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Guerrilla

of 1970s

Networks

Radical Media Ecologies

MICHAEL GODDARD

Amsterdam
University
Press

Guerrilla Networks

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Guerrilla Networks

An Archaeology of 1970s Radical Media Ecologies

Michael Goddard

Amsterdam University Press

Cover illustration: based on *Radical Software* magazine front cover, Volume I, Number 4 (1971). Courtesy of Davidson Gigliotti and the Daniel Langlois Foundation.

Cover design: Suzan Beijer

Lay-out: Crius Group, Hulshout

Amsterdam University Press English-language titles are distributed in the US and Canada by the University of Chicago Press.

ISBN 978 90 8964 889 1

e-ISBN 978 90 4852 753 3

DOI 10.5117/9789089648891

NUR 670

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Acknowledgements

The research on which this book is based was originally conducted as part of a sabbatical from the University of Salford in 2011, during which time research was conducted in London, Paris, Rome, and Bologna, among other locations. This included research at the British Film Institute (BFI) archives, London; the Bibilothèque du film, Paris; and the Antonio Gramsci Archives in Bologna and Rome, which greatly enriched the range of research materials consulted. An 'accidental' speaking tour in North America was invaluable to develop the ideas in the first part of the book for which I would like to thank Steven Shaviro for facilitating my talk at Wayne State University, Detroit; Greg Elmer at Ryerson, Toronto; and Brian Massumi, Erin Manning, and the Sense Lab, for organizing my talk at Concordia University. Of special importance for me was meeting J. Smith and André Moncourt from Kersplebedeb publications and editors of the excellent *Red Army Faction: A Documentary History*. Not only did they provide me with rare and hard-to-come-by materials on and by urban guerrilla movements, but they also took the time to meet with me and discuss their work. As is fitting for a work of media archaeology, this book is a mix of materials both old and new. An earlier version of part of the section of chapter one 'Concepts of Media Archaeology, Anarchaeology and Media Ecologies' was published as 'Opening up the black boxes: Media archaeology, "anarchaeology" and media materiality' in *New Media and Society*, December 2015, 17 (11): pp. 1761-1776. Earlier versions of the section of chapter three, 'The Media Ecology of Radio Alice', have appeared in various publications including as 'Towards an Archaeology of Media Ecologies: "Media Ecology", Political Subjectivation and Free Radios', in *Fibreculture 17: Unnatural Ecologies*, edited by Michael Goddard and Jussi Parikka, 2011. Finally, an earlier version of part of the section of chapter four on minor cinemas was published as 'Cinematic and Aesthetic Cartographies of Subjective Mutation', *Subjectivity* 5(1), 2012, pp. 75-94. In the intervening years, work within this book was presented at several conferences in Europe and elsewhere, including at the Network for European Cinema and Media Studies (NECS); Deleuze Studies; Re:Wire; and, more recently, the 'Coming to Terms with Film Philosophy' conference, which was hosted by York University and Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) in Toronto, 2015. The Jean-Luc Godard retrospective organized by Michael Witt at the BFI Southbank in January, 2016, was also an invaluable contribution to the latter stages of my research, and I would like especially to thank Michael Witt for making available his

own research on Jean-Luc Godard and Anne Miéville's television work. Essential conversations on the issues covered within the book took place with Franco Berardi (Bifo), Jussi Parikka, Steven Shaviro, Brian Massumi, Rodrigo Nunes, Stevphen Shukaitis, Greg Elmer, Ganaelle Langlois, Gary Genosko, Alberto Toscano, Yngvar Steinholt, Erick Felinto, Gozde Naiboglu, Benjamin Halligan, Felicity Colman, and Phoebe Moore. The latter, as the Manchester 'gang of four', have also been especially important in terms of friendship and support during the long period of this book's composition. I would also like to thank Jeroen Sondervan and Maryse Elliott of Amsterdam University Press, and the Recursions series editors Jussi Parikka, Anna Tuschling, and Geoffrey Winthrop-Young for believing in the book and including it in their series alongside a singularly impressive array of media theory, and also for their patience. Thanks are also due to Matthew Fuller, Stevphen Shukaitis, Benjamin Halligan and Kimberly Mair for reading the finished manuscript and providing endorsements.

The cover is based on *Radical Software* magazine front cover, Volume I, Number 4 (1971). Courtesy of Davidson Gigliotti and the Daniel Langlois Foundation. I thank both Davidson Gigliotti and the Daniel Langlois Foundation for their generosity in allowing this image to be used.

Finally, I would especially like to thank Victória Souza, whose love and support contributed to the final stages of writing this book in multiple ways.

Introduction

Some activists involved in the Italian *Autonomia* movement in Bologna start a free radio station. They call it Alice, after *Alice in Wonderland*. A few years later, this station plays a key role in the explosion of the *Autonomia* movement and its repression in Bologna. Another group of activists in the US form an urban guerrilla group: they base its name, Weatherman, on a line from the Bob Dylan song, 'Subterranean Homesick Blues' (Dylan, 1965). After an initial disastrous bomb explosion that kills three of its members, the Weatherman group adopts an underground mode of life, producing communiqués, setting bombs, and working with other underground and aboveground social movements. A future German filmmaker decides – not without hesitation – not to join some attendees of his Anti-Theater in their first act of political violence, the explosion of a bomb in a major supermarket. He goes on to set up an alternative 'German Hollywood' in his native Munich, while some of these bombers became the key members of the Red Army Faction, joined by a leading radical journalist and another nascent filmmaker.

These fables all concern the constitution of what this book will treat as guerrilla media ecologies in the 1970s. While some of the forms of media creativity and invention that will be mapped here, such as militant and experimental film and video, pirate radio, and radical modes of television fit with conventional common-sense definitions of media, others, such as urban guerrilla groups, do not. Nevertheless, what was at stake in all these ventures was the use of available technical means of expression in order to produce transformative effects, whether these were located on the levels of affect and perception, or on the social or political plane, or, as was frequently the case, on both these levels at once. Why these exploits took place exactly when they did and, conversely, why their radical aims only met with short-term rather than long-term successes, even if they continue to produce tremors and effects on media and political practices and ecologies up to the present, will be some of the key questions guiding this book.

A key supposition in this, following the insights of media archaeology, is that both media inventions and creative social practices are nonlinear and that key developments often take place at the edges, far from the dominant paradigms of the mass media in any given era. This will necessarily be a study then of 'minor' media, a fundamental term for this book that will be expanded upon in chapter one, even if some of the practices involved became, at particular times and locations, central to contemporary media

and political culture. Whether the practices examined culminated in an explosive supernova, or merely percolated in the shadows and are only known beyond the immediate sphere of their participants due to the efforts of later media archaeological attention, all of them can be seen as both ephemeral and essential to the media and sociopolitical mutations that were unfolding in this key period of the late twentieth century.

But what then defines radicality? While the vast majority of media practices and ecologies could be considered minor, since this term is potentially applicable to all non-hegemonic media practices in general, radical media must partake of a transformation of existing, dominant media practices, whether this is understood in aesthetic, perceptual, or political terms. While some of the media ecologies examined in this book could be arguably limited to mere formal, aesthetic, or perceptual experimentation, in many cases this formal experimentation was directly linked to social and political movements and transformative currents. In other cases, this experimentation called for the existence of such currents, in line with the Deleuze and Guattarian formula for minor art addressed to 'the people who are missing', because they are yet to come.¹ Similarly, in the most apparently politically motivated media ecologies such as the urban guerrilla movements or free radios, there were, nevertheless, always examples of aesthetic experimentation with 'form', even if this concerned the form of a programmatic text or a communique or even the 'propaganda of the deed' of a bombing or jailbreak. In all of these cases, the radicality of the practices involved a focus on the idea of an alternative future as a radical and utopian break from both present forms of political domination and dominant media tendencies, even if this was sometimes accompanied by the apparently nihilistic assertion of there being 'no future', as the Sex Pistols so precisely articulated.

Putting together the two terms 'guerrilla' and 'network' is only to seize upon an existing and palpable conjunction in the 1970s of urban guerrilla media tactics from Che Guevara to the only quasi-political project of guerrilla television, diluting the concept enough that it could become fully appropriated simply as an equivalent of DIY entrepreneurialism, or even a justification for neoliberal defunding of arts and cultural sectors of the economy. Nevertheless, in the 1970s, the conjunction between 'guerrilla' actions and media networks was a real and disruptive one, perhaps attaining its fullest cataloguing in the *Handbuch der Kommunikationsguerrilla* (*The Communications Guerrilla Handbook*), subtitled in its Italian translation as 'Tactics of joyful agitation and ludic resistance to oppression' (autonome a.f.r.i.k.a. gruppe et al 2001, p.1). While this catalogue of ludic tactics extends

throughout the twentieth century, its high point and full development of the network form is embodied in actions and experiences ranging from post-Situationist interventions to free radio stations such as Radio Alice in the 1970s. In light of recent critical highlighting of cybernetic network modes of power by Alexander Galloway and others, this might seem a naïve embrace of both ‘communications’ and the network form; however, the conjunction with the term ‘guerrilla’ introduces a profoundly destabilizing and necessarily conflictual element, pointing to other network potentials than the emergence of new modes of cybernetic governance.

Following this initial clarification of what is meant by radical media and guerrilla networks this leaves the final slippery term of media ecologies. Why not speak rather of media practices, their creators or participants, and their audiences or spectators? What does the idea of media ecologies add to conventional methodologies of media research? For this book, the concept of media ecologies is essential for a number of reasons. First of all, it enables a holistic mode of comprehending media practices in the context of their aesthetic, social, political, and subjective surroundings of which the fragmented and fragmenting categories of producers, institutions, audiences, and the phases of media production, distribution, and consumption are incapable. In the case of many of the ecologies that will be examined, this type of breakdown into categories is not only falsifying, but also fails to include key elements of the media ecology, such as existing social and political movements and their repression, or modes of technological innovation and their pragmatic (mis)use and processes of (radical) subjectivation.

None of these media experiences took place in a vacuum; rather, they resulted from the intense interconnections of many factors, technological, social, political, subjective, affective, and perceptual. At the same time, the recapitulation of all these different elements of a given ecology and their relations is, at best, a highly complex and, at worst, an impossible task, given how ephemeral many of these media practices were and what few traces remain of them. Also bearing in mind that incorporeal components such as affect and modes of subjectivity are just as important as technologies and material media artifacts, the reconstruction of a past media ecology is necessarily as much a matter of imagination, creativity, and speculation as it is an historically verifiable procedure. Following insights adapted from media archaeology, these media ecologies persist less as stable archives and more as ‘anarchives’ (cf. Ernst 2014, pp. 139-140), that is to say, unstable collections of textual, material, and audiovisual fragments that are as revealing in their gaps and absences as in their remaining material traces.

Nevertheless, in all cases, these media experiences will be treated as ecologies – even if many of their components are now missing – rather than as isolated practices, using as many artifacts, secondary sources, and accounts of participants as are available. The art of media archaeology and ecology is to construct a coherent world out of these fragments, which is not necessarily a true world in any verifiable sense, but one that is, nevertheless, a consistent presentation of the radical and utopian worlds that these radical media ecologies attempted to construct.

1. Media (An)archaeology, Ecologies, and Minor Knowledges

Introduction: The Long 1970s

The 1970s as a decade, until recently, had a very poor reputation. Sandwiched between the supposedly creative, liberating 1960s and the conservative, neoliberal reformation of the 1980s, the 1970s have frequently been seen as a regressive era of cheesy and kitsch music, ridiculous fashions, and cultural and political stagnation. And yet, whether one looks at the cultural spheres of music, film, and radio or the explosions of the social and political movements for which 1968 was more of a beginning point than an end, this view of the 1970s is unjustified. This misperception of the 1970s is taken up in Howard Sounes's populist but not unperceptive account of the decade, in which he claims that it has been buried under a consensus at odds with what actually happened during these years:

My impression [...] was that there was a consensus among journalists and other pundits that the decade was somehow a rather stupid, indeed vulgar, one – certainly when compared to the ever glamorous 1960s – but amusingly stupid and vulgar: a time of endearingly foolish fashions, embarrassingly bad (so bad it is good) music and deliciously trashy TV and films, all of which we are presumed to embrace in collective fond nostalgia. In essence, I felt I was being told that the 1970s was all about flared trousers, *Starsky and Hutch* and Showaddywaddy. (Sounes 2006, p.1)

If the media Sounes focuses on to counter this impression from the music of Lou Reed and the Sex Pistols; or the films of Francis Ford Coppola, Martin Scorsese, and Woody Allen; to the design of the Sydney Opera House (originally designed in the 1950s but completed in the 1970s) are, in general, more mainstream than the media practices considered in this book, Sounes' point that 'the 1970s offered a vibrant, innovative and fascinating popular culture, much of which remains important' (Sounes 2006, p.3), is equally applicable to the more radical and minor media that will be engaged with in this book. Similar points are made by Dave Haslam in his account of the 1970s, *Young Hearts Run Free*. In light of the frequent misrepresentations of the decade in terms of easily digestible kitsch nostalgia rather than the vibrant and conflictual subcultural phenomena that actually took place, he

suggests that 'the most pressing need is to rewrite the rewriting of history' (Haslam 2007, p. 9).

While Haslam's book at times extends the dynamics of the contested cultures of the 1970s into the political realm, taking account of such phenomena as 'tribalism and violence on the streets, IRA bombs, PLO hijackings, overt racism, football hooliganism' amongst other events (2007, p. 1), it is still more a populist history than a rigorous archaeology and makes little attempt to draw any larger conclusions from the cultural phenomena treated in the book. While useful corrections to the neglect and distortions surrounding the 1970s that Haslam humorously refers to as the 'Abbafication of history' (2007, p. 1), neither of these volumes constitutes a sufficient way to engage fully with the profound sociopolitical and media mutations that took place in the decade and that were, by no means, limited to the spheres of either culture or subculture. More recent works on British political history in the decade by Andy Beckett (2010), Alwyn Turner (2013), and Dominic Sandbrook (2013), while instructive on UK parliamentary politics, barely touch upon media and political practices beyond this majoritarian focus, although Turner at least discusses both the Angry Brigade and the Sex Pistols. The situation is slightly better with regards to radical art: John A. Walker's important *Red Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain* (2001) touches on some key radical art and media practices in the decade, and, more significantly, so does former RAF member Astrid Proll's *Goodbye to London: Radical Art and Politics in 1970s* (2010). Probably the most interesting addition to this bibliography on the 1970s in Britain is Mark Fisher's *Ghosts of My Life* (2014), which weaves together a range of pop-cultural artifacts from the 1970s, with more contemporary ones haunted by the 1970s, around the concepts of (sonic) hauntology and lost futures. Such a nonlinear approach is highly complementary to the media-archaeological one of this book, and it certainly underlines the crucial significance of this decade for future (pop) cultural and political development. Nevertheless, the national focus of all these publications limits their ability to capture the radical media and political practices that spread across Europe and North America during this decade that were fundamentally internationalist and not limited to any one national context.

One way into this oblivion that surrounds the 1970s is via a reexamination of the mythologies and remembrance and forgetting that surround the global student and worker uprisings of May 1968. Although the events in Paris in May 1968 are acknowledged as part of a chain of youth rebellion and its suppression encompassing other locations such as Chicago, Prague, Mexico City, and Tokyo, the concentration on the *Joli mai* of Paris is only

the beginning of a series of distorting series of falsifications that have enabled 1968 to become a harmless object of ritual nostalgia. The recent marking of the 40th anniversary of 1968 was no exception to this, with texts commemorating this crucial date appearing in everything from the most rarefied reaches of political philosophy to the French TV guide available in every street kiosk.

A typical mid-range example of this is the collection, *Revolution I Love You* (2008), which at least has the virtue of extending the memory of 1968 beyond France, being a multilingual publication in Hungarian and Greek as well as English. Nevertheless, some of the key conventions of remembering 1968 are inscribed within its pages. For example, Simon Ford's chapter 'The Beginning of an End of an Era' (2008, pp. 171-173) proclaims 1968 as the end of an era of radicalism in a deliberate reversal of the Situationist International claim that 1968 was a beginning rather than an end, coming admittedly near the end of their own existence as a collective, in a text entitled 'The Beginning of an Era' (Ford, p. 173). To see 1968 as an end, rather than a beginning, is to enact the same disavowal and forgetting that was subsequently enacted by the de Gaulle-led restoration of order, which necessitated the consignment of 1968, if not to total oblivion, then to a now-surpassed endpoint. Contrary to this supposed ending, as will be shown in this book, there were multiple continuations of the radicalism of 1968 in many world locations throughout the 1970s, some of which, if they did not have as massively popular effects as 1968, at least managed to escape some of its illusions.

Another text in the collection, '68, Année Symbolique' (Kornetis, 2008, pp. 17-23), correctly presents 1968 as a global political phenomenon – perhaps the first to be spread in this way via global media networks – and especially via radical media and subterranean channels, filtered by local conditions. When it comes to the legacy of 1968, however, this tends to be seen in largely intellectual and cultural terms, as if these global rebellions merely aimed to create new theories of the subject, agency, or knowledge, even if these theories did in fact emerge. As for the political effects of 1968 in the 1970s, Kornetis limits these to feminism, displacing the gay rights and ecological movements, which really went through their most dynamic developments in this decade, to the 1980s. Moreover, the mythological fetishization of 1968 that Kornetis is intending to illuminate is only augmented by the claim that the other only continuation of 1968 in the 1970s was in the negative form of 'terrorism and social extremism' (2008, p. 22). The problematic nature of the term 'terrorism' that Kornetis has applied to guerrilla movements will be discussed extensively in chapter two of this book. These are hardly

innocent words; in fact, these are the very terms used by power to separate 1968 from any real political consequences, by enforcing the false distinction that, whereas revolutionary political action in 1968 was a good, energetic, imaginative phenomenon, the later incarnations of the same tendencies were terrorist, extremist, and therefore doomed to and deserving of failure. Of course, from the safe distance of hindsight, it may well be the case that, in certain instances, these radical movements took on destructive and self-destructive forms; nevertheless, if there was no destructive radical violence in 1968, it would not have constituted the danger it was taken to be to established systems of order both on the part of its participants and forces of authority.

The quarantining and fetishizing of 1968 is explicitly designed to disallow any of its political continuations in the 1970s and, indeed, continues to echo in the present as the compromise of a harmless 1968, the continuation of the restoration of order after the events of 1968 themselves. Of course, more recently, those in power no longer want to accept even a harmless 1968; and as in Sarkozy's 2007 election campaign, would prefer to wipe the 1968 rebellions from history altogether, just as the American military-industrial complex used its wars in the Middle East to wipe away not only the memory of defeat in Vietnam, but especially the power of the anti-Vietnam war movement which, needless to say, continued to find powerful expression throughout the early 1970s and arguably ultimately succeeded.

In light of these dynamics, it is worth returning to the Situationist proclamation – which was also adopted both in theory and in practice by the Italian *Autonomia* movement – that 1968 was indeed the beginning and not the end of an era. Rather than the final explosion of the steadily building youth rebellion of the 1960s, which were, in fact, formerly dominated by conformist and consumerist tendencies, 1968 should instead be seen as the opening act, the prologue to the 'long 1970s', which I will also argue lasted well into the following decade, since the Neoliberal regimes that followed were not imposed smoothly and all at once, but in an atmosphere of contestation and continued resistance.

This brings us to another take on 1968, this time as the transition from Fordist to post-Fordist modes of labour and economic organization. While this is expressed in numerous Autonomist and post-Autonomist theories as a process of counterrevolution against the rebellion of 1968 and afterwards,¹ it was stated more provocatively by Régis Debray in his 'A Modest Contribution to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Tenth Anniversary' that 1968 may well have been all about this economic restructuring rather than any real revolution: 'we felt a gust of madness, which was only the economy giving

a common sense lesson to society, the enforced submission of the old to the new' (Debray cited in Reader 1995, p. 24). Debray, who was principally known at that time as the intellectual translator of the Cuban and other Latin American revolutions and guerrilla movements for an eager audience of Western radicals, joined the Mitterand socialist government as an adviser shortly thereafter, and later claimed never to have advocated revolutionary political action in France. Yet, this is not just the tract of a cautious, conservative Republican (in the Gaullist sense), but points to a real problematic concerning the political consequences of 1968. In essence, the problem is, in part, that the greatest strength of 1968 – its communicability across different milieux both politically and internationally – was also its great downfall, leading, in Debray's view, to a mediatized depoliticization. Against this is the argument that this depoliticization was, in fact, a counter-strategy of power, the deliberate transformation of what could have been a global revolution into an isolated incident that came to be seen as a need to modernize capital in a post-Fordist, globalized, and, ultimately, neoliberal direction, rather than overturning it altogether. This is certainly the thesis of Herbert Marcuse in whose view the pressure brought to bear by 1968 and other radical movements in the USA and Western Europe had forced the establishment into adopting a range of counterrevolutionary measures ranging from repressive desublimation to pure repression.²

It is within this contested territory that, what seemed to be an insignificant event on a political level, at the beginning of the 1970s, takes on its full significance, namely the separation of the US national currency from the gold standard enacted by Nixon on behalf of the Federal Reserve in 1971. This was known in economic circles as the Nixon shock, due to the fact that it was a unilateral act, unannounced to the international community, whose currencies it profoundly affected. As Christian Marazzi and other post-Autonomist thinkers have argued, this was a political act and not only because it was intended to counter the inflation and devaluation of the US dollar that were the results of massive expenditure on military enterprises abroad, especially on the Vietnam war. Nor was its politics limited to it being it a hostile economic act aimed against competing economies, designed in order to give a sudden and, it was hoped, irreversible US advantage. As Marazzi puts it:

The Federal Reserve's monetarist initiative was aimed against its 'enemies', both internal (the Fordist working class, rigidity of salaries and welfare programs) and external (impediments to US global expansion coming from 'places' creating petrodollars and Eurodollars beyond the

control by the Fed). The idea was to tie American workers to the *risks* of American capital; to relaunch the *material* expansion of *American* capital in the world economy' (Marazzi 2008, pp. 36-37; emphasis in original).

The violence of this act, and the neoliberal, deregulated new economy that it was the prelude to, should be seen, according to Marazzi, not as the opening of the door to globalization, but as the expression of a 'nationalist ideology' operating within an imperialist world economy (2008, p. 36). Paradoxically, beyond this nationalist dimension, the transformation of work indeed appeared to enact the overcoming of alienation demanded by the 1968 revolts, in that it served to abolish the separation between workers and capital. With market-indexed pension funds and the spread of shareholding beyond class boundaries, everyone had an investment in the smooth and successful functioning of capital, rendering resistance and rebellion an unnecessary and counterproductive waste of one's own investments.

This articulation of the proletariat with financial risk is obviously only a parodic version of what the insurrectionists of 1968 were aiming for, even if it allowed for accommodating some of their demands such as more flexible and less hierarchical work practices, more emphasis on creative rather than manual labour (now outsourced to the developing world), and so on. Nevertheless, it overturned the mediating role previously played by welfare and fixed salaries and therefore radically undermined what remained of the power of working-class union movements. If, increasingly, there was no distinction between labour and capital, even if levels of inequality in the manipulation of the latter were intensified rather than reduced by its freedom from regulation by the nation-state, this also meant the end of traditional forms of resistance such as strikes and mass protests, as already foreseen in the new modes of resistance experimented with in 1968. In place of these conventional forms of mediation, which could be described as belonging to disciplinary regimes, the key site for mediation was now the media themselves, which were not only a major new sphere of work and immaterial production, but were increasingly integrated within every aspect of both labour and capital in a process that would ultimately be realized in the implantation of digital technologies in all spheres of production, circulation, and consumption. Even in the 1970s, media were already functioning as a primary means for the operation of social control as much through the promise of wealth, power, and pleasure as through the threat of exclusion and punishment of those foolish enough to keep resisting. This had already been anticipated in Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (1967), but only in the 1970s did it come to be fully implemented as

a dominant mode of production (that would come to be seen, in a mystifying and depoliticizing perspective, as the era of postmodernity).³ This also meant that media, meaning technological textual, visual, sonic, and other modes of communication and expression, became the key battlegrounds on which cultural and political contestation would take place. Of course, arguably, resistance has always operated via 'media', as has power, in that it has involved contestations of language, discourses, signs, and meanings, as much as struggles over territories, political hierarchies, and modes of organization. Nevertheless, it was only in the late twentieth century that these zones became inseparable as what post-Autonomist theorists called 'immaterial labour' became hegemonic and what used to be called ideology, culture, or the superstructure became the very mode of productive functioning of advanced capitalist economies.⁴

Rather than seeing the 1970s as involving a specific phase of capitalism, political order, or type of resistance, it will be seen as a period of profound and contested mutation, in which the end result of the global imposition of neoliberal economic regimes was, by no means, perceived as inevitable. This displacement also entails the displacement of the central role accorded to 1968 in contemporary cultures of resistance, as outlined above, towards the more enigmatic date of 1977, synonymous not only with the 'no future' of the Anglo punk explosion; but also the irruption and suppression of the *Autonomia* movement, especially in Rome and Bologna; and the aesthetic and political contestation over political violence in Germany in the events surrounding the Stammheim deaths of the RAF leaders, to name only three key events of that year. Beyond the immediate effects of these events, 1977 will be presented as a fulcrum year, the year in which the cultural, political, aesthetic, economic, and, above all, media mutations of the decade attained their greatest degree of both intensity and contestation.

What the media ecologies that this book will focus on demonstrate is that this was a period in which there was a remarkable invention of alternate potential futures, quite contrary to the dominant economic and political ones that actually eventuated. Even if, in hindsight, this seems to be a struggle that was lost in advance as so many lost causes, or the mere cultural ephemera of the neoliberal restructuring of the global economy, this book will argue that the futural orientation of these media ecologies means that, far from being lost, they remain vital resources to be reactualized when possible. To appropriate another Deleuzian formula, they are the resources of the past, to be used against the present in favour of a different time to come;⁵ arguably in a number of political, media, and aesthetic manifestations over the first decades of the 21st century, this has

already begun to take place in phenomena ranging from alter-globalization movements to tactical media, hacktivism, and new forms of media art. It is in the interest of these alternate potential futures rather than a sterile and merely academic examination of the past that this book is written.

Concepts of Media Archaeology, Anarcheology and Media Ecologies

‘Media cross one another in time which is no longer history’ (Kittler 1999, p. 115).

The above epigram can be read as a useful formula for one of the primary fields of media research that informs this book, namely media archaeology. As with many earlier theoretical paradigms such as modernism or structuralism, media archaeology is traversed by debates, contestations, and evasions, rendering any stable delimitation of the field at the very least problematic. Some of the key theorists responsible for the media archaeology paradigm have either never, or at least only in limited instances, considered their work to be media archaeology. Moreover, both Friedrich Kittler and Siegfried Zielinski went as far as to question the usefulness of the word media in their later work, the latter preferring the term ‘Variantology’ to describe his research into ‘techniques of seeing and hearing’.⁶ As for Kittler, his interests turned largely to the classical world, for example, through conducting experiments to prove that Odysseus was lying when he claimed to have heard the Siren’s song despite not coming ashore, as recounted in Homer’s *Odyssey*.⁷ Despite these instabilities, this section will attempt to draw out some of the key concerns and insights of the fields of media archaeology and media ecologies and indicate the ways in which they inform this project. This mapping is an explicitly partial one, expressive of my own path to media archaeology and its deployment in this book, rather than claiming to delineate the field as a whole. A more fully developed ‘archaeology of media archaeology’ can be found in the introduction to the volume, *Media Archaeology* (Huhtamo and Parikka 2011, pp. 1-21).

From a media development perspective, both media archaeology and ecology have their roots in the advent of so-called new media, beginning with video and culminating in the current digital regime we now inhabit; interestingly enough, this makes both fields traceable back to the very period on which this book focuses, even if their full emergence only took place considerably later or indeed is still taking place today, at least in the

context of English-language publishing. Among the many effects of the appearance of successive new-media technologies from the 1970s onward was a significant challenge to the ways in which media had been conceptualized just at the very moment when critical film and media studies were becoming recognized as legitimate fields of academic research. While the histories of media research are varied and also took different forms according both to what media were being studied and in what context, a general tendency, at least in the Anglophone world, was to study media separately, that is to have departments and courses focused on film or cinema studies, television studies, and, less frequently, radio. This was also reflected in publishing, which was medium-specific and carved up the field in question in terms of concepts imported from literary studies or the social sciences into such domains as genre, authorship, industry, political economy, national cinema and media, and, of course, media history. While some contestation of this discipline formation of the field of media research was enacted by the transdisciplinary methodologies of cultural studies, this too tended to be confined to specific media forms (TV news, popular music) and not to trespass on the privileged field of film or cinema studies, which, since the postwar 'discovery' of the cinematic *auteur*, had been busy setting itself up as a respectable humanities discipline on the model of literary studies or art history, rather than according to the social scientific, empirical concerns and methodologies that were evident in the study of other media. While there were certainly studies of film industries and economies, somehow this was done separately from other media, even in a period in which cinema and television were almost entirely interdependent economically.

The figure most frequently evoked in the shift from medium history to media archaeology is, of course, Michel Foucault, whose project of the 'archaeology of knowledge' is the primary inspiration for using this term in relation to media. As Thomas Elsaesser puts it, in the most useful aspect for media archaeology of Foucault's project is what he calls an 'archaeological agenda' (Elsaesser 2006, p. 17), encompassing an abandonment of the search for origins, a questioning of the already-stated, and the description of discourses as practices, all of which Foucault's meta-archaeological text, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1989) elucidates. The use of Foucauldian archaeology in media archaeology, however, is by no means a homogeneous or uncritical one, and most media archaeologists insist on the need for the term to be reinvented or, at least, extended beyond the written archive that forms the basis for Foucault's studies of disciplinary societies. While this might seem to resonate with Baudrillard's argument in *Forget Foucault* (1988) that Foucault's diagnoses of power appeared at just the moment

when the forms of power they discerned were disappearing (Baudrillard 1988), the media archaeological critique of Foucault is considerably more precise. The key limitation to Foucault's analyses, according to Friedrich Kittler, is that, while based entirely on the written archive stored in libraries and other repositories, they do not acknowledge that writing is just one technical medium amongst others and one that had already lost many of its privileges at the time of Foucault's analyses:

even writing itself, before it ends up in libraries, is a communication medium, the technology of which the archaeologist simply forgot. It is for this reason that all his analyses end immediately before that point in time at which other media penetrated the library's stacks. Discourse analysis cannot be applied to sound archives or towers of film rolls (Kittler 1999, p. 5).

Nevertheless, however scathing this criticism may seem, it is, in many ways, merely a dual call to open up questions of technicity to encompass writing, while, at the same time, opening up questions of the archive beyond written texts to encompass other forms of storage, transmission, and retrieval. In this, Kittler updates the dual innovations of McLuhan's studies of the 'Gutenberg Galaxy' (McLuhan 1962) and the most current forms of media communication at that time, with the more rigorous insights of the Derridean deconstruction of the technicity of writing. Nevertheless, Foucauldian archaeology still remains an essential inspiration for any media archaeology since, despite these limitations, it provides a range of key principles for a nonlinear account of diverse media, their various crossings, and contingent assemblages.

A media archaeological perspective then is necessarily a nonlinear one and one that disputes the already-stated distribution of winners and losers in teleological medium narratives whether this be an inventor, a technical invention, or a whole media *dispositif* or assemblage. This tendency can be seen clearly in both Zielinski's aforementioned archaeology of cinema and television as contingent assemblages of seeing and hearing, as well as Kittler's *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* (1999), which, even in a domain in which the concept of a foundational text seems oxymoronic, must nevertheless be seen as an initiating statement of the entire field. In these studies, the contingency of media assemblages are emphasized as are their crossings, not only with one another, but also with other technological practices such as warfare and psychology to name only two. While the shift to a media archaeological perspective often de-emphasizes content in line with the

famous McLuhan formula of the medium being the message, this is not necessarily a shift to technological determinism. Certainly, it can seem to take this form in Kittler's work; after all, the very first line of the preface to his key media-archaeological text reads 'media determine our situation which – despite or because of it – deserves a description' (1999, p.xxxix). Nevertheless, this hard statement of media determinism, while not merely rhetorical, proves to be less severe in Kittler's actual analyses of media, in which creators and experimenters certainly play a key role and media assemblages are repeatedly shown not to be implemented when this would have been first technically possible, but only when the right socio-technical assemblage is able to make use of them.

In an even less deterministic vein, Zielinski privileges artist-inventors of the technologies of seeing and hearing that he investigates, whether of the more conventional media such as cinema and television or the deeper historical studies he presents in *Deep Time of the Media*, which extend media archaeology back to the Renaissance and even to the classical world, since techniques of seeing and hearing have a much longer history than that of contemporary mass media. This is yet another effect of an archaeological approach, to extend the temporal layers of media beyond their usually circumscribed periodization as artefacts of recent modernity. While this book does not intend to follow Zielinski into these realms of pre-nineteenth-century technical invention in such domains as alchemy and combinatorial systems, except as these have been reactualized in contemporary media ecologies, it does point to a key insight of media archaeology that necessarily extends the concept of media beyond narrow definitions of mass media. This applies as much to other modes of communication as it does to the 'deep time' that Zielinski excavates and hence is of special relevance to this book's engagement with the 'media' of urban guerrilla groups, for example.

Another key insight of Zielinski's, relating directly to the field of media archaeology, is that Foucault's archaeology of knowledge project would be better characterized as an 'anarchaeology'. This idea, which Zielinski adapts from the German Foucault scholar Rudi Visker, posits that, while archaeology in the conventional, disciplinary sense implies an ordering and governing of the ancient or original (*archaios* plus *logos*), Foucauldian archaeology evades any idea of a 'standardized object of an original experience' (Visker cited in Zielinski 2006, p. 27). What this means for a truly Foucauldian media archaeology is the idea of 'a history that entails envisioning, listening, and the art of combining using technical devices, which privileges a sense of their multifarious possibilities over their realities in the form of products' (Zielinski 2006, p. 27). Essentially, what Zielinski

takes from this idea of 'anarchaeology', leaving aside the question to what extent this is still Foucault's method in relation to the archive or his own, is a nonlinear history, one that is as, if not more, interested in the 'losers', or inventors and inventions that remained potential rather than actual, and that rejects any idea of either origin or teleology. For this reason, Zielinski is as interested in examples such as Athanasius Kircher's allegorical drawings and magic lanterns as he is in the latest examples of digital art, with considerably more focus on the former than the latter. While Zielinski's plea to 'keep the concept of media as wide open as possible' (2006, p. 33) is an important one, the direction in which he responds to this plea, namely via the investigation of a range of historical 'curiosities' is not the only road that can be taken in the elaboration of a media archaeology. It is one thing to call linear temporalities into question and quite another to abandon interest in temporal shifts altogether in a kind of 'deep time' that risks becoming only a series of eternal moments of invention, which, as Zielinski himself puts it, blur together heterogeneous times and spaces:

I developed an awareness of different time periods that we often experience with regards to places: for example, to discover Kraków in Palermo, to come across Rome in New York [...] Phases, moments, or periods that sported particular data as labels began to overlap in their meanings and valencies. Wasn't Petrograd's techno-scene in the 1910s and 1920s more relevant and faster than that of London, Detroit or Cologne at the turn of the last Century? (Zielinski 2006, p. 11).

Despite Zielinski's reference to his archaeological examples as 'dynamic moments in the media-archaeological record that abound and reveal in heterogeneity, and [...] enter into a relationship of tension with various present day moments' (2006, p. 11) or 'attractive foci where possible directions for development were tried out and paradigm shifts took place' (2006, p. 31), in practice they often seem plucked out of the economic, social, and technological modes of development in which they were embedded and given a semi-eternal status as the great inventions of great men, with an undisguised uncritical act of constructing media-archaeological heroes. But is a new canon of great media inventors and dreamers any better than a pantheon of great cinematic auteurs? It certainly does not seem very anarchic, but rather seems a strangely Leavisite reinvention of a great if relatively occult tradition that loses at least one key aim of Foucauldian archaeology, namely, a non-teleological way of accounting for change. While it may be accepted that Foucauldian (an)archaeology disrupts the linear

order of historical causation and succession, this is not a relativist denial of relations between the present and the past but rather an insistence on their force and power. In particular, if Foucauldian archaeology insists upon heterogeneity, this is in order to uncover real processes of change, or, as Foucault puts it in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 'to establish the system of transformations that constitute change' (Foucault, 1989, p. 173). This is what some commentators on Foucault have referred to as the 'history of the present' or the rules governing what it is possible to express in a given spatiotemporal configuration; more broadly than that, it refers to something like the Deleuzian and Guattarian concept of becomings, of real change that a given state of affairs certainly modulates and conditions, but which, nevertheless, has the capacity and tendency to escape this given state. In this light, (an)archaeology, the history of the present, or becomings, are not outside of history, as great moments of invention, but rather refer to the processual flux of real temporal change out of which historical narratives emerge in a process of capture, always in favour of particular ends and power formations. Much as it is tempting to follow Zielinski in his media anarchaeological 'deep time machine', exploring the wonders that the conventional and nonconventional archive have to offer and their capacities to transport us from one spatiotemporal variant to another, it is also important to maintain the foothold in processes of real change, whose aesthetic and importantly political effects are felt all too keenly in the present. Paradoxically, Zielinski's earlier work *Audiovisions*, in its explorations of the 'materiality of the media within the triadic relationship of culture-subject-media', seen as reciprocally defining terms (Zielinski 1999, p. 20), comes closer to giving a nonlinear history of media invention, expanding closed accounts of the histories of both cinema and television into a broader field of material media practices and inventions. Nevertheless, despite these intentions, there is still an almost exclusive focus on technical inventions and inventors rather than the socio-technical assemblages into which these technologies have been implanted, which are paradoxically given more attention in Kittler's work, despite his reputation as a merciless technological determinist.

The insistence on the importance of engaging with real processes of change and providing a history of the present is, at any rate, the justification for the type of media anarchaeology that will be explored here. This raises another issue connected with German media theory, namely, its privileging of science and scientific invention over social and political processes. While this is often done as a necessary correction of humanist, culturalist tendencies and their overemphasis on such frozen social categories as

'the audience' or 'media institutions', the result is often the jettisoning of the sociopolitical altogether, or at least its relegation to an epiphenomenon. Moreover, the narrow equation of invention with science and technology, even if this is moderated by an interest in other actors including, in Kittler's case, rock musicians such as Pink Floyd or Jimi Hendrix, tends to exclude any consideration of how media function as vectors of political invention. It is as if any consideration of the explicitly or obviously political is too tarred with the brush of cultural-studies populism and its 'resistant audiences' or 'embodied spectators' to warrant serious consideration, unless it is to echo Virilio's conclusions about media as the 'misuse of military equipment' (see Virilio 1989); this is also a favoured trope of Kittler (see Kittler 2014, pp. 152-164).⁸ Of course the very focus on the materialities of media objects and systems, coupled with alternative genealogies or counter-histories of media, is in itself at least micro-political in that it challenges dominant regimes of knowledge in a manner highly resonant with Foucault's later genealogical method that succeeded his archaeological one. In this regard, Parikka has noted the ways in which Kittler extends Foucauldian genealogies into media networks:

Power is no longer circulated and reproduced solely through spatial places and institutions – such as the clinic or the prison as Foucault analysed – or practices of language, but takes place in the switches and relays, software and hardware, protocols and circuits of which our technical media systems are made (Parikka 2012a, p. 70).

Media practices are always political because they are assemblages of expression with both human and technological elements; however, from a media-archaeological perspective, this is a politics that runs counter to the usual refrains of both the political economy of the mass media and cultural-studies investments in the audience. Instead, taking from media archaeology the interest in the 'invention of machines', but understanding these machines in political as well as technological terms another mode of media archaeology becomes possible, in which both human and machinic agencies are articulated in specific media assemblages.

In this respect, this study is much more aligned with more recent articulations of media archaeology, especially those that have aligned themselves with archaeological tendencies in media art. Erkki Huhtamo, for example, points to the emergence of what he calls 'the *archaeological approach* in media art' (Huhtamo 1996, p. 234; emphasis in original), citing the work of such artists as Paul DeMarinis and Lynn Hershman, among others. These

artists produce works that 'incorporate explicit references to machines from earlier phases in the development of technoculture' (1996, p. 234). By calling attention to these 'archaic' technologies in relation to the present, these art practices destabilize processes of technological progress, acceleration, and obsolescence by privileging machines that bear the traces of the recent but already obliterated past. According to Huhtamo, these artists are not just performing a luddite techno nostalgia for earlier epochs but are themselves acting as media archaeologists, viewing forms of technology less in terms of 'concrete artifacts' than the '*discursive formations* enveloping them' (Huhtamo 1996, p. 239; emphasis in original). Furthermore, these artists also often clearly articulate the political stakes surrounding successive forms of technoculture and draw attention not only to technological change, but also to shifts in the discursive sociopolitical orders that surround given technological assemblages. In Huhtamo's words, 'their affection for the debris of the machine culture seems to be intertwined with anxiety and suspicion about the role that technology actually plays in contemporary society, pushing them to investigate the processes of its becoming' (Huhtamo 1996, p. 258). A similar tendency can be seen in the interest in 'Dead Media', a term first popularized by the science-fiction writer Bruce Sterling but recently adopted in a more complex way by the artist Garnet Hertz. The existence of 'dead media', that is, discarded and outmoded forms of technology, is not just an archaeological problem, but an ecological one. For example, in the sense of the exponentially increasing stockpile of electronic waste whose toxic effects and relations to geographically unequal power relations has been stressed by several writers. This, however, is only the beginning of the ecologies of dead media, which, as Hertz and Parikka have argued in a coauthored work, should really be thought of as 'undead' or 'Zombie Media' (Hertz and Parikka 2012), because 'dead' media continue to exist and to haunt present technological configurations (and not only because of problems with their disposal). In a complementary way to Huhtamo, Hertz and Parikka suggest that 'Zombie Media' point to the ways in which media archaeology can become an art methodology in which the theoretical critique of rapid technological obsolescence is coupled with an active repurposing of discarded forms of technology through practices of circuit bending; for example, a discarded electronic toy from the 1980s can become a mutant musical instrument. The value in this process is less in terms of the object produced, which may, in fact, be more rather than less useless than it was originally, but in the process of undoing the 'black box' of a given technical assemblage. In other words, the value lies in understanding on a practical level how the object or medium functions, and making it

function otherwise. This is meant less as a serious proposal for dealing with the growing stockpile of electronic waste, so much as a pragmatic pedagogy that reveals to what extent technological formations are prone to being repurposed and modified, thereby subverting their closed functioning as standardized objects or commodities. This not only resonates with contemporary practices of both software and hardware hacking but also with many of the media ecologies that will be investigated here, which, in different ways, also aimed to critically repurpose existing socio-technical assemblages, or their own (un)dead media.

These developments in contemporary approaches to media archaeology bring it into proximity with ecological questions and indeed the related field of media ecology. Media ecology can claim an even more direct lineage from the work of McLuhan, since the term first developed out of conversations with his closest associates. As developed by Neil Postman and the Media Ecology Association, however, media ecology seemed to lose any of McLuhan's technological optimism to become instead a somewhat phobic account of the ways in which media and technology more generally shape and deform human existence, a line that perhaps shows more of an imprint of Jacques Ellul's *Technological Society* (1965) than McLuhan's more celebratory *Understanding Media* (1994).⁹ As we will see in the final chapter of this book, there was a much more interesting adoption of these ideas in practices of guerrilla television than in these academic continuations of McLuhan's ideas.

More recent approaches to media ecologies, however, have rejected the humanism, nostalgia, and technological determinism of all these accounts in favour of a more dynamic account of both how media pervade and constitute a major part of our environment and how media ecologies can be seen as comprising of human, technological, animal, and other material components, as well as, significantly, relations. Far from eliminating human agency, a less anthropocentric account of media ecologies, such as that elaborated in Matthew Fuller's book of the same name, allows for a more active articulation of media ecologies, emphasizing the way in which circuitries or assemblages of organic life, technological components, and other material and immaterial elements can form powerful ecosystems, often operating in conditions that are far from any stable equilibrium and producing effects beyond both subjective human intentions and inherent technological capabilities. Media ecologies, conceived of in this way, are as dynamic and unpredictable as organic ecosystems and just as prone to sudden emergences, crossings of thresholds, and processes of disintegration. Media ecologies are not only concerned with the effects of reified technical

media on a supposedly preexisting and stable environment, but rather with the codevelopment of humans and technical machines as dynamic systems in which the human and the nonhuman is not clearly dissociable. This is based especially on Félix Guattari's understanding of ecology as always multiple and including, alongside a physical ecology of material components, a social ecology of relations, and a mental ecology of subjectivity and immaterial factors such as thought and affect.¹⁰ For example, a phenomenon such as the London Pirate Radio that Fuller analysed in the first chapter of his book (Fuller 2005, pp. 13-54), is not reducible to an inventory of physical components such as micro transmitters, microphones, portable turntables, and mobile phones, nor to the circuitries of sound, electrical impulses, and digital messaging that these devices circulate. Equally important in this media ecology are the social ecology of the South London tower blocks and their multicultural and frequently Afro-Caribbean inhabitants; the social relations that are also connected via parties, clubs, and other events; as well as specific affects and mental states related to both the music, but also chemically alterable states of mind and emotion; as well as a specific mode of life in which Pirate Radio plays a crucial role.

A key reformulation of media ecologies, in a direct relationship to the project of media archaeology, can also be found in the work of Jussi Parikka, both in his media archaeology of computer viruses *Digital Contagions* (Parikka 2007) and his subsequent works *Insect Media* (Parikka 2010) and *A Geology of Media* (2015), which form a trilogy of works crossing both these paradigms. This is stated especially clearly in the conclusion to *Digital Contagions*, in which his exploration of the anomalous and parasitic life of computer viruses leads to a mutual contagion between new articulations of both media ecology and media archaeology. If a Guattarian-inflected media ecology necessarily involves transversal passages between multiple ecologies – at the very least between the three Guattari-identified ecologies of the environment, social relations, and subjectivity –, then this is highly resonant with the nonlinear and heterogeneous project of media archaeology that involves 'digging [up] the overlapping, changing and transversal lines of discourses and practices on which traditional historical analysis (of molar entities like science and technology) rests' (Parikka 2007, 292). For Parikka, both media ecology and media archaeology involve similar practices of mapping heterogeneous lines that are both transversal and transdisciplinary.

This is not to say that there is no distinction between the two methods, but rather that there is a contagion between them in which the archaeological excavation of temporal layers of material practices and techniques

encounters the inventory and evaluation of a necessarily temporal media ecology as a mode of media life in becoming. This encounter takes place on an abstract plane of machinic composition on which the two distinct practices become indiscernible and mutually interfering. Parikka's account of media viruses inhabits this zone of indiscernibility and thus functions at once as a media archaeology and media ecology of the anomalous digital phenomena with which it engages, even if one of these methods is relatively dominant over the other at times. Finally, what Parikka, following Zielinski, suggests is that the distinction between media archaeology and ecology and of both from conventional media history might be one of alternative models of temporality, as so many techniques for disrupting the linear, chronological model of time: 'This means a move from the time of Chronos as one of imposed linearity that homogenizes the past and the future toward the registers of Aion and Kairos. Aion means for us the time of non-human duration [...] Kairos, on the other hand is the time of the political' (Parikka 2007, p. 294).¹¹

If the nonhuman durations of technologies and machines have been the frequent focus of media archaeology, then what can be supplemented by media ecology or, perhaps more precisely, media ecosophy in a Guattarian sense? meaning an ecological, immanent and ethical mode of knowledge, are evaluations of media as modes of life that express a political temporality, the capacity to make 'cuts in the repetitive nature of Chronos' (2007, p.294). In other words, while the nonchronological accounts of the technological durations of the nonhuman that characterize materialist variants of media archaeology attain the nonlinear time of Aion to reach the time of Kairos, an ecosophic approach is needed that not only describes but intervenes in the life of a given media assemblage. While this intervention may take the form of an affirmation, it by no means needs to descend into the uncritical heroic valorization of a media inventor, invention, or assemblage, but can rather be a form of affirmative critique, the affirmation of what one loves coupled with the desire to push it further, to reinvent it and to give it a greater intensity. In this sense, media ecology, like the practical media archaeology advocated in Hertz and Parikka's 'Zombie Media', can become a form of theoretical circuit bending.

In this project, dealing with historically specific radical media ecologies, most of which are no longer functional, means that the traces of these ecologies will necessarily amount to an incomplete mapping of the specific ecology, since no amount of documentation and recorded material can ever be sufficient to reconstitute the life of a media ecology in its original spatiotemporal context. The archive of sound and video recordings and

textual documents associated with a historical media ecology, even when supplemented by accounts of or interviews with participants, can never hope to reconstitute more than a shadow of a fully functioning media world and, in many cases, can only give an indication of its material components rather than its social and subjective dynamics.¹² Yet, some of these traces are suggestive enough to enable an imaginative reenvisioning of what mode of life a particular media ecology was able to generate, what it was able to appropriate from its socio-technical surroundings, and to what extent it refashioned its surrounding media and social environment. That this process will be as much a process of invention as discovery and will concern immaterial dimensions such as thought and affect as much as technological components is an essential part of its method. In the way that the most recent accounts of media archaeology position it as a field in proximity with art methodologies, the same is equally the case with media ecologies: the description and evaluation of a media ecology being more a type of *ars memoriam*, an art of memory, than an empirical science, albeit one based on concrete and dated documents, audiovisual recordings, and individual and collective memories. Like Foucault and Gogol, we will still be ‘taking statements’ (cf Deleuze 1988, p. 3), but these statements may well be in the form of audiovisual recordings, diagrams, spaces, technologies, and other extralinguistic if not extra-discursive phenomena.

Radical and Guerrilla Media

Returning then to the distance taken from the media-archaeological tendency embodied by the work of Zielinski – that of the media archaeologist as the collector of temporally diverse curiosities –, what will count for this project as ‘radical’ or ‘guerrilla’ media? Is there some way of classifying the objects of this research other than merely by an apparently arbitrary set of dates? The short answer to this question is necessarily negative since it implies a capacity to define radical media as standard objects, whereas they in fact refer to processes, experiences, and media events whose artifacts and traces are necessarily only partial actualizations. Nevertheless, some provisional limitation of what kind of processes are being considered is perhaps useful and can be provided without unnecessary distortion and reification. From a technical point of view, the media ecologies under consideration are either:

1. The various modes of expression of self-declared urban guerrilla groups and radical political movements, consisting not only of manifestos, leaflets, radio broadcasts, or other modes of audiovisual communication, but also of the production of events that the mass media would be obliged to cover, ranging from ludic protests and other modes of nonviolent contestation to bombings and forms of political violence.
2. Audiovisual assemblages of communication and expression, using media technically available in the period of the 1970s and consisting of film, television, radio, video, and recorded music. While there will be some engagement with written, photographic, and other visual media, this will not be the primary focus. Instead, this part of the book will be most interested in those time-based audiovisual media through which active processes of communication and expression took place via technical means. It is a core argument of this book that the relations between both these modes of guerrilla media are intimate and ambivalent.

Related to this is a perhaps problematic distinction between 'radical media' and contemporary art practices.¹³ This is problematic since this was the very period during which the space of the modern and contemporary art gallery was invaded by cinematic and audiovisual displays of many kinds, of which video art was perhaps the most prevalent example. This is an area that will necessarily be touched upon but is in no way the principle focus of attention. This is partly because video art is one of the relatively privileged areas of media-historical attention and analysis and partly because this project is more engaged with modes of expression in the public domain, but outside of art institutions, even if they deal with practices characterized by a high level of artistry and creativity. Of course, this institutional autonomy was never absolute and there are plenty of instances of radical modes of expression occurring within or despite the constraints of art institutions. This is further complicated by the complex trajectories of projects, several of which started from artistic settings or art schools, and then passed through autonomous, popular, or commercial forms of media expression only to be subsequently institutionalized in the very institutions that they had previously scandalized (such was certainly the trajectory of a group such as *Coum Transmissions/Throbbing Gristle*).

Similarly, while some of the media ecologies examined were certainly technically inventive, this project will not dwell on the series of technical inventions that led, for example, to the first commercially available business and personal computers or other technical devices. While the inventions

and modifications of some technical assemblages and machines such as radio equipment or analogue video will be engaged with when an essential part of a given media ecology, this will not be privileged over the social and subjective dynamics of the media ecology. More significance will be attached to the radicality of the media ecology in terms of its reconfiguration of its socio-technical environment even if this was only realized to a limited extent or, in some cases, remained an imaginary, unactualized potential.

This raises the question of the criteria for claiming a media ecology to be radical and minor. While the marginality of some of the media under consideration is clear this project will also engage with work that was quite widely distributed and was, in a few cases, such as the work of Fassbinder, seen both at the time and subsequently as a central reference point; if Fassbinder can be included, why not Francis Ford Coppola or even George Lucas (if not *Star Wars* (1977) then *THX1138* (1971))? At what point, if any, can a line be drawn between the military-industrial-entertainment complex and radical media? This is not an easy question to answer, but, in each case, media are included on the basis that they were the expression of a form of critical autonomy from the hegemonic mass media, whether in an aesthetic or political sense or in that it attempted to connect with or invoke critical social movements beyond the media ecology itself. In the case of Fassbinder – and in the broader ‘genre’ of cinema that I will call ‘anti-cinemas’ –, the relation to larger political and/or countercultural movements was central to the functioning of the films themselves. Furthermore, this project will especially emphasize transmedia crossings such as when a ‘Krautrock’ group appears in a radical film also engaged with practices of guerrilla warfare, as in Fassbinder’s *Niklashausen Fart* (*The Niklashausen Journey*, 1970). Ultimately, however, there is inevitably an aleatory element in the selection of examples, based in part on the richness of archival artefactual traces and in part on the contribution each media ecology can make to the broader picture of the mutant becoming of the 1970s as enacted in its various radical media, however big or small, relatively autonomous or complicit with dominant media and culture.

However, while this might give some examples of what will or will not count as radical media, it hardly adds up to a theory of radical media or even an explanation of why this term is used, as opposed to alternative, oppositional, subcultural, or subversive media. Other attempts to define radical media have also tended to define it as what it is not, for example, as ‘media [...] that express an alternative vision to hegemonic policies, priorities, and perspectives’ (Downing 2001, p.v). Downing’s account of radical media is relevant here because he acknowledges a process of change in his initial ‘binary’ conception of radical media, which he situates as both

a reaction to and as conditioned by the Cold War binary of competing capitalist and 'socialist' media spheres. The above negative definition of radical media is problematic in that it is reactive and could just as easily refer to right-wing or religious media as to any media with a 'progressive' or 'socialist' agenda. Downing, in fact, gives no less than ten ways of defining radical media, some of which are precisely concerned with dealing with the above problem, as well as the emptiness of what he describes as tautological terms such as 'alternative media'. One of the key ways to define radical media that he suggests is not based on their content or size but, rather, on the insistence that 'everything depends on content and context' (Downing 2001, p. x). An extremely radical media text or system might have negligible effects, for example, by preaching to the converted, whereas a seemingly slight instance of media transgression, or even an apparent accident – as in the mass distribution of the Abu Ghraib torture images – may have profoundly destabilizing consequences, depending on the specific situation.

In addition to their diversity and heterogeneity of formats, strategies, and degrees of radicality, radical media are, by definition, on the edges of general perception. Radical media may emerge in the periphery and may well remain there or, alternatively, they may become the objects of state or public anger, fear, and ridicule (Downing 2001, p. xi).

Perhaps most importantly, Downing defines radical media as operating on two axes of aims, the 'vertical' one along which they 'express opposition [...] directly at the power structure' and the horizontal axis along which they 'build support, solidarity laterally against policies or even against the very survival of the power structure' (2001, p. xi). Leaving aside the question of whether this account is still too binary in its distribution of aims according to binary axes, it is this latter, horizontal quality that is really crucial to the definition and evaluation of radical media in that it implies a radically democratic, 'network' model of multiple relations between different points within a media system, rather than a hierarchical, centralized model of communication that, as Downing points out, may be just as authoritarian in its Leninist articulations as it is in the capitalist mass media. The question of the relations or even complicity between this radically democratic concept of the network and new 'cybernetic' modes of power and control are essential and will be dealt with throughout this book, but, for now, it is sufficient to emphasize this political dimension of the often technologically determinist idea of 'the medium is the message'. In this context, it might be more accurate to say that the socio-technical assemblage is the message and that to engage with radical media is not to restrict oneself to 'radical contents' somehow injected into existing media assemblages, but to create radical

modes of non-centralized communication. It is only in this sense – the decentralized operation of modes of communication – that media can be said to be radical, or *transformed at the roots*. In this sense, radical media are always primarily rhizomatic. In other words, rather than being necessarily marginal, small-scale, or epi-phenomenal, radical media are necessarily minor media, which has the advantage of expressing their differential relations with dominant mainstream media in less binary oppositional terms.

As such, radical media belong not to the marginal, but to the minor in the precise sense that this latter term is used by Deleuze and Guattari: not necessarily numerically less than the majority, but operating on another register, one in which the subjective and the affective is directly political; the minor register short circuits established channels of representation and mediation. It is in this sense that it becomes clearer what an urban guerrilla cell, a free radio station, and a radical TV programme have in common in the expression of a minoritarian desire for and activation of change against the apparent norms and stabilities of a present state of affairs. This, in turn, relates to the domain of what Foucault described as subjugated knowledges, which will be explored in the following section.

Popular Cultures, Minor Subjugated Knowledges and Expressive Machines

Dealing with radical media ecologies as being at least relatively outside dominant art and media institutions, cultures, and media industries, means confronting the problematic realm of popular culture. After all, many of the phenomena discussed – from films to radio and TV transmissions to recorded music – would usually be understood as examples of popular culture, even if many of the examples would perhaps be more accurately described as ‘unpopular culture’, both in terms of their minority and divergence from the technical standards and expressive norms of dominant media systems. Long debates between popular and mass culture raged throughout the twentieth century and ranged from the Frankfurt School’s denunciation of popular culture as a hypocritical disguise used by mass culture industries to sell their standardized and standardizing products (see Adorno and Horkheimer 1997) to the post-cultural studies affirmation of the most bland varieties of popular culture as subversive and their ‘resistant readers’ as transgressive, as in the work of John Fiske and numerous others (see Fiske, 1987). There is little point in adding to this apparent deadlock in understandings of a monolithic popular culture, except to point out

that popular cultures should always be understood in the plural, and that they have both regressive and progressive potentialities, in their modes of production, circulation, and consumption, which need to be evaluated in every case, using appropriate contextual criteria. Where the idea of the popular is potentially more useful is in distinguishing popular practices from those of both the state and dominant official culture. This is with the caveat that, again, context is everything. For example, a classical music composition may, at one time, have barely been distinguishable from its popular-cultural sources, have become institutionalized as high culture for a given period of time, only to be later dethroned and therefore potentially amenable to becoming an element of popular or even oppositional culture, for example, by being used as an element in a radical audiovisual media text.

More importantly, there are distinctions to be made between radical, oppositional, and autonomous media and popular cultures, however, relative, contextual, and even subjective these distinctions might be. As John Downing suggests, radical media are inevitably a mixed phenomenon in an intimate relation with broader popular cultures, 'all such media are part of popular culture and of the overall societal mesh [...] quite often free and radical in some respects and not in others' (Downing 2001, p. 8). The importance of this recognition is to emphasize the obvious but easily forgotten point that radical media do not take place in a separate realm, but are immanent to and part of wider popular practices, technical developments, and political economies. It also emphasizes the heterogeneity of radical media that can take any of the myriad forms of popular culture well beyond the media practices that will be considered here. Another term under which many of these practices tend to be subsumed is that of 'counter culture', a term that has been used since Theodore Roszak's groundbreaking 1969 work, *The Making of a Counter Culture*. This became a catch-all expression for the 1960s practices that questioned the established cultural order, ranging from radical politics to the appropriation of Eastern mysticism, from personal to political liberation. Roszak's aim was to argue for the coherence and value of the heterogeneous practices referred to above in the following terms:

the interests of our college-age and adolescent young in the psychology of alienation, oriental mysticism, psychedelic drugs and communitarian experiments comprise a cultural constellation that radically diverges from values and assumptions that have been in the mainstream of our society at least since the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century (Roszak 1995, p. xl).

Despite these worthy intentions, and the significant insight that all these practices were, in different ways, critical rejections of technocratic social and political norms and models of organization, there is the danger that the idea of counterculture itself can become a homogenizing term, contributing to a bland, cliché imagery of the 1960s, involving protests, flower children, LSD, and Swamis. Certainly, Roszak's book goes well beyond this cliché, for example, in its exploration of the Freudo-Marxisms of Norman O. Brown and Herbert Marcuse and the ways that they were picked up by 1960s youth both politically and experientially, and yet the subsumption of these and other domains into a single counterculture risks normalizing and freezing what was really a process, constituted by diverse and autonomous, if overlapping, ecologies of practice. It is the flowering of these diverse but related ecologies of popular practice to which Roszak's book attests. Even if the only thing that united these ecologies was the sense of moving in a different or even opposite direction to the dominant culture – a 'being against' whose greatest unifying factor was undoubtedly opposition to the Vietnam War –, there were numerous differences, even in some cases antagonisms, that the posing of a unified counterculture can only serve to conceal rather than illuminate. An activist committed to militant activity might well have also experimented with drugs or communal living, just as a hippy might have chanted at a few protests, but this does not necessarily mean that they are part of the same ecology of practice, or that there would be no antagonism between them. It is far from certain that they would even necessarily recognize each other as belonging to the same overall movement. The solution of referring to multiple countercultures hardly improves matters, although perhaps the reference to social, political, and existential movements at least has the virtue of situating these diverse practices as processes and events moving, however heterogeneously, in a similar direction, at a given moment in time (perhaps the more contemporary expression of a 'movement of movements' would be even more precise).

Nevertheless, the real problem with terms such as popular culture or countercultures, even in the plural, is perhaps not so much 'the popular' or 'the counter' as the term culture, which is often insufficiently interrogated. In a provocative chapter of *Molecular Revolution in Brazil* entitled 'Culture: A Reactionary Concept' (Guattari and Rolnik 2008, pp. 21-34), Guattari claims that the whole concept of culture is deeply reactionary because '[i]t is a way of separating semiotic activities [...] into spheres to which people are referred. These isolated activities are standardized and capitalized to suit the dominant mode of production' (2008, p. 21).¹⁴ Although Guattari may seem unaware of the cultural-studies reformulation of culture as ordinary,

as ‘the whole way of life of a people’ (Williams 1989 [1958]) rather than its earlier elitist definition as the sphere of the high arts or ‘cultivation’, Guattari in fact distinguishes no less than three definitions of culture: firstly as pertaining to cultivation or ‘value culture’; secondly, what he calls civilizational or ‘soul culture’ that belongs to everyone; and a third variant of ‘mass or commodity culture’ (2008, pp. 23-24).

Guattari is especially critical of the second meaning of culture, which he traces back to the ethnocentric discourses of cultural anthropology, even if these have been subsequently challenged both internally and externally. The effect of this isolating of all expressive activities as culture is as distorting and imperialist when applied to contemporary capitalist societies as when applied to exotic ones, since it is this very separation of ‘culture’ from other practices and elements of experience that is damaging:

every production of meaning and semiotic efficiency is separated into a sphere that comes to be designated as that of ‘culture’. To each collective soul (nations, and ethnic and social groups) a culture is attributed. Nevertheless these nations and ethnic and social groups do not live these activities as a separate sphere (2008, p. 27).

This separation inherent in the anthropological understanding of culture is just as characteristic of both value and commodity culture. The point is that there is a semiotic slippage between all these supposedly successive definitions of culture, in which cultural elitism, ethnocentrism, and, finally, regimes of uneven consumption are overlaid. This is made obvious in the ways that Bourdieu has analysed processes of distinction in cultural consumption that hardly break with but rather reinforce cultural and economic elites (see Bourdieu 2010). While Guattari is not quite endorsing Jean-Luc Godard’s maxim that ‘since there is a Ministry of Culture and a Ministry of War, culture is therefore a product of imperialism’ (Godard *One Plus One*, 1969), he nevertheless insists that definitions of culture are always political, made top-down by ‘ministries’, and ultimately fall back on the value definition of culture in which semiotic production is instrumentalized as the reproduction of the very economic and political elites, who concern themselves with defining and propagating ‘democratic’ culture. This leads Guattari stridently to disregard the distinction between high culture and popular culture:

there is no such thing as popular culture and highbrow culture, there is only capitalistic culture, which permeates all fields of semiotic expression

[...] There is nothing more horrifying than making a eulogy of popular culture, or proletarian culture, or whatever. There are processes of singularization in certain practices, and there are procedures of re-appropriation, of co-optation (2008, p. 33).

So much for cultural studies and its fetishization of popular culture in the form of mass media audiences! The question then is not one of creating a radical or counterculture as another separate sphere, since this still retains the reactionary capitalist logic of culture as a general equivalent of the production of power, just as money functions as the general equivalent of economic and social production.

Instead, Guattari affirms the development of radical media as crucial processes of semiotic singularization, not only against the dominant culture but against the very concept of culture itself as a separated sphere of value production. Such a singularization would still maintain intimate links with popular practices but would also seek to singularize them precisely by articulating the production of meanings and affects directly with economic, social, and political practices. Such processes of singularization then, would be the only forms of popular or countercultural production worthy of being described in terms of 'radical media', and hence no longer describable as culture.

If radical media ecologies are more concerned with the production of singularities, with socio-technical activation, or with the facilitation of ruptures or events in a given state of affairs, this means that they are profoundly concerned with relations. This means admitting that thoughts, feelings, affects, sensations, perceptions, and habits are real; they only differ from material bodies in that they express incorporeal or virtual relations between bodies rather than themselves being embodied. Fully grasping a media ecology also needs to be radical in the sense of mapping the relations or the virtual elements of a given ecology, which is to say the thoughts, affects, and modes of subjectivation it facilitates as well as its technical and social components. More than this, it requires an understanding of a media ecology less as a thing or a stable system, than as an event, a mutational process whose unfolding is not given by either the sum of human intentions, the current state of technical development, or a particular sociopolitical context, but rather as an event that traverses all these states of affairs with unforeseeable results. While such an approach could conceivably work with large-scale media systems or institutions such as the BBC, since even these are media ecologies that mutate over time with shifting relations to social and technical environments, it is doubtful whether it would achieve

anything more than a translation from a set of relatively static and monolithic terms such as media institutions and audiences to more dynamic or processual ones, even though this, in itself, would be an improvement. In relation to small-scale, radical media ecologies, however, such a relational approach is essential if one is to do anything beyond simple reportage and an inventory of technical components and personnel; radical media work primarily on incorporeal relations rather than physical bodies but nevertheless generate real and sometimes profound effects on existing states of affairs. So the method that will be enacted here will therefore involve starting from material media practices, but will also aim to make apparent the incorporeal relations, the affects, thoughts, mental states, and feelings; above all, the events to which they gave rise will be treated as no less essential or real than the material technologies, practices, artefacts, and archives involved.

One way of excavating this incorporeal level is via the concept of what Foucault calls subjugated knowledges, which could be perhaps more felicitously expressed in Deleuze and Guattari's terms as minor knowledges. This type of knowledge is arrived at through collective practice and in distinction to the deployment of dominant, scientific knowledge as inseparable from the operation of regimes of power (as expressed by Foucault's hyphenated term Power-Knowledge) operates instead as a mode of resistance to power. This idea, which is developed by Foucault at the moment of his shift from an archaeological to a genealogical method, is crucial and yet finds only occasional elaboration in his major works of this time.¹⁵ One of the clearest expositions of subjugated knowledges opens his crucial 1976-1977 lecture series '*Society must be Defended*' (Foucault, 2004), which proposes and explores the hypothesis of politics as the continuation of war by other means. This introduction begins in a severe self-critical mode as Foucault sums up the preceding years of lectures on the histories of penal procedures, psychiatry and sexual practices, still based more or less on the archaeological method, as accounts of shifting discursive tendencies, in the following terms: 'we are making no progress and it's all leading nowhere [...] Basically, we keep saying the same thing, and there again, perhaps we're not saying anything at all' (Foucault 2004, p. 4). This tendency to produce fragmented knowledge is directly related by Foucault to current practices, in particular, what he refers to as 'the efficacy of dispersed and discontinuous offensives' (2004, p. 5) that have been able to disrupt articulations of power-knowledge at a local level. Foucault gives as an example the qualified successes of anti-psychiatry and surely also has in mind some of the political interventions into conditions of imprisonment in which

he had actively participated in the early 1970s. More than this, he singles out Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti Oedipus*, as 'that thing that succeeded, at the level of day to day practice, in introducing a note of hoarseness into that whisper that had been passing from couch to armchair without any interruption' (2004, p. 6). Beyond these offensives, or perhaps emerging through them, is what Foucault describes as a return of knowledge, but a radically different type of knowledge from that associated with regimes of power. Whereas radical practices have generally been seen in terms of a rejection of orthodox knowledges, even supposedly subversive ones such as Marxism, Foucault sees within this rejection the elaboration of 'the insurrection of subjugated knowledge' (2004, p. 7). One sense of this subjugated knowledge relates to projects such as Foucault's own archaeological project of revealing the existence of buried historical contents, which can be used to disrupt contemporary regimes of power-knowledge. This project also refers to what might be called popular knowledge practices, or knowledges from below: 'knowledges that have been disqualified as nonconceptual knowledges, as insufficiently articulated knowledges: naïve knowledges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity' (2004, p. 7).

These knowledges from below are by no means the same thing as common knowledge or common sense but, rather, are particular knowledges produced through practice, through a collective and critical engagement with specific knowledge regimes, such as the knowledges of psychiatric patients, prisoners, and delinquents, but also potentially nurses, doctors, or parole officers who place their collective, practical knowledge above established medical, judicial, or criminological discourses. To give one example, Ulrike Meinhof's account of the perceptual, affective, and psychic effects of long-term solitary confinement in what she described as the 'white room', is a subjugated, practical knowledge, completely separate from and articulated against criminological or judicial discourses.

A more collective example, but one that Foucault would be equally unlikely to cite, could be the workers' inquiry, first pioneered by Marx, but more recently developed in Italian 'workerist' Marxism. Marx's original inquiry from 1880 reads almost like a particularly labour-intensive form of social-science research, with a questionnaire consisting of no less than 100 questions, ranging from the nature and empirical description of working conditions to complex technical questions involving ownership, machinery, unions, and pensions, leaving only question 100 for 'general remarks' (Marx cited on the Marxist's Internet Archive, 1997). Italian Marxists such as Alquati, however, considerably refined this procedure, elaborating a method

that they called 'conricerca' or co-research, which was a veritable collective production of resistant knowledge between researchers and workers, in an effort to express directly the 'general intellect' that Marx had only been able to theorize, apart from initiatives such as the crude workers' inquiry referred to above (see Alquati cited in Borio et al, 2002, pp. 13-14). Conricerca as an exemplary form of subjugated knowledge and its broader context of shifting patterns of class composition will be returned to in more detail in chapter three.

Foucault, then, situates his turn to genealogy as a conjugation of these two forms of subjugated knowledge, 'a meticulous rediscovery of struggles [...] and what people know' (2004, p. 9). For this reason, genealogy is less a science than an anti-science that is concerned with 'the insurrection of knowledges [...] genealogy has to fight the power-effects of any discourse regarded as scientific' (p.9). While Foucault explicitly distinguishes this approach from empiricism, it shares a lot with William James' relational notion of 'radical empiricism', in that it refers to practical knowledges, developed out of lived experiences of power and resistance and against the power effects of established and dominant knowledges. Arguably, this is the most radical statement of Foucault's genealogical project and one that only characterizes a particularly radical moment both in his own work and in the processes of contestation over both forms of power and modes of knowledge that are roughly coextensive with the 1970s.¹⁶ Foucault's genealogical approach still maintains many aspects of his previous archaeological one, such as the abandonment of the search for origins and ends and the privileging of discontinuous events over predetermined explanatory schemes, but it extends the field of research directly into the domain of practices and their fields of conflicting forces. Having said this, the exposition of the rules of this method is qualified by Foucault as less a 'methodological imperative' than, at most, a set of 'cautionary prescriptions' (1998, p. 98) namely the insistence on immanence, continual variation, double conditioning (of power strategies and actual transformations), and the tactical polyvalence of discourse (1998, pp. 98-102). Nevertheless, it is only in Foucault's lectures and interviews that the proximity of his use of a genealogical approach to current popular struggles and modes of knowledge such as those taking place around conditions of imprisonment are fully acknowledged.

Despite these problematics surrounding the anti-science of genealogy, genealogy points to a key issue at the heart of media-archaeological methods: namely, why is it that, whereas the more 'erudite', archaeological side of Foucault's work has been adopted, this more direct political engagement with subjugated knowledges, this anti-science of genealogy is relatively

absent from the media-archaeological field? Why is there no 'media genealogy' in Foucault's Nietzschean sense of the meticulous excavation of the struggle of heterogeneous forces over a particular domain in proximity to contemporary political contestations, both of which are covered over by unified and unifying discourses? Certainly, media archaeology has uncovered discontinuous moments of invention and has pointed to the complicity of technical media systems with world wars, but it has had relatively little to say about the 'civil wars' over technical means of expression between the subjugated knowledges produced through minor media practices and the dominant discourses of the mass media. This is again where a media-ecological or ecosophic approach can be beneficial, since it is also necessarily engaged with subjugated, practical knowledges ranging from shared technical know-how, to common experiences of mass-media subjection and resistance, to meticulous excavations of minor media practices, experiments, and events.

The expression used by Foucault of subjugated knowledges, however, has unfortunate resonances in that it implies an almost military reconceptualization of politics as the clash of warring forces, which is indeed what Foucault goes on to propose in *Society Must be Defended*. This is not necessarily inappropriate in the contexts with which this book will engage, but its dangers can also be seen in the militarization of political struggles of which some of the media ecologies that will be presented are exemplary. While, in some of their formulations, such as the concept of the war machine, Deleuze and Guattari hardly escape these problematics, their aforementioned idea of the minor is a particularly valuable way of articulating what another type of nonnormative knowledge might embody. While the concept of minor literature as a directly political expressive practice was already introduced in and formed the basis of their book on Kafka, it is only in *A Thousand Plateaus* that the concept of a nomad or minor science is contrasted with royal science, the latter roughly corresponding to Foucault's unities of discourse that he articulates in terms of power-knowledge. The idea of minor science is first introduced tangentially in relation to the 'Postulates of Linguistics' plateau (1987, pp. 83-122), as the proposition of a radical pragmatics of expression rejecting any linguistic universals such as innate competence or static accounts of language systems: 'a pragmatic science of placings-in-variation that operates in a different manner than the royal or major science [...] and travels a long road of suspicion and repression' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 120). Interestingly, this putting into variation or becoming expressive of matter is conceived of as a machine, explicitly likened to a synthesizer that conjugates diverse flows of both material and

incorporeal elements. Minor science is developed more fully in the 'Treatise on Nomadology' plateau (1987, pp. 387-467) when the authors characterize nomad or minor science as being fluid rather than solid, concerned with heterogeneous becomings rather than stable identities, curves rather than straight lines, and a problematic rather than theorematic model. Later on, they give the example of metallurgy as exactly this type of nomad procedure, based on several lines of variation rather than on constant laws: 'variation between ores and proportions of metal; variation between alloys, natural and artificial; variation between the operations performed on a metal; variation between the qualities that make a given operation possible' (1987, p. 447). While this might seem an exotic and dated example, what is crucial is the way that it is a practical mode of knowledge that flows from the knowledge of matter to the knowledge of how to act with and on this matter and under what conditions. This is almost definitive of minor knowledges that are always situated in a given interstice and directly connect with knowledge of a given state of affairs with the capacity to act on it.¹⁷ This account of metallurgy is not so different in this respect from Michael Shamberg's account of *Guerrilla Television*, for example, which flows seamlessly from technical diagrams of video technologies, to a critique of their use by 'media-America' to ideas for how to use this technology differently in different contexts and by different users such as children. In this way, it presents radical video as a kind of contemporary metallurgy, a nomad science that is both pragmatic and experiential, even if it also encompasses or appropriates official scientific and technical knowledges. In this sense, media archaeology might be seen as much aligned with geology and metallurgy as it is with genealogy, as in some of Jussi Parikka's more recent work.¹⁸

A perhaps more radical articulation of minor knowledge is evident in other parts of *A Thousand Plateaus*, this time in the form of sorcery. When sorcery is at first discussed in the 'Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal...' Plateau (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, pp. 264-278), it is first of all concerned with practices of shamanism, in which the sorcerer is presented as a lone anomalous figure, but one who is in profound contact with outside forces both animal and cosmic. Soon, however, this figure is joined by more socialized assemblages ranging from secret societies to religious heresies of all kinds to Millenarian peasant movements that were as political as they were religious. What these assemblages share is the production of other modes of knowledge and experience that can be characterized not as abnormal but, rather, as anomalous. The fact that these practices tend to be discounted as being abnormal if not demonic only show how they are perceived from the perspective of the state or established religion as

in the demonization of all non-Catholic practices and experiences in the Inquisition. Whether discussing shamanic practices, the work of Carlos Castaneda, H. P. Lovecraft, or even Melville's *Moby Dick*, what these anomalous practices express is an act of what Deleuze and Guattari call bordering, of being between the settlement and the wilderness, between society and the 'pack' (1987, p. 271). Anomalous phenomena have hardly disappeared in a post-Enlightenment setting, as is copiously evident in projects such as Alfred Jarry's Pataphysics, the 'science' of imaginary solutions, or, even more, in the lifelong accumulations of anomalies by Charles Fort whose discoveries in the *Fortean Times*, itself a fascinating media ecology, were extended into the psychedelic counterculture by Robert Anton Wilson, who characterized contemporary techno-scientific orthodoxy as 'The New Inquisition' (Wilson, 1986). Similarly, Brian Massumi has pointed to the relations between Giordano Bruno's sixteenth-century articulations of magic as an incorporeal materialism that refers pragmatically to efficacious action at a distance and contemporary technologically mediated processes, and these links between magic and media are embraced in some of the media ecologies that will be examined here. The haunting of new modes of technology and media is also a key concern of several media archaeologists and there are numerous examples in the work of Kittler and others of spectral visions and voices conjured by media devices, ranging from the telegraph and radio transmissions to early cinema. Similarly, in Zielinski's project of the deep time of the media, practices that would more conventionally be considered part of the history of alchemy or religion rather than technical media – as in the work of Giovanni Della Porta or Athanasius Kircher – are presented as key moments of media invention. Parallel to Foucault's account of the erudite and popular aspects of subjugated knowledges, the rigorous study of the historical phenomena of sorcery, magic, and heresy resonates with contemporary, popular practices ranging from modern primitivism, drug experimentation, the invention of new forms of mediatized ritual, and enchantment; this constitutes a veritable 'homage to psychedelia' as contemporary modes of anomalous knowledge and experiential practice.

There is, however, an additional aspect of minor knowledges that similarly exceeds the field of epistemology and enters instead into the realm of ontogenesis. A radical media ecology is never simply about the communication of knowledge, even minor or anomalous knowledge, but is rather a mode of operating in a given situation that is concerned with becoming and is therefore ontogenetic. While technical determinism suggests that new technologies introduce new scales of perception and sensory engagement with the world, these perceptual mutations only take effect within

particular sociopolitical assemblages that make the technologies functional for a given relation of power. It is telling that, even in a technologically determinist account such as Kittler's *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, we are constantly confronted with inventions whose material conditions and conceptualization were available decades or even centuries before their actual development. Television, for example, is a nineteenth-century idea, as is the computer, and experiments to develop both were conducted intermittently throughout the early twentieth century. The reasons for this delay are neither technical nor purely social but rather socio-technical: the socio-technical assemblage – whether military or capitalist – that could make use of these ideas had simply not yet emerged. While media archaeologists such as Kittler are correct to criticize humanist accounts of media development as the technical responses to human needs and desires, it is no less limited to view it as operating according to some entirely desocialized logic in which the experiments of a few genius inventors become miraculously implemented some time later in a purely aleatory fashion.

What is needed to counter such a chicken-and-egg situation is a more complex conception of the machine that abolishes the false separation between the human or the social and technology, which has been considered as a tool or prosthesis, as in McLuhan's conception of media as the 'extensions of man'. This concept of the socio-technical machine is precisely what Deleuze and Guattari developed in *Anti-Oedipus* which, as Gerard Raunig has pointed out (Raunig 2010, p. 31), is implicitly a critical engagement with Marxist, instrumental accounts of technology. In place of the separation between the social practice of labour and the machine as a perfected tool, Deleuze and Guattari propose an idea of the machine as both a thing and a specific practice, namely the practice of connection:

both material object and practice, the machine is also not solely an instrument of work, in which social knowledge is absorbed and enclosed. Instead it opens up in respectively different social contexts to different concatenations, couplings and connections (2011, p. 31).

Such a conception of machines rejects both discourses of technological alienation and the technological fetishism of the Futurists with which it has been frequently confused. If anything, it is a form of constructivism; Deleuze and Guattari once suggested in relation to *Anti-Oedipus*, machines do not aim to obliterate the distinctions between humans and technologies, but rather to express their myriad connections and describe what processes these connections enact.

In this view, all machines have both social and technical elements and there is no purely technical machine just as there is no social assemblage that is not mediated by technical components, however simple. This is a particularly valuable way to think media ecologies, since they are especially concerned with the interfaces between social and technical assemblages or, rather, they are mixed assemblages with both social and technological elements. The advantage of thinking these assemblages as socio-technical machines is that, instead of seeing technology as an alienating or liberating prosthesis or of seeing human beings as mere technological epiphenomena, it is able to grasp the complex interweaving of the human and the mechanical or the organic and the inorganic in a pragmatic and processual way that leaves none of the components involved untouched.

Media ecologies, like more conventional ones, are, above all, unpredictable processes or events in which subjects and objects, beings and things, movements and blockages are caught up in and are transformed. In other words, they are machines or, more accurately, mega-machines that articulate together a world composed of multiple socio-technical machines. If media assemblages are distinct from other machines, it is perhaps only in their emphasis on the production of expression, whether via writing, technical images, sounds, or conjunctions of all these modes of expression. A factory is as much a socio-technical machine as a media system, but it lacks the same intensive production of expression and is instead focused on the production of objects as commodities. In the current period of post-Fordism, which dates from at least the 1960s, it has been argued that we have increasingly entered the realm of immaterial production, which is another way of saying that machines that produce expression are privileged over machines that produce objects. This places media at the centre of struggles over social power and explains the tendency of both regimes of power and movements of resistance to focus on the media as a primary terrain of expression and contestation. This contestation will be the focus of the following chapters.

2. Armed Guerrilla Media Ecologies from Latin America to Europe

Introduction: Contra 'Mass Mediated Terrorism'

There is a veritable industry of quasi-academic research going by the name of 'Terrorism and the Media'. This is hardly surprising given the contemporary emphasis on security regimes and the infinite 'war on terror' proclaimed by George W. Bush in the wake of 9/11, but has been, in fact, developing across several international contexts since the 1970s, when it was pioneered in Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany in response to the proliferation of 'left wing terrorism'. Many of these studies adopt an explicitly counterterrorist approach: instead of merely adding to the understanding of a situation of conflicting forces, these studies offer remedies, usually concerned with limiting terrorist access to the media, controlling media actors so they cease to be 'unwitting pawns' in terrorist strategies, improving preemptive military strategies and response times, and so on.

While some of these studies are simply pure propaganda, on a level with Cold-War studies of communism and how to defeat it in the 1950s, even the more serious articulations of this field tend to be based on the same presuppositions: there is a violent menace threatening civil order, it can be unproblematically labeled terrorist, and it is pointless to attempt to understand its motives or sociopolitical causes at best one can get to know the psychological profiles of its pathological agents, usually considered as criminal and irrational if not evil individuals, rather than collective social agents. At work here is a radical forgetting of history in which few, if any, of these studies cast a backward glance at histories of political violence, colonialism, guerrilla warfare, or even terrorism itself. Furthermore, these studies do not engage with the instability of the concept of terrorism, let alone the complicity between 'terrorist' violence, the state, and secretive and clandestine security services.

An example of a relatively intelligent, but still flawed, work in this field that is characterized by these limitations is Brigitte Nacos's *Mass Mediated Terrorism*. This work gives a mass media-oriented account of terrorism claiming that 'groups and individuals who commit or simply threaten political violence understand their deeds as a means to win media attention and news coverage for their actions, their grievances, and their political ends' (Nacos 2002, p. 10). The idea is a tautological, circular one

that terrorists not only seek media attention, but that this is their primary goal, essentially casting political violence as an illegitimate back-door entry into mass-media culture. This is both an impoverished view of media communication and of politics, assuming that the former is purely involved with the linear transmission of messages and that contemporary politics could ever operate without the persuasive use of mediated semiotic material. This approach conceals a selective judgment of legitimate and illegitimate acts of political violence, in which it is assumed that the acts of war of the state and its security services, not to mention its uses of the media, are, if not legitimate, then at least not terrorist, whereas those of small excluded groups always are.

This assumption is clearly evident in the common-sense phrase Nacos cites as a final definition of terrorism: 'Terrorism is like pornography: you know it when you see it' (2002, p. 17). In fact, this common-sense attitude is simply the already-known distinction between us and them, which confirms the absolute relativity of the term terrorism, which Nacos is quick to sidestep, and, which has clear historical roots in the Cold War; reversible and entirely relative division between terrorists and freedom fighters. In the absence of Cold-War geopolitics, a terrorist is simply any group or individual that would use violence against the US or any other liberal 'democratic' state, providing an effective way for every state to designate and criminalize its internal and external enemies (seized on, for example, by Israel, Turkey, and Russia). It is little surprise that, by the end of the book, Nacos includes, amongst the enemies whose media strategies need to be combated, 'a small bunch of anarchists [who] caused disturbances in the streets of Seattle during the World Trade organization's meeting in 1999' (2002, p. 194).

This consequence reveals the entire project of the book to be not one of politics, but of policing in Jacques Rancière's sense. In other words, the prevention of the 'part with no part' from having a disruptive influence on the reigning order, which will necessarily label all anomalous and resistant practices that refuse to follow increasingly reduced avenues of permitted dissent as terrorism.¹ The erasure of histories of political violence, the lack of any real accounting of relations of force and power, and the absolute foreclosure of any sympathetic engagement with political violence that seeks to understand it in a larger context of global-power relations, inevitably leads to theoretical incoherence and conclusions that are at once blind to state violence, sentimentally patriotic, and ultimately justify further state violence and the increasing curtailing of civil liberties.

While careful to distance herself from seeming to advocate media censorship purely to advance state propaganda interests, Nacos's recommendations

for improving the mass media's behaviour to prevent its status as 'unwitting accomplice' to terrorist communication are at once laughably naïve and disingenuous in their attempts to submit media behaviour to state security interests under the rhetorical disguise of 'response teams'. Essentially, it all comes down to tactics for media management: 'Trained personnel in close proximity to response professionals must monitor the mass media around the clock for accuracy in crisis-related news' (Nacos 2002, p. 179). This humanitarian disguise is the perfect cover to justify forms of state violence and control over information, since it submits liberal ideals to a policing or military scenario or state of emergency, in which the freedoms they would normally allow may need to be indefinitely suspended. What these strategies attest to is an entire field of research, much of it funded or supported as part of 'homeland security' that is itself a form of security or policing of what it is permissible to think in response to events of political violence.

This judgment of what can or cannot be accepted within the realm of liberal politics has, of course, a long history, which Alberto Toscano's *Fanaticism* (2010) deals with impressively. In the negative evaluations of millenarian movements, the 'terror' following the French revolution and abolitionism, the figure of the fanatic has been used to place a wide range of political practices and beliefs beyond the pale of liberal democracies. Contrary to common-sense ideas that the fanatic is rejected for irrationality, the problem identified in the anti-fanaticism discourses that Toscano traces is rather the opposite, too much enthusiasm for abstraction and the universal: 'fanaticism is to be condemned for its unconditional character ("without regard for consequences") and its refusal of measure and moderation' (Toscano 2010, p. 6). Traces of this discourse can be seen in Nacos's writing when she condemns terrorists, not for their irrationality, but for their rational 'calculus of mass mediated political violence' (Nacos 2002, p. 11); in other words, the very excess of universalist abstraction and lack of common sense that Toscano reveals were attributed to radical abolitionists in the nineteenth century.

This application of the label of fanaticism to phenomena as diverse as millenarian movements and abolitionism shows the problematic nature of fanaticism as, at once, irrational and universal and embodying many of the features required of any project of radical emancipatory change: 'rethinking the history and politics of fanaticism [...] allows us to confront the impasses and hopes of a radical politics of emancipation' (Toscano 2010, p. xii). The figure of the fanatic is a radically unstable one that Toscano describes as being at once 'sub-historical and supra-historical', subjectively

oscillating between 'the anti-political and the ultra-political' (2010, p. xxi). Contemporary attempts to separate political violence or terrorism from any political aims other than (illegitimately) seeking media attention are therefore inseparable from much earlier discourses about the dangerously unstable figure of the fanatic, who must be written out of history and politics as an anti-historical, atavistic, and anachronistic figure. As Toscano puts it, fanatical drives are seen by authors such as Fukuyama as 'the revenge upon modernity by peoples without history, but impassioned by transcendence' (2010, p. xxi), while, at the same time, these authors advocate an ahistorical end of history in the indefinite, eternal world of global neoliberal capitalism. As many authors have indicated, these discourses on the end of history effectively sweep those in less powerful global positions outside of the realm of the historical or the political, and disallow their actions as at once insufficiently political (because too unreasonable) or too political (because too demanding).

What is most interesting about Toscano's argument is what it reveals about the instability of the political itself in (neo)liberal contexts, in that fanaticism operates as precisely the 'dangerous supplement' that liberalism both needs in the form of political passion and enthusiasm, but, at the same time, must either rigorously control and accommodate (as in the case of acceptable social movements) or, in other cases, exclude (as in the case of fanaticism and terrorism). The meaning of these terms ultimately referring to these acts of inclusion/exclusion rather than any prior definable essence. As the above suggests, this is an essentially deconstructive argument, which is, at once, its strength and its limitation. While performing valuable work on the concept of fanaticism and its connection to emancipation and politics more generally, it remains confined to the levels of ideas and discourses, rather than political practices. Consequently, Toscano is unable to formulate just how emancipatory practices might make use of this deconstruction of 'fanaticism' or, in other words, activate political passions and enthusiasms rather than simply note their existence and centrality to the political as such. What is required for this process is rather an ecology of what I will call here by the relatively less loaded term of left political violence. This term focuses on those practices that were directly linked to emancipatory social movements, largely those emerging out of the countercultural and student movements of the 1960s.

An ecological or, rather, media-ecological approach to these groups will not assume a judgment of their actions in advance, whether in positive or negative terms, but will rather evaluate in each case the range of actions and semiotic expressions with which each case engaged in, in similar terms to

how a more conventional media ecology might be evaluated: What tactics were used, in order to pursue what ends? What were the relations of a specific group to existing sociopolitical relations of forces, social movements, and states of affairs and in what ways did it seek to influence them? What processes of political engagement led to the formation of the group and how did it function as a collective mode of subjectivation? Finally, what were the semiotic productions that the group's actions gave rise to? This encompasses physical actions, the productions of 'guerrilla media', the tactical manipulation of mass-media channels, and the provocation of aesthetic and theoretical responses. It will be taken as a given that in no two cases would the answers to these questions be identical, and these differences are vital for any real understanding of political violence in (media) ecological terms. The groups that will be analysed include the Red Brigades in Italy, the Red Army Faction and the June 2nd movement in Germany, and The Weather Underground and the Symbionese Liberation Army in the US. I will not deal with groups directly involved with national liberation struggles or those in third-world contexts; the specific scope of this inquiry is interested in political violence in the same North American and European contexts out of which radical media practices that will be engaged with in the subsequent chapters emerged.

Before investigating each of these groups it is necessary to set the scene of how they emerged out of the social movements of the 1960s and especially out of a series of political encounters with third-world revolutionary and national liberation struggles in China, Vietnam, and Cuba; and with African-American political contestation, especially around prison movements and the Black Panthers. These encounters will later be shown to be vital not only to the groups under analysis, but also to many of the radical media practices engaged with in subsequent chapters. One particular influence is absolutely key, however: guerrilla warfare, especially as practiced successfully in Cuba and Vietnam and less so in other parts of Latin America and Africa, which was both a direct inspiration and a source of both strategies and tactics for first-world left political violence.

Revolution in the Revolution: The Urban Guerrilla Concept from Latin America to Europe and North America

The lines of modern guerrilla warfare date at least to the nineteenth century in multiple struggles against colonial empires. The term itself was first used to describe the tactics of Spanish peasants who resisted Napoleon's

invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in the early nineteenth century (Loveman and Davies in Guevara 1997, p. 3). These tactics also extend back to earlier 'nomadic war machines' and certainly Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, believed to have been written around 500 B.C., bears an uncanny resemblance to modern accounts of guerrilla warfare, such as those of Mao Tse Tung as Robert Taber has indicated (Taber 2002, pp. 149-171).² At the same time, guerrilla struggles reached a peak of both success and popular enthusiasm in the mid twentieth century, as many of these struggles against colonial regimes were finally successful – especially revolutionary guerrilla struggles in China, Cuba, and, ultimately, in Vietnam, generally perceived as informed by Marxist-Leninist politics. These phenomena were powerful enough for a progressive journalist such as Robert Taber, who was perhaps the only US journalist to accompany Castro's successful guerrilla forces in the final stages of the Cuban revolution, to envisage in 1965 not only prospects for successful guerrilla-led revolutions in much of Latin America and parts of Africa, but also a potential revolutionary or at least pro-revolutionary transformation of the United States (Taber 2002, pp. 173-192). Furthermore, the success of guerrilla campaigns also resulted in the production of a whole field of guerrilla literature, both from key participants such as Mao Tse Tung, Che Guevara, and Vietnamese general Giap, as well as interested Western observer-participants such as Taber and Régis Debray. I will turn shortly to the latter's *Revolution in the Revolution* as a theoretical synthesis of these currents of guerrilla practice, but, first, will give an indication of what was so unique about these guerrilla phenomena in the context of modern politics and warfare.

War of the Flea (2002) by Robert Taber gives a useful, if, at times, romanticized and, from today's perspective, naively optimistic view of guerrilla warfare in a range of contexts. Taber defines guerrilla warfare as 'revolutionary war, engaging a civilian population, or a significant part of such a population, against the military forces of established or usurpative governmental authority' (Taber 2002, p. 4; emphasis in original). Interestingly, for Taber, guerrilla wars do not depend on predetermined ideologies or future goals, beyond the overthrow of state power, which tend to be variable. They are not even dependent on political and economic conditions such as poverty, inequality and oppression, or rather some of these conditions are only necessary rather than sufficient ones for determining a guerrilla campaign. Rather, guerrilla struggles are dependent on 'a revolutionary impulse, an upsurge of popular will' (2002, p. 5; emphasis in original); in other words, conditions that are as much affective as they are material or empirical. Taber's account of guerrilla warfare has the value of stressing

that successful guerrilla struggles are not simply reactive protest or dissent against current political and material conditions, but expressions of 'a newly awakened consciousness, not of "causes" but of *potentiality*' (2002, p. 5; emphasis in original). Experiences of suffering and oppression are not sufficient to generate a successful guerrilla campaign; there must also be a more active sense of a joyful potentiality, the prospect of an achievable and radical transformation of current relations of power, and, beyond this, the potential for new modes of life. It is the contagion of these joyful affects, from the guerrillas themselves to the population in general, rather than shared experiences of deprivation and suffering or adherence to an ideology that are the pre-conditions for a truly revolutionary, popular war. Guerrilla struggle is therefore inseparable from processes of mass subjectivation, both the guerrillas and the larger population must share the sense that they are able to both perceive new opportunities and to act effectively in a radical political process. As Taber puts it, '[It] is as though people everywhere were saying: *Look, here is something we can do, or have, or be, simply by acting. Then what have we been waiting for? Let us act!*' (2002, p. 6; emphasis in original).

This distinguishes guerrilla struggle from only being the sum of the methods of irregular warfare, or what Taber calls mere 'guerrilla-ism' (2002, p. 13). Unlike the counter-insurgent, the guerrilla fights for and with the people in the terrain of struggle, rather than a domestic or alien state; therefore, a guerrilla's principle weapon is not 'his rifle or machete but his relationship to the nation, the community, in and for which he fights' (2002, p. 10).

Counter-examples such as William Blum's comprehensive account of the CIA's involvement in multiple successful counter-insurgencies in *Killing Hope* (Blum 1997) may seem to disprove Taber's optimistic evaluation of guerrilla warfare, especially in rhetorical statements of Taber's such as 'Can guerrilla tactics be employed successfully against guerrillas? The answer is negative' (2002, p. 9). As the title of Blum's book suggests, however, the distinction between true guerrilla campaigns and mere banditry or state-backed counter-insurgency remains one not of weapons and military techniques but ideas and hope. While the guerrilla aims to persuade the population that there is indeed hope for radically transformed power relations, the counter-insurgency's prime target is not the guerrillas themselves so much as this force of hope they have the capacity to activate in the population. In short, whereas counter-insurgency is always a military operation in the service of distant and usually disguised political agendas, in guerrilla warfare, war and politics are inseparable in every action and the

capacity of the guerrilla to 'move among the people as a fish swims in the sea', according to the statement that was famously paraphrased from Mao, is inimitable.³ The counter-insurgents can only rely on superior firepower and, at best, a superficial imitation of guerrilla tactics.

More importantly for the purposes of this book, what both guerrilla and state or imperial forces struggle over not only a territory, but the affective disposition of the population – its 'hearts and minds' to use the US military expression – which, unsurprisingly, often tend to favour their own rather than US and other imperial or state interests. This is where semiotic expression assumes a vital role not really dealt with extensively in Taber's account. In modern industrial societies, as opposed to archaic, feudal ones, popular participation is necessary for governments to maintain legitimacy. This means that the policing methods that were used as a matter of course and openly as recently as the nineteenth century, such as simply opening fire on an assembly of protesters or strikers, will not be effective, because they will alienate both local and international populations and reduce the persuasive power of the democratic state – governments must at least appear to be popular. In this context, increasingly sophisticated media management techniques and a guerrilla or radical use of the media also assumes a crucial importance in any field of political struggle. The mass media in almost all circumstances are likely to support the interests of the state. Nevertheless, the guerrillas and their supporters have a number of possible tactics for intervening in the dissemination of information, whether through the production of radical media and other forms of communicative distribution (leaflets, temporary or permanent capture, or setting up of a radio or TV station), or through the generation of events that will have to be covered by the mass media and that a sympathetic public will be able to decode, however much they are presented in a distorted and counterrevolutionary form. At this point, a guerrilla movement becomes not only an ecology of practice in relation to a particular population, terrain, and relation of forces, but a media ecology in that all its actions are part of a semiotic antagonism taking place not only via words but via all the means of technically mediated communication available within a given socio-technical situation. It is a key proposition of this book that guerrilla movements are therefore not only ecological practices but media-ecological ones.

Mao Tse Tung's various accounts of protracted war and guerrilla warfare arguably provide the classic Marxist-Leninist account of guerrilla warfare and certainly some of its most colourful expressions. For Mao, guerrilla warfare is 'a weapon that a nation inferior in arms and equipment may

employ against a more powerful aggressor nation' (Mao 1961, p. 42). Mao writes in the context of the war of communist and nationalist forces against Japan; however, the same principles are equally if not more valid for an insurrection or civil war. Mao is quick to emphasize the directly political nature of guerrilla warfare as well as its responsiveness to local conditions: 'it must be adjusted to the enemy situation, the terrain, the existing lines of communication, the relative strengths, the weather, and the situation of the people' (Mao 1961, p. 46). This is already an ecological account of guerrilla warfare as a fluid and responsive line that responds to minute environmental variations and uses this fluidity to defeat a stronger enemy:

select the tactic of seeming to come from the east and attacking from the west; avoid the solid, attack the hollow [...] When guerrillas engage a stronger enemy, they withdraw when he advances; harass him when he stops; strike him when he is weary; pursue him when he withdraws (1961, p. 46).

In other words, the seemingly unfavourable balance of forces can be tilted in the guerrilla's favour due to this fluidity, as well as a superior knowledge of a local terrain and strong relationships with the people. More than this, time and space can both be turned to the guerrilla's advantage since regular armies are necessarily engaged with protecting a vast territory, while the guerrillas can cede territory to gain time; the longer that hostilities continue, the more this exhausts the enemy's resources, while allowing the guerrillas to build popular support.

Already, in Mao's account, guerrilla warfare is at once military and political and there is little distinction between the guerrilla forces and the party, although, in the final instance, the former are submitted to the command of the latter. In Ernesto 'Che' Guevara's account of guerrilla warfare, written shortly after the success of the Cuban revolution, the guerrilla forces are considered as fully autonomous entities, not only highly sensitive to the conditions for revolution but able to produce them, according to Guevara's three fundamental lessons of the Cuban revolution:

1. Popular forces can win a war against the army
2. It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can create them.
3. In underdeveloped America the countryside is the basic area for armed fighting. (Guevara, 1997, p. 50)

Guevara stresses more than Mao the ethics of the guerrilla fighter, stating that, at the beginning of a campaign, the guerrilla fighter should be a kind of 'guiding angel [...] helping the poor always and bothering the rich as little as possible' (Guevara 1997, p. 73). Admittedly, the latter is more a type of tactic or even public relations to be abandoned later when it becomes a matter of 'punishing every betrayal with justice' (1997, p. 73). The loyalty to the cause of the people, however, must remain exemplary: 'The guerrilla fighter [...] should not only provide an example in his own life, but he ought also constantly to give orientation in ideological problems, explaining what he knows and what he wishes to do at the right time' (1997, p. 73). It should be noted here, as with Mao's account, the tension between exemplary revolutionary ethics, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the tactical requirements to keep even the people on a need-to-know basis; therefore, there is a delicate balance between openness, or even publicity, and a certain tactical secrecy and evasiveness. As will be discussed later, a thinly disguised vanguardism lurks behind these noble ideals; it is assumed that the people's army, as with the workers' party that preceded it, will be in advance of the people and play the leading role in the revolution.

As well as this ethical dimension, Che stresses that a guerrilla fighter needs specific attributes, combining caution with audacity, and, above all, adaptability: 'the guerrilla fighter must have a degree of adaptability that will enable him to identify himself with the environment in which he lives, to become a part of it, and to take advantage of it as his ally to the maximum possible extent' (Guevara 1997, p. 75). This ecological adaptability constitutes a mode of collective subjectivation inseparable from the actions undertaken as part of the guerrilla conflict. In Debray's account, what Guevara calls for is not just an ideological or revolutionary consciousness, but a metamorphosis of the entire organism based on 'accepting the ultimate consequences of one's principles, right up to the point where they demand of the militant other forms of action and other responses from his nervous system' (Debray 1968, p. 102). Guevara's account of guerrilla warfare also contains some fascinating passages on the roles of women as potential combatants and especially as messengers, as well as the importance of metallurgy as a vital part of guerrilla war industry, connecting Guevara's account of the guerrilla with Deleuze and Guattari's previously discussed nomadic war machine. However, what is most interesting for this book is his discussion of propaganda – the insurrectionary use of media Guevara divides this up less into separate media than into its production in different zones: the free zone occupied by the guerrillas and that originating from civil organizations outside the free zone. For

Guevara, the former is by far the most important since it both has access to the latest information about battles and other events and does not have to pass through enemy interference, censorship, or risk confiscation and reprisals. Moreover, communications within the liberated zone form a kind of feedback loop, not only broadcasting the latest news, but also explaining the motivations and reasons for the struggle; this is aimed at the local population who can then connect this with what they have seen and heard. Guevara recommends that, in both cases, 'truth' is the best policy, although different uses of the media should be tailored to the experiences and literacies of different populations, such as peasants or workers. He particularly emphasizes the use of radio in this context on which 'all problems should be discussed' (1997, p. 121). Radio is important not only because it delivers language in the form of voice, free of the exclusions of literacy, but for the affective tonalities it is able to directly communicate: 'at moments when war fever is more or less palpitating in every one in a region or a country, the inspiring, burning word, increases this fever and communicates it to every one of the future combatants' (1997, p. 121). Radio should, therefore, not merely present information but explain, educate, and enthuse the population, for example, by broadcasting impassioned speeches. However, Guevara is quick to point out that the same rules of sticking to 'popular truth' apply and that it is better to tell a small truth, even of a defeat or setback than a big lie (1997, p. 121).

In the Cuban case, *Radio Rebelde* performed an essential role at particular phases of the revolution, from publicizing conflicts that the regime would rather have concealed, to heading off the surprise coup that may well have followed Batista's departure:

It is by means of radio that the guerrillas force open the doors of truth and open them wide to the entire populace, especially if they follow the ethical prescriptions that guided *Radio Rebelde* – never broadcast inaccurate news, never conceal a defeat, never exaggerate a victory (Debray 1968, p. 108).

The sum of the various avenues of popular propaganda clearly constitutes a media ecology, operating in tandem with the guerrilla campaign itself, serving to extend the liberated territory via cognitive and affective means. To limit the media ecology to the use of conventional media, however, would be a narrow understanding of guerrilla warfare as a media ecology. In a guerrilla context, every military action is immediately a form of 'propaganda of the deed' and every communication is a direct contribution

to the military campaign. Radio, for example, enacts a 'qualitative change in the guerrilla movement' (Debray 1968, p. 108) that is an inseparable part of the movement itself. The media ecology of guerrilla warfare encompasses military actions, intelligence, technical media, and informal modes of communication within a single assemblage that, while imagined in theory as ideally devoid of mediation, instead operates as a type of minor media ecology at once experiential and political, popular and military, armed propaganda and guerrilla communication.

The work that gave a more theoretical expression of both the Cuban revolution and guerrilla warfare more generally, and one that was highly influential especially on Europeans, was Régis Debray's already mentioned *Revolution in the Revolution*. Debray, a Parisian intellectual and former student of Althusser, had unprecedented access to the Cuban leaders, and, in fact, this work was a deliberate dissemination of the practice and ideas of the Cuban revolution, in order to win the support of both European and Latin American radicals. Interestingly, Debray conceived of guerrilla warfare and revolution in cartographic terms as a series of lines: 'any military line depends on a political line which it expresses' (Debray 1968, p. 25). Debray is especially critical of attempts to impose what he calls foreign political conceptions disguised as military lines, such as 'armed self-defence' or 'the submission of the guerrilla unit to the party' (1968, p. 25). Some of these models may work in other contexts such as in Vietnam, which Debray characterizes in terms of 'armed propaganda', but, in the typically dispersed rural environments of Latin America, everything must revolve around the guerrilla base or *foco*, leading Debray to elaborate what has come to be known as *foquismo* or the *foco* theory.

While Debray delineates precisely and in detail the distinctive mode of organization that the *foco* entails from a technical and military point of view, what makes it a revolution in the revolution, to paraphrase the title of the book, can be boiled down to a few strategic principles. Debray expresses these principles as the refutation of the following myths about guerrilla struggle. Firstly, there is the idea that '*The guerrilla force should be subordinated to the party*' (1968, p. 114; emphasis in original). Apart from the practical difficulties of needing to use impossible lines of communication between the party's base in the city and the guerrillas in the countryside, this is ruled out primarily because it implies a separation between politics and action, rather than seeing guerrilla action as inherently political and capable of leading the revolution itself. The second myth is that '*the guerrilla force should be an imitation of the party*' (1968, p. 114; emphasis in original).

Again, this results in a separation between politics and action; worse, this communicates indecisiveness and sows discord and dissension.

This leads directly to the core of the Cuban revolution in the revolution in which, contrary to the Soviet or even the Chinese revolutions, *'The people's army will be the nucleus of the party and not vice versa [...] the principle stress must be laid on the development of guerrilla warfare and not the strengthening of existing parties or the creation of new parties'* (1968, p. 115; emphasis in original). This is the crux of Debray's argument, which somewhat modifies the relations between military and political lines presented above. In guerrilla warfare conducted according to the *foco* model, the two lines become superimposed so that *'the political and the military are not separate but form one organic whole, consisting of the people's army, whose nucleus is the guerrilla army. The vanguard party can exist in the form of the guerrilla foco itself'* (1968, p. 105; emphasis in original). This was a complete inversion of previously existing revolutionary theory and practice, one that the Chinese and Vietnamese struggles had approached but that was only fully realized in Cuba. As most of the above authors have stressed, the Cuban revolution, far from being submitted to a Marxist-Leninist party or ideology, in fact, only adopted these later after it had succeeded. During the period of guerrilla struggle, it was enough that the guerrillas established themselves and won small victories against the government forces to encourage and build popular support. This model of guerrilla-led revolution became highly influential, if not without rival methods, throughout Latin America; parts of Africa; and, as we will see, on the urban guerrilla groups operating in Europe in the 1970s, usually referred to in mainstream literature as terrorist.

It is no accident that all of these optimistic accounts of guerrilla warfare were written at the height of guerrilla successes in the mid-1960s. This optimism was to be short-lived, however, especially following the disastrous guerrilla campaign in Bolivia in which the guerrilla force led by Guevara was crushed, he himself was captured and executed, and Debray was imprisoned, narrowly avoiding the same fate. As several observers have noted, Guevara seemed to go against many of his own principles in this campaign: in the foreign leadership of a guerrilla force where none previously existed, in insufficient knowledge of and a poor choice of terrain, and, above all, a lack of popular support either from the local peasants or existing radical parties. The Bolivian guerrillas were isolated from the beginning, and an easy target for the US-trained Bolivian rangers to wipe out. In this case, all the principles of guerrilla warfare, such as taking the time to build up popular support, could not possibly work and, even worse, the Bolivian president enjoyed a good deal of popularity with the local Indian peasants

– he spoke their language and had initiated modest land reforms (Loveman and Davies, 1997, p. 322).

The reason for this apparently suicidal mission was to foster continent-wide revolution, using Bolivia's central location as a starting point. This was accompanied on an official level by the formation of the Organization for Latin American Solidarity (OLAS), which was also committed to continent-wide radical change and was supported by both Fidel Castro and Salvador Allende. This internationalist revolutionary project, however, proved to be more an ideal than a reality, and, in fact, radical movements had to find their own diverse paths to radical change, and, in many cases, repeated failures such as Guevara's by imposing a version of the Cuban model on markedly different physical, social, and subjective environments. This led Debray to reassess his own elaboration of the *foco* theory, especially in *A Critique of Arms* (1974). While still maintaining that the Cuban model is better adjusted to Latin American conditions than either Maoist people's war or especially the Trotskyite concept of world revolution, Debray points to several problems with his presentation of rural guerrilla warfare and its sociopolitical conditions. This includes a detailed analysis of exactly what was favourable in the Cuban case (Debray 1974, pp. 58-71), including the paradoxical situation that while the guerrillas in Cuba were able to appeal to a broad base of social classes by not defining their rebellion in ideological terms, only later becoming a socialist revolution, every subsequent guerrilla struggle was seen both by its participants and by local populations as Marxist from the very beginning, making it much more difficult to win broad popular support. Furthermore, by emphasizing the technical and military aspects of guerrilla organization, as Che had done previously, he had inadvertently neglected the political preconditions for such an organization to function effectively: its need for a supportive rear base enabling the guerrilla unit to have not only material supplies and communications, but a living connection with the people, and which is therefore as much if not more a political consideration than a military one (this is what was completely lacking in Bolivia, for example).

While the idea of *foquismo* was supposed to be the direct integration of political and military leadership and struggle, a guerrilla unit completely cut off from any popular movement is reduced to a mere vagabond army, with no purpose or possible role in any popular insurrection. This does not mean that there was no revolution in the revolution; and in fact, guerrilla struggles were of decisive importance over the next two decades of Latin American history, even if only successful in rare instances, such as in Nicaragua. However, it did mean that the particular form of the revolution

could not be fixed in an imitation of the Cuban model but required the invention of new and diverse tactics from the legalism of the Allende socialist victory in Chile, to movements originating in military rebellions, to an increasing emphasis on the role of urban guerrilla action; this latter shift was the most influential on the guerrilla-inspired groups that will be examined in this chapter.

The extreme emphasis on rural guerrilla action, as opposed to urban or mass action in the cities, was not practicable in many more urbanized Latin American settings; therefore, urban actions tended to be given a greater emphasis. Guevara's limited appreciation of 'suburban' guerrilla warfare, for example, was entirely dependent on its subordination to 'chiefs located in another zone' (Guevara 1997, p. 70). Similarly, Debray is especially scathing of any subordination of rural forces to political leadership in the city and endorses Castro's slogan 'all arms to the Sierra' (1974, p. 75). Apart from the practical difficulties of communication involved, Debray describes city actions as 'independent and anarchic actions' (1974, p. 73) that may do more harm than good, while conceding a more limited strategic value of 'city terrorism' (1974, p. 74) to tie up state and military resources, which, after all, are more concentrated in the city than the remote countryside, and need to be defended. This terrorism, which would more accurately be classed as sabotage, is also embraced by Guevara, who distinguishes it more clearly from terrorism: 'we sincerely believe that terrorism is of negative value, that it by no means produces the desired effects, that it can turn a people against a revolutionary movement, and that it can bring a loss of life to its agents out of proportion to what it produces' (Guevara 1997, p. 116). In other words, whereas sabotage, especially focused on communications both in terms of roads, bridges, and power lines as well as media, is a necessary and extremely useful tactic of depleting the enemy's resources, actions such as assassinations and kidnappings, especially of 'little assassins', are difficult, costly in life and resources, and often merely result in greater reprisals against all involved in the action (Guevara pp. 116-117).

A very different account of urban guerrilla actions was expressed by Carlos Marighella, a Brazilian militant directly involved in guerrilla resistance to the Brazilian dictatorship, who wrote what became known as the *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla*, as a pragmatic manual for use in this and other struggles. This focus on urban actions was intended to complement rather than replace rural guerrilla warfare, Marighella describing the latter in terms of strategy and the former in terms of tactics. Nevertheless, this notorious manual became a virtual how-to guide for European urban guerrilla organizations and even in Brazil was implemented in the absence

of any substantial rural guerrilla mobilization. While the *Mini-Manual* is only one part of Marighella's political proposals collected in the book *For the Liberation of Brazil*, the version that circulated as the *Mini-Manual*, well-illustrated with diagrams of urban spaces and pictures of weapons and bombs, is virtually a shopping list of the kinds of actions that would subsequently become familiar in Europe: occupations, ambushes, executions, kidnappings, sabotage, liberation of prisoners, and the 'war of nerves' (Marighella 1971, p. 21). For Marighella, terrorism is limited essentially to the use of bombs and incendiary devices, but his evaluation of its use is much more affirmative than Che's: 'terrorism is a weapon the revolutionary can never relinquish' (1971, p. 30).

Aside from the practical focus of this manual, which not only describes weapons in detail, but also gives advice on actions such as bank robberies and kidnappings, what strategic innovation does it represent in relation to *foco* theory? On the surface, these urban actions are still meant to play a supporting role in a guerrilla struggle whose strategic centre is still supposed to be in rural areas. This is maintained in the descriptions of the strategy of rural and urban guerrillas, in which the prime goal of the latter is to divert policing and military resources away from the former, allowing the real war to develop in the rural areas, in contact with the peasant base, students, and workers. However, in its absolute concentration on techniques and predominantly urban ones, especially as abstracted from the rest of the book, this *Mini-Manual* actually had the opposite effect of promoting urban guerrilla warfare as a pragmatic end in itself; in fact, Marighella's own group operated entirely in an urban context, and in the absence of any rural guerrilla movement. In other words, the tactics of the urban guerrilla became autonomous from any overall strategy. The effects of this shift could be seen not only in Brazil, but especially in contexts such as Uruguay, where the Tupamaros used these techniques, at times quite successfully, to wage a violent, urban, and eventually unsuccessful civil war with the US-backed dictatorship, which was, however, ultimately crushed as was the Brazilian movement.⁴ Nevertheless, this urban transformation of guerrilla warfare had a major impact on European urban guerrilla groups, especially the Red Army Faction (RAF), whose own 'urban guerrilla concept' was essentially a direct translation of these tactics in a European context; and one of the other groups practicing left political violence in Germany even named themselves after the Uruguayan Tupamaros: Tupamaros West Berlin.

So far, guerrilla warfare has been presented more or less uncritically, in an attempt to highlight the enthusiasm surrounding its practice – not only in Latin America but globally –, as a description of its key strategies

and tactics, and especially how it functions ecologically, or even as a media ecology, in relation to specific rural or urban terrains. This has involved a suspension of possible critiques of this mode of political activity. Even leaving aside the many mistakes made in almost all instances of guerrilla struggle in Latin America after Cuba, there are two related critiques of this model as such that need to be addressed. Firstly, there is the critique that the combination of the political with the military leads, in fact, to a militarization of politics rather than a politicization of struggle, in other words, a micro or even macro fascism since guerrilla units, like regular armies, operate via hierarchical chains of command and necessarily at a distance from the people whose interests they are supposed to be serving. The second critique is the related one of vanguardism, which echo party models of the revolution. This is the idea that a small group of 'professional revolutionaries' can operate ahead of the masses, leading and guiding them towards revolution in their own interests. In Russia, this took the form of the party and is essentially the basis of Leninist politics; the revolution in the revolution would simply replace the party with the people's army and, at its nucleus, the guerrilla forces. As Debray admitted, this was a top-down approach to revolution, and even in Guevara's most poetic passages, the idea that the guerrilla unit should be leading the revolution is never questioned.

One of the writers who has consistently addressed military strategy and has presented it as central to modern politics is Paul Virilio. In works such as *War and Cinema* (1989) and *Speed and Politics* (1986), Virilio develops a 'dromological' approach to contemporary culture, which emphasizes both the complicity of modern image technologies such as cinema with warfare, as well as the increasing militarization of social space via the technological implementation of speed, virtualities, and 'pure war'. While certainly well-researched in relation to military histories and technological dynamics, Virilio's work is highly problematic politically, and nowhere more so than in the short and little-known work, *Popular Defense and Ecological Struggles* (1990).⁵ Despite its title, this book is less an affirmative engagement with either popular or ecological struggles than an insistence on their complicity with militarized power. Virilio begins with one of his favourite examples of the Portuguese bloodless leftist coup against the reigning dictatorship, the so-called carnation revolution: 'In Portugal, in 1975, counter-revolution *was* revolution' (1990, p. 11; emphasis in original). Virilio is not interested in making any argument here but, rather, in his usual rhetorical style, he strings together a number of assertions about contemporary politics with historical examples to claim that events such as the Portuguese coup or the Russian revolution are as much a part of the

'pursuit of the absolute essence of war' (1990, p. 13) as the then hegemonic Cold-War logic of mutually assured nuclear destruction. Leaving aside the validity of what Virilio claims about either of these situations, the key point that needs to be addressed is the asserted complicity between militancy and militarization, which he sees coming to a head in the statements of the Italian Red Brigades: 'This thought aims, precisely, to disrupt the social and political field of nations by abusing the illegality of armed force, the exercise of pure power. *If popular defense, why not popular assault?* This, then, is the heart of the problem' (1990, p. 42; emphasis in original). For Virilio, such militarization of politics, in which he would no doubt include most instances of guerrilla warfare, is not inscribed in the dynamics of left versus right as 'military socialism', but rather the usurpation of all social space by the 'a-national military class' (1990, p. 41).

The assumption Virilio makes is that all forms of organized political violence are the same and that there is no essential difference between insurrection, guerrilla warfare, and civil war on the one hand, and the actions of state armies, peacekeeping forces, or imperial governance on the other hand: 'terrorism is only the last simulation of the revolutionary loading of the masses onto the internal war-machine' (1990, p. 88). This is what allows Virilio to make dramatic leaps between such disparate forms of violence such as the Aldo Moro kidnapping and euthanasia, always with the aim of 'proving' the complicity of militant movements with the militarization of civilian space.⁶ While Virilio may not express a conventional mode of conservatism since – he is just as critical of contemporary 'minimum states' as he is of militant actions against them –, the results are necessarily both bleak and ultimately a form of *radical conservatism*. The protest against the devouring of all social existence by an undifferentiated war machine is both impotent and complicit with its object, since it only contributes to an intensification of the very logistics of perception that it critiques by viewing all political conflicts in military terms, leaving little alternative.

The only possible affirmation in the book is for what is presented as irremediably suspended in the dromological condition, namely a form of deceleration evident in some forms of ecological struggle: 'the most important ecological struggles [...] have all taken place and been organized around speed and its vectors [...] against the same enemy: *physical or mechanical acceleration*' (1990, p. 89; emphasis in original). Virilio also perceives something similar in the Vietnamese 'subterranean' resistance to US ecological warfare enacted in the literal 'topological conquest of their own subsoil [...] appropriating large underground areas for their use' (1990, pp. 52-53),

despite the fact that this was accompanied by active and effective guerrilla warfare. The presupposition behind this would be a praxis of deceleration that would be necessarily non-technological and nonviolent, and therefore would approach a Heideggerean affirmation of attentiveness to being itself. How this deceleration might be achieved is nowhere indicated, apart from these brief passages and some vague comments about the need for 'social solidarity' and even the defense of the family; furthermore, the tools for resistance that Virilio cites are extremely impoverished and paradoxically presented exclusively in military rather than political terms. It is far from clear, however, that the basic presupposition that all forms of military action are the same, that civil war is the same as state or imperial warfare, or that a 'war machine' always serves the interests of the military class is true, as cases as diverse as the Portuguese coup and the Cuban revolution demonstrate.⁷

Against this argument, there is the crucial proposition of Deleuze and Guattari that 'the war machine is exterior to the state apparatus' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 387), an exteriority that they relate specifically to guerrilla warfare: 'war in the strict sense [...] does seem to have the battle as its object, whereas guerrilla warfare aims for the *nonbattle*. [...] [While] it is true that guerrilla warfare and war proper are constantly borrowing each other's methods' (1987, p. 459). We have already seen this in the Cuban example in which avoiding a battle with superior forces was often the main aim, coupled with a number of other functions ranging from land redistribution to medicine (always emphasized by Che), to literacy programs. The guerrilla war machine may have a warlike goal in the defeat of state power, but it pursues this goal less through the application for military force than through a nomadic movement through the population with a catalyzing and persuasive, rather than coercive force. The aim is to multiply alliances and thereby extend the guerrilla forces numerically and laterally throughout the population in a contagion activated by the nomadic movements of the guerrilla line through the territory, which also generates movement in the population, or a becoming-guerrilla. This is no more than what Guevara and Debray already argued, albeit expressed in a less dogmatic language: the guerrilla force is a supple mobile line that undoes the rigidity of the striated space of the state territory, opening up aberrant movements of the population within it.

Nevertheless, Virilio raises the key issue of the problematic figure of the militant that has also been critiqued more recently by Nicholas Thoburn. Thoburn's critique of what he calls the 'militant diagram' situates it as a problem of subjectivation of both groups and individuals, using the Deleuze



Fig. 1: Che Guevara, the face of guerrilla subjectivation.

and Guattarian idea of a passional regime of signs.⁸ In Thoburn's words, passional regimes 'are characterized by "points of subjectification" that are constituted through the "betrayal" of dominant social relations and semiotic codes' (2009, p. 127). The problem is not the betrayal, or line of flight from dominant modes of subjectivation, but the enclosure of this flight in a black hole of a fixed militant subjectivity on an individual level and an enclosed and separated radical group on a collective level. Thoburn associates this procedure both with the historical workers' movement and especially with Leninism, but also with more recent militant experiences such as Weatherman [sic].

In his engagement with these militant phenomena, Thoburn stresses the reduction of subjectivity to a series of cliché militant gestures, as well as of political thought to a series of propagandistic aphorisms, exemplified by the quotations of the thoughts of Chairman Mao, the militant bible of the 1960s. Although Thoburn does not mention this, Deleuze and Guattari explicitly associate the passional regime of signs with Judeo-Christianity, which is evident in the worship of exemplary militant heroes such as Che or Mao, accompanied by the multiplication of their images, as figures of redemption to which militant subjectivity should aspire. In the case of Weatherman, Thoburn presents everything from the willingness for sacrificial actions, to arduous self-criticism sessions, to the purportedly macho practice of the 'gut check' as part of their militant diagram, which is at once an attack on bourgeois subjectivity and the construction of the passional and hardened figure of the militant, with contempt for the

apolitical white masses in the name of postcolonial and African-American struggles.⁹ To this figure, Thoburn contrasts a dispersive, cartographic model of radical politics, no longer defined by group or subjective exemplars, but rather by open assemblages or ecologies of political practice that include 'material and immaterial objects-technological apparatus, medias, city environments, images [...] as much as human bodies, subjective dispositions, and cognitive and affective refrains' (Thoburn 2009, p. 139). The point is not to go beyond passion, as if politics should be carried out with Kantian disinterest, but rather to replace a 'subjective monomania carved off from its outside' with 'situated problematics that are characterized by [...] a dispersive opening to the social multiplicity' (2009, p. 139).

The problem with this argument is not its validity so much as its setting up of a rigid distinction between militant subjectivation and dispersed political practices, as if such groups as Weatherman had no connection whatsoever to outside political movements such as mass opposition to the Vietnam war, in which all their members had in fact been committed participants. Enclosed militant formations and open political practices should rather be seen as a continuum on which a particular group or practice may tend more in one or another direction, dependent not only on voluntarism but also on social conditions, political encounters, and accidents. If it is nevertheless true that many of the groups that will be discussed ended up replicating in one way or another the militant diagram delineated by Thoburn, this only shows the openness and slipperiness of the movement between political openness and militant closure, a movement that many members of all these groups would have wished to reverse (and in some cases did to a limited extent), through the type of grassroots political participation that was, however, rendered impossible due to illegal and clandestine practices. Thoburn's presentation also abstracts militant groups from their political contexts, which were frequently perceived in terms of imminent civil war or revolution, situations that do not leave much time or space for the more experimental political cartographies that Thoburn advocates.

Rather than judging these militant groups according to standards of political practice which at the time were often neither available nor possible, in the following sections they will be evaluated as inherently political ecologies, which, however mistaken they may seem from today's perspective, operated according to their own logics and constituted their own cartographies of political struggle. Certainly, as the contrast between the experience and practice of the Italian Red Brigades and that of the

Autonomia movement will show, there were choices and bifurcations, as well as events of political invention, imitation, and sometimes sterile repetition. Nevertheless, each group, movement, or political event needs to be grasped in its own (media) ecological context, as a particular mode of political expression, before being evaluated as a good or bad diagram, war machine, or political ecology.

***Brigate Rosse* and Armed Struggle in Italy**

By far, the most extensive of the European left urban guerrilla groups was undoubtedly the Italian *Brigate Rosse* or Red Brigades (BR), although, as we shall see, they constitute an anomalous example in relation to other armed groups. Emerging out of the student and worker struggles that in Italy both preceded and followed 1968 and were to continue throughout the 1970s, the Red Brigades began operating in the industrial context of northern Italian factories. Both this industrial milieu and the relatively proletarian composition of these groups distinguish them from many of the other cases that will be examined, and yet they were nevertheless seen as an exemplary model for the adoption of a variety of forms of urban guerrilla activity in Europe. They were, of course, not the first group in Europe to engage in armed struggle, being preceded especially by national liberation struggles in Ireland and the Basque territories (the latter having roots in the anarchist side of the Spanish civil war), but they were the first example of left-wing armed struggle to develop out of the student and worker movements of the late 1960s.

In order to understand a phenomenon such as the Red Brigades in ecological terms, it is necessary to know something about its sociopolitical environment. Two series of events stand out from the numerous studies of this particular period of Italian political history. The first is a series of industrial struggles dating back as far as the 1950s, but which intensified in the 1960s, when they became connected to struggles beyond the industrial workplace, such as those of students, women, and 'new social subjects' (Wright 2002, pp. 89-106). As with many global locations, these struggles were especially intense during 1968, but, in the particular context of Italy, 1968 was more a threshold in an ongoing cycle of struggles, already taking pace outside of union- and communist-party mediation that also continued well beyond 1968, especially in what came to be known as the 'hot Autumn' of 1969.¹⁰ While industrial action ranging from massive strikes to sabotage waxed and waned during the 'red biennial' of 1968-1969, it was in the

autumn of the latter year that a concerted campaign was organized that spread to workers previously uninterested in unions and labour politics. In May 1968 in France, a commonality between student and worker demands managed to bypass the traditional separation between these two groups, as recounted in Nanni Balestrini's semi-autobiographical *Vogliamo Tutto* (*We Want Everything*, 1971) in which a southern Italian formerly apolitical worker discovers that 'the things that I'd thought for years, as long as I'd worked, the things I believed only I felt, were thought by everyone' (Balestrini, 1971, p. 133). The aftermath of the hot autumn was the formation of many new far-left 'extra-parliamentary' groups, ranging from the Workerist *Potere Operaio*, to far-left groups emerging around particular publications such as *Lotta Continua* and *Il Manifesto*. This was also the moment in which the first Red Brigades formed, out of the same struggles, although from distinct political groupings.

A very different series of events also seemed to begin around this time, but, in fact, had considerably earlier roots; namely the 'strategy of tension' which was employed by state intelligence services in alliance with far-right groups, and in cooperation with the CIA and the highest echelons of the Italian political and military elite. This strategy, whose first major and visible act was the Piazza Fontana bombing in Milan in 1969, in fact had its origins in the top-secret Gladio 'stay behind' armies, initiated after WWII ostensibly in order to combat a future communist takeover. In reality, they were deployed especially but not only in Italy in active warfare against left-wing forces prior to and preemptive of any such takeover, culminating not only in the series of brutal terrorist acts of the strategy of tension, but much earlier attempted *coups d'état* (Ganser 2005, pp. 3-14, pp. 63-83). This network, well-supplied with caches of weapons, explosives, and advanced communication systems, actively recruited right-wing forces and deliberately staged acts of terrorist violence, which were then to be blamed on the left and therefore justified waves of arrests and other forms of repression, as well as acting as a deterrent for active militants. This network was further allied with P2, a masonic lodge operating as a virtual parallel state, whose membership list once discovered read like a who's who of powerful figures in Italian military, political, and economic spheres, notably including a certain Silvio Berlusconi.¹¹ Of course, none of this was officially known at the time and, for the most part, only started to be officially acknowledged in the 1980s, but there was a strong awareness on the left that actions such as the Piazza Fontana bombing not only showed the hand of the state, but were part of an overall repressive strategy.¹²

One intervention made this particularly clear, namely a widely circulated text 'The Real Report on the Last Chance to save Capitalism in Italy' that appeared in Italy in 1975, and was originally signed only by the pseudonym, Censor. This text created a furore in the Italian media and was generally assumed, due to its seeming insider knowledge about the then still-secret 'strategy of tension', to originate from a source high up in government, industry, or perhaps the intelligence services themselves. Ultimately, after several months of intense speculation, Gianfranco Sanguinetti, who had been one of the two final members of the Situationist International, claimed responsibility for the text, which had also had a considerable input from Guy Debord. This was a double blow against the Italian establishment since it not only revealed the conspiratorial violence of the governing regime, but was also taken to be true in the mass media. The report had been widely believed rather than censored because its author was assumed to be an insider, whose proposed strategy was one of 'saving capitalism' by incorporating elements of the far left via the historic compromise between the Christian Democrats and the Italian Communist party, thereby defusing political rebellion. This was then revealed to be a well-informed prank after it had been admitted virtually everywhere that state-sanctioned terrorism with massive casualties was being used as a strategy of domination, rather than being an activity of the far left or the unaided far right. Sanguinetti's subsequent work, *On Terrorism and the State*, had the following to say about the relations between what he called defensive terrorism and state strategy:

The desperate and the deluded resort to offensive terrorism; on the other hand it is *always and only* States which resort to defensive terrorism, either because they are deep in some grave social crisis, like the Italian State, or else because they fear one, like the German State (Sanguinetti 1979, n.p. reproduced on notbored.org).

In other words, paraphrasing Virilio, state 'counter-terrorism' is, in fact, terrorism, and often of the most lethal kind, as demonstrated by both the Italian strategy of tension and the historical record of clandestine intelligence organizations such as the CIA.

It is only in relation to these two series of events that, not only the Red Brigades, but the larger tendency of the Italian far left to adopt violent struggle of one form or another becomes fully comprehensible; essentially, the political situation in Italy was one that was seen by many as approaching revolutionary civil war and in which any left-wing victory, even the legal one of the communist party being elected to power, was almost certainly going

to be met with some kind of right-wing coup, as had, in fact, already been attempted in recent Italian history. The place of the Red Brigades within this contestation is still subject to debate; with negative evaluations such as that of a group statement by a number of former 'Workerists', including Paolo Virno and Antonio Negri, situating the Red Brigades as 'completely marginal and outside the general outlook and debate of the movement [they] had absolutely nothing in common with the organization of violence in the class vanguards and revolutionary groups of the movement' (Castellano et al. 1996, p. 228). In contrast, one of the few sympathetic accounts of the early Red Brigades, *Strike One to Educate 100* (Beck et al., 1986 [partially reproduced on kersplebedeb.com]), differs considerably from this account, by showing the emergence of the groups leading to the formation of the Red Brigades out of the same student-worker movement as the other far-left groups, only tending to adopt different tactics to both those of Workerist groups such as *Potere Operaio*, or 'spontaneist' formations such as *Lotta Continua*. In this account, the Red Brigades were formed as a way of elaborating a higher level of organization for a 'People's War Based in the Working Class' (Beck et al. 1986, p. 29), extending existing tactics such as occupations of factories, housing, and social spaces, by means of a clandestine armed organization. While somewhat exaggerating popular involvement in and support of the BR, this text highlights the fact that the autonomists were understandably keen to disavow that 'these trends were not separated by iron walls, but shared people and ideas as they struggled together in a quickly-changing environment' (Beck et al. 1986, p. 29), as indicated by the fact that some of the same tactics and events, such as housing occupations, transport fare 'auto-reductions', and industrial sabotage and go-slows were affirmed by both tendencies. Similarly, it is worth noting that one of the most significant pre-BR documents, produced at a Metropolitan Political Collective (CPM) meeting in December 1969 at the moment of formation of the first Red Brigade, was largely concerned with defining and affirming 'proletarian autonomy' in terms not entirely dissimilar to that of the Workerists:

Autonomy from: bourgeois political institutions (the state, parties, unions, judicial institutions, etc.), economic institutions (the entire capitalist productive-distributive apparatus), cultural institutions (the dominant ideology in all its manifestations), normative institutions (habits, bourgeois 'morals').

Autonomy for: the destruction of the whole system of exploitation and the construction of an alternative social organization. (Beck et al. 1986, pp. 33-34)

The difference, therefore, between the proto-Red Brigade groups and groups such as *Lotta Continua* or *Potere Operaio*, can be more sharply understood as strategic rather than theoretical or ideological, in that the former opposed the latter primarily in considering that conditions were ripe for a clandestine organization of communist combatants to undertake a leading role in the movement through armed action, as much inspired by the myth of Italian WWII communist brigades as by contemporary guerrilla warfare in the third world. This is why Félix Guattari, in a 1978 discussion with Maria-Antonietta Macciocchi entitled 'Minority and Terrorism' refused to consider either the BR or the RAF as outside of the movement, however much he disagreed with their strategy and tactics: 'I would still insist that the Red Army Faction and the Red Brigades are indeed part of the movement. Whatever kind of impasse in which they find themselves, they – with perhaps more courage and absurdity – pushed the movement forward. This merits a minimum of solidarity on our part' (Guattari and Macciocchi 2009, 104).¹³

While the Red Brigades are most widely known today for the Aldo Moro kidnapping and execution in 1978, their early actions were quite distinct from this, both in their focus and their tactics; in fact, Gian Carlo Caselli and Donatella della Porta have identified no fewer than four strategically distinct periods in the history of the Red Brigades during the 1970s. The first period, the primary one dealt with in *Strike One*, is referred to by Caselli and della Porta as 'Armed Propaganda' (1991, pp. 71-79). This was characterized by largely factory-oriented actions in Milan or Turin, usually the car-bombing, injuring, or kidnapping of an unpopular manager, or other right-wing factory target. These tactics had the tendency and aim to gain worker support since they were effectively an extension of factory struggles by other means. At this point, Red Brigade actions could take on the form of a type of lunch-time street theatre for the workers as '[a] "liberated" car would pull up, with loudspeakers temporarily mounted on the roof, and several masked comrades spoke to the crowd of workers that gathered. Leaflets were passed around. [...] Just before the pigs arrived the car would zoom off to cheers' (Beck et al. 1986, p. 41). During this time, as Caselli and della Porta acknowledge, the BR could hardly be described as terrorist and 'in its two first years of action, BR violence was directed exclusively against property' (1991, p. 77), usually the flashy cars of factory managers. As the BR became stronger, their actions became more audacious, including the fire-bombing of eight Pirelli trucks in 1971, as well as the first raids and abductions in 1972-1973.

At this point, there was a shift in the strategy of the BR, corresponding with the arrest of two key figures of the BR 'historic nucleus', Renato

Curcio and Alberto Franceschini, as they attempted to become a national organization and carry their struggle to the 'heart of the state' (Caselli and della Porta 1991, p. 79). Initially, the BR was the product of the industrial north and mainly operated in the cities of Milan and Turin. The idea was to create columns in all the major industrial cities in Italy, even if, in reality, the group was only really able to do so in a few, mostly northern cities. At the same time, the organization became more centralized and bureaucratic with a complex assemblage of vertical city-based columns, in turn, composed of the individual brigades and lateral fronts (factory, logistical, and propagandistic), all under a national 'Strategic Direction'. The fronts were supposed to perform political analyses of their specific terrains for use in the politico-military struggle, following their interpretation by the strategic direction. Caselli and della Porta maintain, however, that this complex structure was something of a fiction, that, in reality, the horizontal and vertical dimensions proved to be irreconcilable, and the logistical fronts reduced to mere servicing operations for the brigades with the factory front 'only existing on paper' (1991, p. 82). Again, emphasizing the common ground between the BR and the far left, the major source of new recruits in this period were from the dissolution of extra-parliamentary groups such as *Lotta Continua* and *Potere Operaio*, even if this could be understood less in terms of ideological affinity than a type of parasitism of the armed groups on the political setbacks of these social movements.

This was also when the group became more militarist rather than populist, and selected political rather than industrial targets, in an attempt to take the conflict to the state itself. So, while some of the figures targeted by the BR were still associated with the factory, they also turned their attention to purely political targets, such as members of the Christian Democrats, held to be responsible for preparing a future authoritarian right-wing coup, or else sweeping industrial reforms against worker unrest and interests, not an entirely far-fetched theory in the Italian context. In light of this 'militarization of power' (1991, p. 84), the BR saw their actions as a type of counterstrategy, one could even say a way of countering state terrorism, which included several raids of right-wing and Christian-Democratic institutions in order to capture documents pertaining to this future counterrevolution. The BR began to target magistrates and judges in order to 'attack the state at its weakest links' (1991, p. 84) and to secure the release of imprisoned comrades. It was at this point that arms started to be used not merely as a threat, but for premeditated injury, even if the BR would not carry out a premeditated execution until the June 1976 assassination of the Genoa prosecutor Francesco Cocco and two of his bodyguards.

This, in turn, led to the third phase of the group, the one that included the Aldo Moro kidnapping; this phase was characterized by both a raising of the stakes and consequences of political violence as well as an increasing distance from the escalating mass movements :

the BR transformed (at times accentuating a process already in action) their strategy (from 'armed propaganda' to 'unleashing civil war'); their targets (the factory to the 'heart of the state'); their definition of the enemy (from *neo-gollismo* to social democracy); their tactics (from 'hit-and-run' to 'dislocation of the apparatus'); and their forms of intervention (from 'punitive actions' to 'destruction') (1991, 90).

The final phase of the BR from 1979 could rather be described in terms of self-destruction, in which the organization splintered into several conflicting factions and the initial revolutionary aims of the organization were limited to rhetoric, while their actions increasingly took on the form of a private war with the state at a considerable distance from any mass social struggle.

Such a brief timeline of the BR, however, is only the beginning of an understanding of its operations in ecological terms. The best resources for doing so are not so much in the analysis of the ideological statements of the BR and its proto-groups such as Lavoro Politico as Luigi Manconi has done, who claims unhelpfully that they can be seen, at best, as 'pure Marxism-Leninism [and] a scholastic reading of basic Maoism in a national setting' (Manconi, 1991, p. 118). The more interesting point that Manconi makes, beyond the fairly obvious one that the brigade model tended to replicate the very bureaucratic and hierarchical state structures it was set up to oppose, was the way this ideology was enacted: 'this Marxist bible – which interacted directly and brutally with reality – was conditioned by the environment and registered all its tensions' (Manconi, 1991, p. 118). The seemingly abstract and artificial theoretical formulations in these and other similar publications have to be seen in the context of the series of events referred to above, of which the Piazza Fontana bombing played a key role that catalyzed a generation of militants to take up the thesis, paraphrasing the subtitle of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet's *Not Reconciled* (1964), 'only violence is effective where violence reigns.'¹⁴

The writer who has probably gone the furthest in developing an ecological account of the Red Brigades and other left-wing politically violent groups is Donatella della Porta, especially in her study *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State* (1995), which gives a comparative analysis of armed

groups in Italy and Germany. One of the most valuable achievements of this work is to show the development of armed groups as emerging out of the antagonism between social movements and policing, the encounter of which, in circumstances in which 'hard' policing meets radicalizing protest, is highly conducive to the accelerated radicalization of militants and the adoption of forms of violence, up to and including clandestine armed struggle (della Porta 1995, pp. 55-82). More than this, she elaborates an analysis of armed groups as organizational ecologies, drawing on the field of organizational analysis, which had rarely before been applied to such processes of radicalization. One thing that emerges from this approach is that Weberian notions of progressive institutionalization, moderation, and adaptation to a given power configuration or social environment do not necessarily take place within radical movements (della Porta 1995, p. 84). To understand this organizational negentropy, a more complex account of the ways radical organizations make use of environmental resources is necessary, as well as grasping the ways that complex organizations can develop their own resources and thus perpetuate themselves by an internal logic, as well as responding actively to their outside political environment.

In the usually volatile and conflictual conditions in which radical social movements develop, their organizational transformations will not necessarily be the same or even follow the same direction, depending on their specific internal and external dynamics, which may lead some groups to become more reformist or moderate, while others become radicalized, even in response to the same events. In this context, it can be argued that, while Workerist and BR groupings developed out of the same environmental resources and in response to common events and interactions, their internal organizations constituted distinct organizational ecologies, leading to quite distinct strategies and tactics. Similarly, in her comparison of the environmental resources available to radical groups in Italy and Germany, della Porta argues that the Italian situation was a distinct environment in that it permitted an encounter between student and worker radicalism that was not possible in Germany, '*only in Italy did the students "meet" the working class*' (1995, p. 108; emphasis in original). This encounter of radical students with workers and their modes of organization led to distinctive organizational structures in Italy, which tended to be, in della Porta's view, 'fairly centralized' (1995, p. 109). This encounter also led to a distinctive repertoire in Italian social movements in which tactics such as wildcat strikes, industrial sabotage, and organized housing occupations could play a leading role. Della Porta also points to transnational resources in armed groups; while less marked in a direct way in the case of the Red Brigades,

the inspiration of third-world national liberation struggles and guerrilla movements clearly played a key role and can be seen as a type of symbolic environmental resource, actualized by reference to international armed struggle. Finally, there is a sense in which groups such as the BR created their own environmental resources in that, 'if they developed radical skills in order to meet a demand present in their environment, they then used the skills they had developed and, in this way, contributed to produce the very environment in which their political skills made them more competitive' (della Porta, 1995, p. 110). For example, the carrying out of successful actions inevitably led to police reprisals and repression against the movement, and not always against those who were part of the radical group, thereby increasing both solidarity and the necessity for 'professional' armed groups.

None of these dynamics alone, however, is sufficient to account for the formation of a clandestine armed group; instead, della Porta emphasizes that the becoming clandestine of a radical group is usually predicated on encounters with state institutions such as the police and the judiciary and often on unforeseeable and contingent events, as well as organizational experimentation; it is when an organization is in crisis, whether due to internal splits or the arrest of some of its members, that it is likely to try out new organizational forms, some of which are likely to involve an increase in levels of violence. In short, della Porta's explanation of the radicalization of social movements can be seen as a cybernetic one in which 'negative feedback' plays a key role in an escalating conflictual encounter between the movement and the state, both of which operate with fixed and mistaken images of the other: 'all the participants operate on the basis of a self-constructed image of reality and gamble on the results [...] the outcome of their actions is the product of several "fictions" and concomitant miscalculations' (della Porta, 1995, p. 111). In this respect, an event like the Piazza Fontana bombing can be seen as just such a contingent event leading to the radicalization of several existing political groups, but only in the encounter with the specific organizational structures of the groups that would form the BR did it lead to the adoption of the clandestine strategy of the urban guerrilla.

Della Porta's organizational ecology approach has clear advantages over approaches based on ideological analysis or sociological theses, which often claim that either a blocked democratic political process or mass unemployment leads directly to armed violence. Della Porta's approach focuses on the ways that radical groups are less determined by their sociopolitical environments than in a coevolution with them, a process in which ideologies and economic developments do not necessarily play the

central role. In her desire to find an account of political violence able to deal with the micro, meso, and macro levels of social organization, della Porta approaches, without explicitly theorizing, an assemblage account of social formations similar to that more recently elaborated by Manuel DeLanda (DeLanda 2006, pp. 32-33). For DeLanda, assemblage theory, modified from its articulation by Deleuze and Guattari especially in *A Thousand Plateaus*, can provide a useful and flexible basis for thinking about a range of social phenomena at scales ranging from the person to entire nations. On all of these levels, an assemblage is not an organic totality (DeLanda 2006, pp. 8-25) or an essence (DeLanda 2006, pp. 26-46), but a heterogeneous whole, a functional assembly of components and their relations operating between a series of poles including matter and expression, coding and decoding, and territorialization and deterritorialization (DeLanda 2006, pp. 12-16). Since organizations are one level of DeLanda's analysis (2006, pp. 68-75), it is worth seeing how an organization such as the BR or other radical political groupings might be considered as an assemblage, its specific ways of operating as a coherent whole between the various poles outlined above.

One thing that quickly becomes apparent with regard to the BR is that, while not associated with as specific an institutional territory as a building or headquarters, impossible in any case for a clandestine organization, it was nevertheless considerably more territorialized than the Latin American rural guerrilla movements referred to above, whose capacity to move through rural territories were an elemental component of their mode of organization. In contrast, the BR was doubly territorialized, first of all in particular, northern Italian cities, inscribed in the very structural division of the organization into city columns, and, secondly, in the industrial factories such as Fiat or Pirelli that had been the site of proletarian unrest and radical actions. Of course, even in the case of BR members who had been factory workers, by joining the BR, they were no longer strictly within the factory; nevertheless, the bulk of the BR's actions were oriented towards these particular industrial spaces and the struggles within them. While the formation of a national 'Strategic Direction' and various lateral fronts could be seen as attempts to inject more deterritorialization into the group, this was a low level of deterritorialization, more or less following the hierarchical, reterritorializing model of the nation-state, itself assembled out of various provinces. Far more deterritorializing was the practice of clandestinity itself, which meant firstly a movement outside legal existence and a kind of nomadism in place through the adoption of an underground life; paradoxically, however, this can also be seen as a reterritorialization

as clandestinity necessarily entailed 'a way of life that was *de facto* cut off from the everyday experience of most people' (Lumley 1990, p. 291), which also meant giving up both freedom of movement and engagement in political discussion and thereby 'the means of testing and verifying political hypotheses and projects' (1990, p. 291).

It is the poles of matter and expression, however, that most clarify the assemblage of the BR. On the material side, this involved the use of various arms (e.g. guns, Molotovs, industrial tools) in practices of violence that were less the invention of the BR than practices already taking place within the industrial workers' movement. What was new was the abstraction of these tactics from the contingent contexts of conflict in which they had previously been used, and their incorporation in a quasi-military apparatus. This lent a primacy to violence as not simply one of several tactics but *the* essential tactic to be used in revolutionary armed struggle: 'The communist revolution is the result of a long armed struggle against the armed power of the bosses' (BR 'Un destino perfido' ['A Treacherous Fate'], 1971), a struggle that the BR considered to be already initiated in the Italian state's strategy of tension. Part of this is based on a simplified and voluntarist analysis of political conditions, if not as already those of a revolutionary civil war, then potentially modifiable in that direction. The BR also involved a set of material practices, not limited to violent actions themselves, but also incorporating the logistics of underground existence, the maintenance of the organization, and the production of propagandistic materials ranging from telegraphic communiques to lengthy theoretical justifications such as those collected in *Soccorso Rosso* ([*Red Aid*] 1976). As researchers like della Porta have pointed out, researching the everyday material practices of radical political groups, especially clandestine ones, poses numerous problems; in the absence of detailed records, one is left with an unstable mixture of police records and personal testimonies. Given the widespread police corruption and misinformation, as well as the *penitento* confessional practices whereby producing a particular story directly affected the length of a judicial sentence, it is dubious to what extent either of these sources can be fully trusted. When it comes to the expressive pole of the organization, however, numerous collectively produced texts remain and are now available that can give some idea of the expressive dimension of the BR assemblage, as well as its (ideal) organizational model.

While on one level the actions of the BR and similar groups can be seen in material terms as the application of force via various technologies and techniques against either material or human targets, this is only one dimension of these actions; the other expressive dimensions being pedagogical

and judicial. The early slogans such as 'for one eye, two eyes, for two eyes, a whole face', or 'strike one to educate 100' clearly indicate one aspect of this pedagogical dimension, the idea being that action against one manager, judge, or politician would not only modify the behavior of the target, but would also influence that of other members of their class or profession.

Moreover, as vanguard actions, they were also meant to have pedagogical effects on industrial workers, demonstrating that it was both possible and necessary to strike at the bosses through organized violence 'to educate the proletarian and revolutionary left to the need for resistance and partisan actions' (BR cited in Lumley 1990, p. 282). Several of the actions themselves can also be seen as a form of conflictual research; raids on the premises of right-wing and centre-right offices, for example, along with abductions, were undertaken in order to expropriate secret information about state and industrial strategies and especially the plans for political and economic restructuring, which the BR saw as effectively being an imminent coup. As such, these activities can be seen as an extreme form of minor knowledge and co-research, less 'subjugated' in Foucault's sense than 'antagonistic', since conducted directly in a terrain of conflicting forces. Even the Moro kidnapping was meant to be an elaborate form of research into the future transformation of the Italian state, even if the results of this research were not forthcoming. All of this was folded back into the various textual productions of the BR, which were extensive and mirrored the highly complex world of far-left groups in Italy, many of which were oriented around particular journals and other publications. BR founders Mara Cagol and Renato Curcio had prior experience of this kind of activity in their involvement with *Lavoro Politico* and the project for a 'negative university' at the University of Trento (*Soccorso Rosso*, 1976, pp. 26-34) and, in a sense, the pedagogical dimension of the BR could be seen as a continuation of these projects.

More frequently commented on and criticized was the BR's formation of an alternate judicial system based on what they described as proletarian justice. This idea, which has its origins in the summary justice meted out by WWII resistance groups, as well as military justice more generally, affected every aspect of the BR's activities from the selection of targets (who were, after all, chosen for exemplifying the punishable actions of the class enemy), to their 'interrogation' and the decision taken about their punishment. Abductees were typically photographed with placards around their necks or against a BR backdrop stating their 'crime': 'Milan 3.3.72, Macchiarini, Idalgo, fascist manager of Sit Siemens, tried by the BR [...] for the bosses it is the beginning of the end' (cited in Lumley 1990, p. 282). In this case, the abductee was released after a short time in the back of a van with a warning

to him and other 'functionaries of the anti-worker counter-revolution' (*Soccorso Rosso*, 1976).

Completing this judicial series were the various responses in both the mainstream press (alarmed) and radical journals (mostly approving), which are also meticulously documented in *Soccorso Rosso*. Ideas of proletarian justice were quite common in Marxist-Leninist contexts and had been practiced not only in situations of guerrilla warfare, but also in factory struggles, for example, in collective worker decisions about when an oppressive foreman or scab would be 'allowed' to return to work. Again, in the apparatus of the BR, such contingent actions were decoded and generalized with the BR setting itself up as a kind of judicial counter-institution to judge and to punish the bourgeois class in general, beginning with factory managers, but subsequently extending this to Christian Democrat (DC) politicians such as Moro. Commentators such as Dini and Manconi have seen this as a legitimization process whereby the BR set up a double of state institutions:

trials/counter-trials; prisons/people's prisons; army of the bourgeoisie/ army of the proletariat [...] the whole macabre and grotesque ritual of the 'trials', 'interrogations', and 'sentences', of a judicial procedure that imitates and inversely mirrors that of the state apparatuses (Dini and Manconi 1981, p. 28).

Later Italian urban guerrilla groups such as *Prima Linea* would critique this mirroring of bourgeois state apparatuses via the setting up of People's Courts, but, according to Manconi, 'such a discussion never took place within the BR' (Manconi 1991, p. 128). Proletarian justice was, however, welcomed by some segments of the working class and, in the beginning, by some of the far-left publications, with the Red Brigades taking on the role of 'avenging angels' doing in reality what others fantasized about; hence, this BR form of justice, if not initially wholeheartedly approved, was at least met with 'non-rejection'. This support was in turn predicated on the resort to secrecy and illegality on the part of the state, which created a situation in which clandestine operations, coupled with contempt for democracy, seemed to equally characterize both sides of the conflict between the BR and the state.

Nevertheless, it was just such imitation of the apparatuses of judgment that led some on the far left, even those initially sympathetic to the BR, to reject its tactics. This rejection was, in part, due to the BR's lack of political imagination and partly for its personalization of both capitalism

and the state in the figures of particular functionaries, as if they were the functions that they carried out, rather than indefinitely replaceable individuals part of more abstract processes: 'it becomes damaging and confusing to define ideologically or – even worse – morally, positions of command that are *per se* abstract and interchangeable' (*Potere Operai del Lunedì* cited in Manconi 1991, p. 124). This personalization was, paradoxically, a form of depersonalization; in identifying their target entirely with their functions in the system, they were reduced entirely to the status of a disposable and absolute enemy, so that their sentences up to and including death became the expression of a political line, rather than a moral or ethical question, even while they were 'moralized' and personalized by the attribution to them of individual guilt for the role they performed on behalf of capitalism and the state. Expressions such as the post-1974 slogan of 'striking at the heart of the state' really only referred to the social groups from which the targets were chosen, and were very far from reaching the 'places where repressive decisions were made' (Manconi 1991, p. 125). Even in the case of Moro, his centrality to the Italian state was more symbolic than real, and certainly more real to the BR than to the Christian Democrats, whose lack of response to the kidnapping showed that the Italian state was quite capable of doing without him (not to mention the quite plausible theory that elements within the DC, hostile to the historic compromise, were complicit in facilitating, if not planning, the Moro action).

This pedagogical/judicial coupling therefore constituted the expressive pole of the BR as an assemblage, in which not only the communiqués and theoretical statements of the BR, but also their actions themselves and the responses they elicited in both the mainstream and radical press can be seen as part of the overall diagram or media ecology constituted by the BR. It is here that ideas about the spectacular nature of 'terrorism', first taken up by contemporary commentators and then by writers such as Baudrillard (1990), only to become a commonplace term in work on political violence can be revised. Certainly, political violence is expressive and aims to communicate a message including, but not exclusively, via the mass media. In the case of the BR, the effects on the radical press and expression in their own publications was of equal importance, as demonstrated in the passage referred to from *Soccorso Rosso*. The idea was not to build up an army equal in power to that of the state, or at least not initially, but to sustain a revolutionary force that was as much virtual and expressive as it was actual and material, using all available expressive means, including the mass media. This aim in a sense differs little from

that of any guerrilla campaign, which, as we saw above, is always as much if not more about collective belief and potentiality as it is about empirical reality. What is open to dispute, however, is whether the BR actually constituted such a force in relation to the actual practices of the workers' movement and the forces of the Italian state and it is here that any Latin American comparison, even with urban guerrilla groups, becomes highly problematic.

First of all, despite the rich field of contemporary practices of resistance and forms of organization, both within and outside the factory, the BR operated by a hierarchical, closed organizational model, which even closed off the possibility of any direct links with the forms of political struggle that the BR was supposed to be supporting. Secondly, there is the question of subjectivation which, within the BR, took on a hard political, moralizing submission both to structures of authority and to political decisions from above, a model based explicitly on secrecy and compartmentalization. While some aspects of this can be seen as the necessary consequences of a clandestine mode of operation, they were not always dealt with as rigidly as in the case of the BR, for example, the later 'diffuse terrorism' of groups such as *Prima Linea* operated via relatively autonomous cells making decisions without reference to or control by a centralized 'Strategic Direction'. Finally, there is the question of political imagination, which, in the case of the BR, was extremely limited; many commentators on the BR have noted that, in their case, as well as in the case of Italian communism more generally, there is a continuity between Catholic and Marxist beliefs and practices, the idea that Marxist revolution could be the earthly instantiation of the promises of redemption inherent in Christian eschatology. Such a continuity is clearly evident in the work of a filmmaker such as Pier Paolo Pasolini, whose *Il vangelo secondo Matteo* (*Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1964), for example, essentially depicts Christ as a proto-revolutionary, a synthesis of Catholicism and Marxism also evident in other popular and avant-garde Italian texts of the time. In this respect, the BR could be seen as continuing a quite conventional mode of Catholic subjectivation based on an absolute belief in a redemptive future of the revolution, justifying in advance all actions against the fallen world of the bourgeois capitalist order. This more or less corresponds to what DeLanda identifies as 'group beliefs' (DeLanda 2006, pp. 74-75), which, in the case of the BR, was reinforced less through modes of specialization than through the production of militant discourse from communiqués to internal directives and theoretical statements. This seems to be borne out of a relatively puritanical attitude to sexual relationships in the BR,

and a strong rejection of feminism, even though one of the key founders of the BR, Mara Cagol was female (she and Renato Curcio were married in a conventional church wedding prior to the formation of the BR). This is also evidenced in their attachment to traditional images of resistance such as those from WWII, attachment to the point of fetishization to the high-end industrial worker, and failure to respond to the 'new social subjects' beyond the factory (women, the under- and unemployed, and even students), that were paradoxically becoming central to the competing current of radical thought and practice that had formerly been known as Workerism. This Catholic subjective dimension might also at least partially account for the BR's strangely moralized account of sociopolitical processes in which, beyond the Marxist-Leninist veneer, it seems very much a case of punishing the wicked on behalf of the innocent, in a form of justice that seems as much the divinely inspired early Christian resistance to the Roman Empire as Marxist proletarian justice. Many of these themes will be returned to in different ways in subsequent sections of this chapter dealing with different groups operating in different contexts and via often markedly different media ecologies, beginning with the Red Army Faction and the June 2nd Movement in Germany.

The 'Baader Meinhof Complex' and the June 2nd Movement

The Red Army Faction – the more widely known by the police- and mass-media generated name of the Baader Meinhof Group, or even gang, – can also be understood as produced at the intersection of the post-1968 student movement and repressive policing, albeit in the notable absence of any significant encounter with working-class politics.¹⁵ The West German Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund (SDS, German Socialist Student Association), especially known via its charismatic leader Rudi Dutschke, had progressively radicalized over the course of the 1960s, reaching a high point, in line with student movements in other countries, in 1968. As in Italy, this radicalization was catalyzed by key events, the first being the visit in 1967 of the Shah of Iran and his wife, Farah Diba, which was the subject of mass media publicity. This visit was denounced by the student movement and especially in an 'Open Letter to Farah Diba' in *Konkret* by the prominent left-wing journalist and future RAF founder, Ulrike Meinhof.¹⁶ In the ensuing protest, during which the students threw paint and eggs at the Shah, the students were attacked by the Shah's supporters (anti-Shah Iranians had already been suppressed by the German security forces), mainly the Shah's

own security forces wielding large sticks, who the German police did little to restrain. In a later, seemingly unmotivated and equally violent German police attack on the remaining demonstrators, one of the protesters, Benno Ohnesorg, was shot at point-blank range by a German police officer. This event more than any other was taken as a clear sign by some participants of the student movement that the German security state leaned towards becoming a Nazi-style authoritarian state.

The second key event was the assassination attempt on Dutschke one year later; he was shot on the street by Jozef Bachmann, a right-wing and mentally disturbed young man who apparently operated alone. This act, nevertheless, had clearly been encouraged by the populist and right-wing Springer press (Bachman was carrying a newspaper cutting with the headline 'Stop Dutschke Now') and resulted in a far more violent level of protest against Springer than had been seen up to this point. Instead of throwing eggs or paint, the students threw rocks and Molotovs, and also built barricades and set fire to cars. In the words that Meinhof later used in her column, the students had moved, if only momentarily, 'from protest to resistance', a movement that would lead – at least in her case – to the formation of an urban guerrilla group.

This movement towards resistance was already evident within the student movement itself and can be clearly seen in a speech by Dutschke, 'Students and the Revolution', given shortly before this attack on his life.¹⁷ In this speech, Dutschke argued that the postwar period in Germany had been characterized by a new form of neofascism, a diffuse capitalist authoritarianism no longer associated with a specific party or leader, but disseminated via diverse authoritarian institutions, resulting in a 'a structure geared to adaptation, passivity, paralysis, fear' (Dutschke 1971, p. 6). According to Dutschke, both reformist and strictly national political responses to such a situation are ineffectual; he instead pointed to two worldwide alternatives: 'anti-authoritarianism, world-wide revolution and authoritarian, imperialistic counter-revolution' (1971, p. 9). Dutschke reserves terrorism against individuals to states controlled by ruthless dictatorships, since, in advanced capitalist societies, individual functionaries are infinitely replaceable 'character-masks for capital' (1971, p. 14). He insists, however, on a global revolutionary perspective for student politics in which mass actions need to be supplemented by subversive 'revolutionary terror [...] against inhuman machines', such as the Springer enterprise in West Berlin: 'We have consequently begun a broad anti-manipulation campaign with the final aim of directly attacking Springer – not the person but the institution – in order to destroy this machinery' (1971,

p. 14). Both the analysis of the West German and other capitalist states as authoritarian and neofascist, as well as the emphasis on a direct link between the student movement and global anti-imperialist struggles directly informed the ideas of the RAF, which was formed a few years later. This is evident in the initial targets of the RAF, which included US military installations, representatives of the German state and judiciary, and the Springer press. From the beginning, the RAF aimed its actions not only against the heart of the state, but against US imperialism; these actions were also much more costly in terms of human lives on both sides than those of the BR.¹⁸

Arguably, the paradigmatic case of the relations between political violence and radical media would be that of Ulrike Meinhof's transformation from left-wing columnist for the journal *Konkret*, to key participant and ideologue in the Red Army Faction. While this is shown to some extent in the film *The Baader Meinhof Complex* (2008) – via Meinhof's celebrated leap 'through the window' from respected left-wing journalist to outlaw urban guerrilla during the action to release Andreas Baader from prison –, the circumstances preceding and surrounding this leap are only given in a very sketchy form. A more in-depth view can be given by reading Meinhof's texts for *Konkret*, which clearly show the emerging conditions for this leap into direct action; which was more than just the desperate and frustrated act of a psychologically disturbed and sexually unfulfilled liberal journalist as both the press at the time and the film portray her.¹⁹ Meinhof's columns, as presented in the collection *Some People Talk about the Weather ... We Don't* (2008), are concerned with the legacy of Nazi Germany, the relations of the German state with the US and Israel, and the student movement of which she was a participant. Her columns reveal a writer intimately connected with the emergence of new political movements in the 1960s and their radicalization through the specific dynamics of the clashes between these movements and the West German state that would ultimately lead some of its participants, including Meinhof, into political violence. Reading Meinhof's texts also provides a valuable way to circumvent the various mythologies surrounding the RAF and its leaders that the film does little to dispel.²⁰ Such a cult of personality, both reverential and pathologizing, has been extensively applied not only to Meinhof but also to other key RAF members, such as Baader and Gudrun Enslin; however, these cults of personality shed little light on the actual dynamics, politics, and ecology of the group.

A key column in this regard is the 1968 column 'From Protest to Resistance' (Meinhof 2008, pp. 239-243). Following on from an earlier column



Fig. 2: Ulrike Meinhof at the offices of *Konkret*.

entitled 'Counter-Violence' (Meinhof 2008, pp. 234-238), this column states in very clear terms the justifications for the shift in tactics of the student movement from merely protesting about injustices such as the Vietnam War to taking direct action. Referring directly to the protests against the right-wing Springer press in the wake of the attempted assassination of Rudi Dutschke, this column coolly analyses the shift from protest to resistance in this action enumerating the acts of slashing tyres, burning cars, and destroying editorial offices. At the same time, Meinhof equally dispassionately acknowledges in this column that all of this damage will be easily repaired and that the distribution of *Bild* was only subject to delays rather than stopped altogether. As Meinhof points out, the response to the June 2 killing of Ohnesorg was more of a peaceful protest, which included the screening of a film about making Molotov cocktails (directed by future RAF member Holger Meins); after the Springer events, real fires were started and stones rather than eggs were thrown.

For Meinhof, this passage to direct action is not mindless, impotent, or, significantly, terrorist violence but a necessary form of counterviolence. For her, denunciations of this violence by those in power is hypocritical since this power is directly complicit with multiple forms of political

violence, ranging from the war in Vietnam to postcolonial oppression to hate campaigns directed against the student movement of which the attack on Dutschke was a direct consequence. For Meinhof then, the practice of counter-violence is a sign that there are 'people who have decided not only to name what is intolerable but to oppose it' (2008, p. 241). This shift to resistance is not without its risks and it is worth pausing to consider Meinhof's acknowledgement of these risks in this column: 'Counter-violence risks turning into violence, when police brutality sets the measure for action, when helpless rage takes over from sovereign reason, when the paramilitary interventions of the police provoke paramilitary reactions' (2008, p. 242). This note of caution, which was decisively abandoned after a short period of time when Meinhof became a core member of the RAF, is undercut in the column by the terse statement, near the end of the column, directly preceding the repetition of the two opening sentences: 'the fun is over' (2008, p. 242). What is of interest here is not merely this movement towards the justification of counter-violence, but the tightly structured rhetoric of the text that is not merely a description or representation of violence, but a still hesitant movement towards it.

Several of Meinhof's other columns around this time are equally worthy of analysis, particularly those that evaluate the actions of Enslinn and Baader's department store arson 'Setting Fire to Department Stores' (2008, pp. 244-248); the proto-act of the RAF; and the Kommune 1 'Pudding Incident', in which the bags of pudding they planned to hurl at US Vice President Hubert Humphrey were mistaken, first by the police and then by the press, for explosives and therefore this was considered an assassination plan ('Napalm and Pudding', 2008, pp. 229-233). Once the ludic rather than violent nature of the action was revealed, it was the police and the press who emerged with egg on their faces while the Kommune 1 members were able to obtain some unexpected press coverage. Meinhof was both appreciative and critical of these acts, as she was of so many false starts in the movement from protest to resistance. While she criticizes the Kommunards for their lack of exploitation of their unexpected media attention (Meinhof, 2008, p. 229), the department store arson is rejected politically as actually strengthening rather than weakening processes of capitalist consumption, constituting an equivalent of advertising or built-in obsolescence (Meinhof, 2008, pp. 244-245). However, while she condemns the efficacy of the act of arson which is, 'not to be highly recommended' (Meinhof, 2008, p. 248), Meinhof fully embraces its illegality, the stepping beyond the confines of the law that she would later emulate with her leap into the life of the urban guerilla.

It was perhaps her last column for *Konkret* entitled Columnism (2008, pp. 249-253), however, which was not about political violence, but about writing, that most fully accounts for this leap. Essentially a piece of self-critique that was also aimed at *Konkret* and the hypocrisies of the left-wing press more generally, Meinhof intimately describes the limitations of her own role as a radical columnist as a release valve or alibi for the lack of real political discourse. According to Meinhof, the radical, original views of the columnist are a type of advertising for the commercial publication in which they are located, and one that ultimately reinforces rather than challenges the system opposed by the writer. The column also instantiates a cult of personality in which the views arrived at by many are expressed by a solitary individual and therefore cut off from the movement from which they emerged. Meinhof therefore rejects less the complicity of the publication with market values than the internalization of these values and the pretence of being a site of free journalism, using the radical ideas of columnists as proof. The column as an exception to the authoritarian control of the editor in fact wraps up these anti-authoritarian views in an authoritarian form. For Meinhof, this is not freedom but opportunism:

What if this paper were to really open up to discussions, to really listen to how people across the land are criticising its articles? It is opportunistic to claim to be struggling against the conditions that one is actually reproducing [...] it is opportunistic to limit the anti-authoritarian position to the authoritarian form of the column (2008, p. 253).

While the possible outcome of this critique could conceivably be the formation of more political forms of open communication as was developed, for example, in the 1970s free-radio movements, which attempted just such open discussions, in Meinhof's case it led to the formation of an urban guerrilla group. This cannot, however, be seen as simply an abandonment of discourse for violent action, but was also, in part, the attempt to find a new way of writing, no longer as an individual star, but within and for a militant collectivity. Therefore, despite the break in context and style between Meinhof's career as a columnist and her role as an ideologue for the RAF, there is actually a continuation of the desire to find a mode of communication outside the market and outside the law.

Holger Meins seems to have been undertaken a similar process, but in relation to filmmaking rather than writing. A student at the Berlin film academy, Meins involved himself in several activist activities alongside other radical film students such as Harun Farocki; these activities included

intervening in the Knokke experimental film festival to make a collective statement of filmmakers against the war in Vietnam. He also became involved with Kommune 1 and made the film about making Molotov cocktails that Meinhof referred to in her column, as well as some fascinating short films that are not reducible to a narrow Marxist-Leninism, but rather focus on the excluded of contemporary German society, from the elderly and poor (*Oskar Langenfeld, 12 mal*, 1966), to exploited workers and tenants (*3000 Häuser*, Bitomsky, 1966). He also made films that prefigured the development of more violent and direct tactics on the part of the student movement and was described by one of his colleagues, Thomas Geifer, as 'using the camera like a weapon' (*Starbuck Holger Meins*, Conradt, 2002). While Meins comes across as having a softer, more artistic sensibility than other first-generation members of the RAF group, he nevertheless did not hesitate to become involved in dangerous and violent operations, including robbing banks and setting bombs. During the first RAF prison hunger strike, Meins was subject to particularly cruel treatment and became their first 'martyr', entering a space of fiction rather than creating cinema, in contrast to his contemporaries such as Farocki and Fassbinder. Meins became RAF's 'Starbuck', militantly expressing himself through an involvement in political violence, a political expression that might have been pursued in cinema or his other forms of artistic expression such as painting, writing, and photography that are also presented in *Starbuck Holger Meins*. Farocki's memories of Meins in the short essay 'Staking One's Life: Images of Holger Meins' (Elsaesser ed., 2004, pp. 83-91) consist largely of a breakdown of his short film *Oskar Langenfeld* and a series of images of Meins as a filmmaker, a film student, and even as the older man he never became. According to Farocki, Meins 'mistrusted the political rhetoric we employed at the time' (2004, p. 85) and he speculates on whether Meins' deep love of cinema was disappointed in terms that clearly implicate himself within the same bifurcation between ecologies of cinema and political violence: 'if he could not cope with the claims made by such a love, how could I?' (2004, p. 91). As with Meinhof, it seems that there was a moment of bifurcation, a leap in which political violence rather than radical art was chosen as a means of expression, while his contemporaries stayed within the media ecology of radical or not-so-radical cinema.²¹

While the first text attributed to the RAF was written by Horst Mahler in prison,²² it was thoroughly rejected by the other RAF members as being 'as inflated as a game of cowboys and Indians' (RAF cited in Aust 2008, p. 107). The next RAF text to appear, the leaflet entitled *Red Army Faction: The Urban Guerilla Concept* (RAF, 2005), while anonymous, was undoubtedly

mainly the work of Meinhof, despite the considerable difference in style, as compared to her columns.²³ In this text, there is a strident explanation and justification of the actions of the RAF, famously beginning with quotations from Mao about drawing a clear dividing line between oneself and the enemy (RAF 2005, p. 9). The pamphlet goes on to attack many of these enemies from petit-bourgeois cops to leftist fellow travellers who sympathize with the RAF, but are unable to countenance its acts of violence. Rather than a misguided gang, the leaflet describes RAF members as defining their political identities through a praxis of revolutionary discipline. The leaflet also presents the RAF not as the substitute for other forms of political action, but as its necessary supplement: *'we [...] maintain that a pre-requisite for progress and an eventual victory of revolutionary forces is the armed struggle'* (2005, p. 14; emphasis in original).

Some of the sections of the pamphlet are not so far from the positions Meinhof espoused as a columnist, for example, in her affirmation of the student movement because of its resistance, however, throughout there is an insistence on the necessity of armed struggle as an essential complement to other practices of political resistance in order to demonstrate that the enemies of the movement are only 'paper tigers'. In these and many other respects, this text is not far removed from other expressions

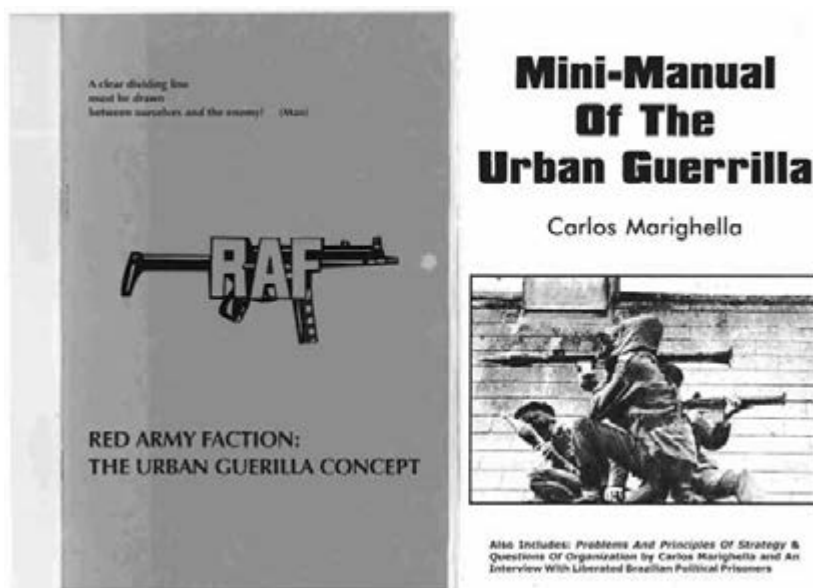


Fig. 3: *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla* and *The Urban Guerrilla Concept*.

of post-1968 European Maoists; other militants and organizations such as Régis Debray and *Il Manifesto* are also freely quoted. The inspiration behind the concept itself, however, is Latin American and, from a pragmatic point of view, essentially endorses the account of the urban guerilla organization developed by Carlos Marighella in his aforementioned *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerilla*, which provided the essential description of the modus operandi of the first-generation RAF. The RAF's *Urban Guerilla Concept* is, however, much more theoretical than Marighella's pragmatic text and is most troubling due to its logic and rationality; once one accepts its premises that immediate guerrilla warfare against the German state is both possible and necessary, the conclusions it reaches on urban guerrilla strategy are entirely convincing. To paraphrase the title of a later RAF publication, they were 'terribly consistent'.²⁴ In other words, it is the kind of fanaticism of excessive reason that Toscano theorizes in *Fanaticism* that leads to necessarily violent conclusions. Of course the initial premises on which this manifesto is based are the weak point in its argument. First, the manifesto assumes that conditions of oppression and resistance in West Germany are essentially equivalent to those in Latin America; in other words, the manifesto assumes that West German democracy is merely a dissemblance of a brutal dictatorship as proved by the violent police responses to the student movement, the introduction of emergency laws enabling the police to use military weapons, and so on. This puts the question of armed resistance into a context in which it is equivalent to resisting a military dictatorship that the RAF openly declares as a continuation of Nazi Germany.

The second doubtful assumption is the existence of a revolutionary movement with which the urban guerrilla cell can be working in tandem, as was the case in Cuba or China. In fact, the leftist movement in Germany was not only a small minority, but one that, unlike in Italy, was both cut off from the working class and in decline; this movement certainly was not prepared to engage even indirectly in an urban guerrilla struggle as the RAF would soon discover to their cost. Nevertheless, the aim of this pamphlet was explicitly to secure this type of support as the culminating slogans of 'Support the Armed Struggle! Victory in the People's War' (RAF 2005, p. 36) clearly indicate. A further and crucial problem was clearly the separation between the guerrilla cell, necessarily illegal and underground, and other radical forces; this is even acknowledged in the text in the stated impossibility of working with grass-roots organizations: 'you cannot combine legal political activism with illegal political practice' (RAF 2005, p. 28). While this might seem to indicate the futility of the whole enterprise, it is clear

in this pamphlet that, while not unduly optimistic about the revolutionary potential of West Germany, the RAF believed that elements of the left would be persuaded to step outside the bourgeois confines of legality and embrace, not only the form of armed organization, but also the supposedly freer type of communication it made possible:

No areas of public life are left which don't have, in some way or another, the main goal of serving the interests of capital. [...] These activities play themselves out in the context of mostly private, coincidental, personal and bourgeois forms of communication. [...] In the public domain a powerful elite has a dominant role [...] the media's message in a nut-shell is [...] *Sell*. Anything that can't sell is considered pukeworthy: news and information become commodities for consumption and the most popular publications become commercially saturated. [...] An urban guerilla can expect absolutely nothing but bitter hostility from these institutions. (RAF 2005, pp. 28-29)

The echoing of the mass-media critique of the Frankfurt School, albeit in more strident terms, can be clearly be heard here as can the extension of Meinhof's own self-critique as a columnist for the radical press. What the RAF were proposing was therefore as much an ecology and theory of communication and subjectivation as new forms of armed resistance, or, rather, these two aspects were intimately linked. It is at this point that one might pose the question of how the RAF was constituted in ecological terms, or how its practice drew upon specific environmental conditions and constituted specific modes of expression. As the above analysis demonstrates, textual expressions were of even more importance to the RAF than to the BR, and like the latter, their actions were frequently accompanied by the production of texts, ranging from communiques to elaborate theoretical arguments. A key difference, however, was that the constituency of the RAF was, by no means, the industrial working class but rather, in addition to radical elements of the student movement, a range of marginalized youth subjects, particularly those from institutes for delinquents and radical experiments in anti-psychiatry. As far as the former goes, Meinhof had already written a television film *Bambule* (1970), about teenage delinquent girls in revolt that was due to be screened on West German television and was only cancelled due to her formation of the RAF.²⁵ Similarly, the community service done by Baader and Enslinn was also with delinquents, several of whom became, as with some of Meinhof's subjects, future members of the organization (see Aust 2008, pp. 46-50).



Fig. 4: Baader Meinhof wanted poster.

At the same time, a radical experiment in anti-psychiatry, the Socialist Patients' Collective (SPK), led by Dr Wolfgang Huber in Heidelberg, had come into conflict with both university authorities and the state ministry of culture, leading to a radicalization to the point of armed struggle. Echoing a popular leftist song of the time by Ton, Steine, Sterben, 'Macht kaputt was euch Kaputt Macht' (1971) ('Destroy what is Destroying You'), Huber encouraged participants of this experiment, which included psychiatric patients, nurses, and interested others, to take up arms for therapeutic purposes: 'The system has made us sick, let us give the death blow to the sick system' (cited in Aust, 2008, p. 110). Study groups of the SPK at that time included, in addition to studying the political constitution of mental illness, the 'Radio Technology Study Group' and the 'Explosives Study Group'. Therefore, the SPK increasingly approached the aims and tactics of the RAF,

which would recruit several key members from the SPK milieu, constituting much of the RAF 'second generation'. One of these new recruits, Margit Schiller, has written of her experiences in the SPK and contacts with the RAF, stating of the radicalized SPK that, 'Everybody was of the opinion that organizing against the state and against capital was necessary and legitimate, as was the use of violence' (Schiller 2009, p. 33). According to Franz-Werner Kersting, in a chapter tracing the relations between German anti-psychiatry and radical movements, in the SPK: 'Illness was explained as a human reaction to the sickening social system of capitalism; and the patients themselves as self-aware revolutionary subjects who should now smash the system' (Kersting 2007, pp. 366-367) by turning mental illness into a weapon. While these positions may seem extreme, as Kersting argues, they should be understood as being in fundamental continuity with the anti-psychiatry of Laing, Cooper, and others, who saw mental illness as a product of both a repressive society in general and the specific repressions and exclusions enacted by psychiatric institutions, a reversal of perspective that the SPK merely took to its ultimate conclusions.²⁶ Needless to say, this experience would have been crushed, leaving few traces, were it not for the contingent encounter, just at the moment when its repression was taking place, between remaining members of the SPK and the newly formed RAF.²⁷ In short, in different ways, both institutions for youth delinquents and the politicized subjectivation practices of the SPK were ideal resources for RAF recruitment, compensating initially for the lack of connection with a substantial revolutionary movement or the industrial working class. However, these were also very limited resources both because of their dependence on chance encounters and affinities, as well as the instabilities and vulnerabilities of several of the members recruited, who joined less out of political commitment than because they had very little to lose. As such, the RAF was addressed to very different, much more marginalized subjectivities than the BR, and also oriented its actions to different, anti-imperialist rather than industrial targets, setting off bombs at US army installations, for example, rather than targeting factory managers.

When it comes to the organization of the RAF, there is no sign of any even fictional brigade structure as in the BR. The RAF, a much smaller group, instead formed itself into autonomous cells, within which intense processes of subjectivation took place, with solidarity increasing through the series of actions undertaken, clashes with the police and especially in response to the loss of life of RAF members. One of the few statements on the structure of the RAF was by Brigitte Monhaupt in the Stammheim

trial, who described it as being made up of 'eight groups organized in six cities', which 'were autonomous in their decisions regarding how to carry out operations' (Monhaupt cited in Moncourt and Smith ed. 2009, p. 173). There were logistical coordination and group discussions, but nothing like the strategic direction of the BR, making it unsurprising that these two groups were never able to work together despite the desire to do so on both sides. One further comment on structure, written by Meinhof shortly before her death, in suspicious circumstances, emphasized the collectivist structure of the RAF and the form of leadership that operated within this structure: according to Meinhof, 'the collective is a group that thinks, feels and acts as a group' (Meinhof in Moncourt and Smith ed. 2009, p. 397). For Meinhof, leadership developed within this collective context through practice, and 'leadership falls to the individual who has the broadest vision, the greatest sensitivity, and the greatest skill for coordinating the collective process' (Meinhof in Moncourt and Smith ed. 2009, p. 398). However much this corresponded to the actual power relations within the group, it is certainly a rejection of an *explicit* authoritarian structure and an ideal of collective becoming initiated by the decision to join the armed struggle. Whether this approach to leadership was, in practice, *implicitly* authoritarian is a question that is much more complex and difficult to determine.

From the beginning, the RAF developed a kind of self-referentiality, especially in the naming of 'commandos', the subgroups that performed specific actions, after fallen comrades; hence the 'Petra Schelm' and 'Holger Meins' commandos. This self-referentiality only increased as more RAF members were arrested this led to the release of the RAF leaders becoming the principle if not the only demand of their actions, as their levels of violence increased. Another important dimension of the RAF was its international connections and anti-imperialist outlook, with a key event being the training of its first-generation militants in a Palestine training camp, a trip facilitated by the GDR. Later cooperation with Palestinian militants was instrumental in the most dramatic action conducted by the RAF: the hijacking of a passenger plane that was ultimately raided in Mogadishu. Rather than drawing on the myth of WWII resistance units, the RAF was clearly aligned with the new left, and articulated the politicization of its members with both personal and political liberation, as well as with global anti-imperialist struggles. Ultimately, the RAF would become its own myth, and in doing so would also be the inspiration for subsequent urban guerrilla groups in Germany such as the June 2nd Movement and the later Revolutionary Cells.

The aspect of guerrilla subjectivation in the RAF has been taken up by Simon O'Sullivan in *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari* (2006), otherwise dealing with Deleuze and Guattari and art, as an exemplary case study of the militant production of subjectivity (O'Sullivan 2006, pp. 82-87). For O'Sullivan, the guerrilla cell is both centripetal and centrifugal; that is, it is defined both as a force against an outside, the regime of capitalism-imperialism, but also as a force operating within the cell as a mutant production of subjectivity. O'Sullivan cites Meinhof's reference to the guerilla as a 'breeding cell' and as a constant process of 'learning and action' as evidence for seeing the RAF in part as a becoming political of the individual. This was clearly evident in the transition of Meinhof from a 'bourgeois' left journalist to the ideologue of the RAF, producing texts that correspond to the Deleuze and Guattarian concept of a collective assemblage of enunciation based on group processes of subjectivation, rather than the expression of a separated and privileged individual.

In fact, O'Sullivan goes on to assimilate the actions and textual discursive productions of the RAF to the concept of a minor literature; for him, the statements of the RAF can be seen as a sort of stammering interfering with the normal workings of dominant languages. Indeed, O'Sullivan is not the first to identify a certain poetics at work in the textual expressions of the RAF, for example, it has been noted that the lower-case communiques of the RAF, composed of programmatic decisionist rhetoric, reprise certain tendencies of the modern poetry formerly studied by Gudrun Ensslin. This engagement with literature is also confirmed by the 'info system' adopted by the RAF once they were in prison, by means of which a type of coded communication facilitated by sympathetic lawyers, was based on each key member, with the exception of Meinhof, being assigned a character out of *Moby Dick* (Meinhof was, in contrast, Saint Theresa). This is emphasized in *Starbuck Holger Meins*, whose title refers directly to Meins's name within this info system. This info system was a veritable media ecology in its own right, not only overcoming the attempts of the state to keep the RAF members separated from one another, but providing a forum for a production of minor knowledge ranging from a collective critique of their conditions of imprisonment to elaborating tactics such as hunger strikes against them. In many respects, the tactics the group found to continue communication, even when they were often kept in isolation if not sensory deprivation, was more radical than the actions they had engaged in prior to their arrests. In particular, the use the RAF made of hunger strikes as a means to resist their conditions of imprisonment, which, in the case of Meins was continued to the point of death, coupled with their resistant

actions at their lengthy trial at Stammheim, which aimed consistently at the politicization and deindividualization of their 'crimes', can be seen as amounting to the constitution of a form of minor or resistant knowledge. This is especially evident in the previously cited text by Meinhof on the 'dead wing', which vividly describes the effects of the kind of isolation treatment to which members of the RAF were subjected:

The feeling, one's head explodes (the feeling, the top of the skull will simply split, burst open) [...] the feeling, one's spinal column presses into one's brain [...] the feeling, one's associations are hacked away – the feeling, one pisses the soul out of one's body, like when one cannot hold water. (Meinhof in Moncourt and Smith 2009, p. 271)

It is prison texts such as this, much more than the RAF's actions themselves, that have inspired the ongoing reverence of Meinhof as a figure of radical resistance.²⁸

Furthermore, both the language and actions of the group have been compared to the culture of the happening, graffiti art, fluxus, and living theatre; it was, for O'Sullivan, not only a political, but an aesthetic break with previous forms of political organization (2006, p. 83). In this regard, Thomas Elsaesser has noted a comparison by Michael Dreyer of the RAF's street violence not only with street theatre but also with rock music, 'as a percussion cutting into the monotone of the everyday', which, like rock music, 'opened up a new subjective space' (Elsaesser, 1999, p. 289). In terms of language, this meant adopting a direct, even abusive, mode of expression that paralleled the engagement with violent actions. This mode of expression was not just the misogyny of some of its male leading members such as Baader, but a deliberate and collective attempt to counter what they saw as bourgeois, polite, and deceptive modes of communication, even at the risk of psychological cruelty. Even the acts of violence of the RAF can be seen as the twisting of the language of the state in that its aim, at least in the beginning, was to highlight the violence of the state itself, by attacking military installations and politicians whose power stemmed from their involvement in the Nazi era, to make the fascistic violence of the state appear from behind its cloak of democratic invisibility. More than this, the deployment of violence was, in itself, an expressive affirmation, as both the means and the consequence of breaking with conventional norms of subjectivity.

This leads to the second aspect of minor literature, namely a becoming political, which, as already pointed out, can clearly be seen in the

transformation of Meinhof herself from a bourgeois individual to the assumption of a collective identity as an element of the guerrilla group. This rejection of individualization continued in jail through the information network that was set up precisely as a form of resistance to the forced individualization that the state was attempting to impose on the prisoners as responsible legal individual subjects. O'Sullivan also points to the futural orientation of the group; the group not only reacted critically against society as it was in the present, but aimed to embody a future society to come. It is this last point that seems most problematic to maintain and the problem of leadership is a crucial stumbling block; far from an egalitarian utopia, the RAF seemed to be dominated by strong personalities, and especially by Andreas Baader as a leader as well as the dominant Enslinn/Baader couple. In accordance with the previously cited statement by Meinhof, however, Baader could be seen as embodying for the rest of the group a model or forerunner of a people to come, the leader as the product of group practice. Nevertheless, there is a very thin line between this affirmative leadership and micro-fascism, a line that, in the case of the RAF, remains a grey area.

What is most interesting in O'Sullivan's analysis is that, unlike most accounts of the RAF, it is aesthetic rather than moral.²⁹ Indeed, O'Sullivan is not primarily interested in the RAF itself so much as what aspects of its practice might be productive in relation to both contemporary aesthetic practices and modes of life. One might even argue that this reading is only possible from a certain distance, when the violent effects of the RAF's actions have become a kind of modern mythology and its protagonists have become pop icons as have other militants such as Che Guevara or the Black Panthers. For these practices and figures, it is now safe to discuss in a type of affirmative, even nostalgic fashion – as a fond memory of the days when the left was dangerous and political violence was politically rather than theologically informed. Even so, it would certainly be arguable that the members of the RAF are not the best model for an affirmative, non-bourgeois production of subjectivity, and perhaps themselves fell prey to pop-cultural delusions such as a Bonny and Clyde or even Godardian version of the revolution; the stridency of their affirmations of violence resembling the students in Godard's *La Chinoise* (1967), who, after a summer of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist study, assassinate a mistaken target. One aesthetic movement not mentioned by O'Sullivan in relation to the RAF is Pop Art, and the transfiguration of Baader, Enslinn, and especially Meinhof into pop icons also expresses the complicity of the movement from which they emerged with pop consumerism. They were the 'children of Marx

and Coca Cola' as the Godardian phrase taken up in a collection of essays on radical European 60s and 70s counter cultures has insisted upon.³⁰ Put simply, the student movement, the antiwar movement, the anti-imperialist movement, and the RAF itself took place to a soundtrack of American rock music and popular culture that, as stated in Wenders' *Kings of the Road* (*Im lauf der zeit*, 1976), had colonized the subconscious of the European countercultures even in their most radical expressions. This point is also emphasized by Elsaesser (1999, p. 288-289). This is not to diminish their actions, but to locate them within the highly ambiguous environment in which they took place.³¹

The RAF was, however, neither the only urban guerrilla cell, nor the only example of this linking of guerrilla organization with new modes of communication and subjectivation. For example, Michael 'Bommi' Baumann, a key member of the June 2nd movement – named after the date on which Benno Ohnesborg was killed –, wrote an extraordinary account of his political radicalization and turns towards and away from political violence called *How it All Began* (1977).³² This book, written while Baumann was still leading an underground existence, appeared at the height of counterterrorist state paranoia, and was banned under counterterrorism laws. This resulted in a raid of the offices of its publisher Trikont Verlag by 30 police, armed with sub-machine guns, who confiscated, in addition to all copies of the book in stock, 1200 other publications, as well as typewriters and other equipment, virtually putting the small left-wing publisher out of business (Baumann 1979, pp. 7-8). However, due to the support and defence of the book by prominent figures, including Jean-Paul Sartre, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, and Heinrich Böll, a second edition appeared in a much larger print run, partly due to the publicity generated by the attempts of the state to censor it.

The reason the book attracted such strong support is due, in part, to the extraordinary frankness with which it describes Baumann's experiences as an urban guerilla, which are quite different to those of the RAF. Growing up in the GDR and coming from a proletarian background, Baumann was no stranger to violence as a part of everyday life and while well-read was not from the student and intellectual milieu of Meinhof. Baumann was at first a participant in the counterculture and took part in the Kommune 1 experiment in communal living, during which time he became increasingly politicized. His expression of this politicization, however, sometimes took bizarre forms, such as the slashing of the tyres of more than 1000 cars in a neighbourhood largely inhabited by the police. Through such acts as these, he spent time in jail and became increasingly introduced to

illegality so that, by the time of the Springer riots, he was well-prepared to go further than the activists who only threw Molotov cocktails in the heat of the moment but were not prepared to maintain an armed form of activism.

In the early 1970s, the June 2nd movement was formed explicitly following the lead of the RAF by forming an underground armed cell, but diverging greatly from the latter's tactics; the June 2nd movement largely operated in their own area of West Berlin and Baumann was quite critical of the RAF's games of cat and mouse, with police and safe houses all over West Germany. Instead, the June the 2nd movement retained close links with political movements in Berlin and also combined acts of violence with humour, such as wearing crazy clothes and masks during bank raids, handing out sweets to bank clients, and giving away considerable amounts of their takings. During a brief encounter with the RAF, they were harshly criticized by the latter as chaotic and hedonistic, and for not taking revolutionary action seriously enough; however, this was precisely the June 2nd movement's way to escape bourgeois forms of subjectivity, the middle-class work ethic still apparent in the *modus operandi* of the RAF.

The language of Baumann's book differs considerably from that of the RAF; in place of Marxist-Leninist rhetoric, there is an anarchic combination of German and American slang and countercultural language that reveals Baumann's continued attachment to the ideals and ways of life of the Kommune; terrorism is described as a 'trip', albeit a heavy trip; he uses particular expressions such as 'night and fog actions'; or refers to the various groups with which he was involved as 'the base'; and, in the end, says he has chosen love over terror. Especially noticeable in his account is the affirmation of pleasure and emotions, and the opposition to the cold revolutionary discipline of the RAF. According to Baumann, the big mistake of the RAF was to oppose the state apparatus with their own apparatus, their complex network of safe houses, codes, and disguises, since the state would naturally be superior in this domain, rather than making use of a different and anarchic mode of life, which Baumann associates with his own countercultural group, the Blues:

They [the RAF] opposed the apparatus of the Bulls [cops] with their own apparatus, which is always weaker. The opposition just has much longer experience in this area and they also have a bigger, better apparatus – that's precisely their thing, what they invented, the methods of gathering material, identification etc. [...] Not a single one of them is Blues; they can't deal with the way you act, doing exactly what no-one expects, all

of the time. For example, running around in all those bright clothes so that everyone thinks: one of those insane Hash Brothers. (Baumann 1979, p. 92)

Baumann even described driving across Berlin in a brightly painted van with Dynamite Transporter written on the side and being waved ahead by the police, when the van really was transporting explosives. For Baumann, the difference between his group and the RAF was that they mostly had proletarian origins and therefore a completely different, instinctive rather than intellectual, relationship with violence; in other words, the student origins of the RAF were still evident in the way it used violence:

What lies behind that attitude [of revolutionary discipline] is the rigidity of being a student: it's this total opposition to pleasure. Every ecstasy – without which a revolution can't happen – is lacking. In the Paris commune, they climbed on the barricades singing, and not with a sour face, or membership cards in their pockets. They didn't say, we must make a revolution here, they said, this is our hour now. [...] They [the RAF] couldn't see that it was exactly this – the mini-insanity, the gags, that brought comedy into the situation, that made the thing at least in part still worth living for. (Baumann 1979, p. 106)

The contrast between the two assemblages, despite their shared aims is clear; whereas the RAF aimed at becoming a disciplined apparatus, resembling, in some respects, an official state army, the groups with which Baumann was involved in Berlin corresponded much more to the nomadic war machine. Paradoxically, the dispersal of the RAF all over West Germany in a complex network of safe houses actually made it easier to locate them, whereas, by blending into the West Berlin counterculture, the June 2nd movement was more nomadic, even if this was a nomadism in place, in direct relation with the 'base' of the Berlin political counterculture. Both of these models were different again from that of classical guerrilla warfare and each had its own tactical weaknesses, whether being caught up in the new computer-aided machineries of the state for the tracking of aberrant movements, as in the case of the RAF, or being too easily localized within a particular milieu, as in the case of the June 2nd movement.

Despite these differences, however, both the revolutionary discipline of the RAF and the 'mini-insanity' of the June 2nd Movement can be seen as related techniques of militant subjectivation, of developing new relations

to oneself, the group, and the outside world; in other words, as expressive ecologies, even if this expression, for the most part, took the form of acts of political violence, rather than other modes of communication. Nevertheless, this subjectivation was also expressed via forms of media from pamphlets and statements to the tactical manipulation of the mass media. Ultimately, despite their differences, what was left of the two organizations would combine into one, while, as in Italy, other more autonomous organizations, such as the Revolutionary Cells also emerged. This chapter will now turn to a final example of the US urban guerrilla group, the Weather Underground, whose organization and tactics were different again and raise even more directly questions of the media ecologies of left political violence.

Weather Variations: Weatherman, the Weather Underground, and the Symbionese Liberation Army

At the same time and for similar reasons that the German SDS was becoming more radical, a similar process was taking place within the US Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), provoked even more directly by resistance to the Vietnam War, as well as encounters with black liberation movements, from the pacifist civil rights movement to the armed Black Panthers and the Soledad Brothers prison movement. In the beginning, however, SDS was simply a left liberal student response to the political vacuum left by the vehement anticommunist attacks of McCarthyism in the immediate postwar era that had left what remained of the US left in a weak and defensive position. Inspired by the nonviolent black civil rights movement, these mostly middle-class students sought to contribute to combating racism as well as to affirm such quintessentially liberal, American values as free speech and democracy. Rather than attacking the US Constitution, they saw themselves as upholding its values, not fully realizing the depth of the gulf between these liberal ideals, and their actual implementation, which was much more authoritarian, segregative, and often the complete opposite of what was actually proclaimed.

Such idealism can clearly be read in the famous Port Huron statement, written by Tom Hayden, but modified in collective discussions of the SDS in 1962 (Hayden 2008, pp. 35-64).³³ The fact that this statement was sharply criticized by the old left at the time of its production as a radical rejection of anticommunism, and reviled by most factions of the SDS only a few years later as being too reformist, only demonstrates its value as an indication of

the process of radicalization that the SDS underwent throughout the 1960s. There has already been much analysis of this statement as the 'vision call' of 1960s US youth radicalism, indicating its specific mix of idealism and pragmatism, naiveté, and the distillation of existing experiences of political organization in the civil rights movement. While hardly a call to communist revolution, its criticism of anti-communism and US Cold War foreign policy clearly set the scene for future opposition to the Vietnam war: 'America rests in national stalemate [...] its democratic system apathetic and manipulated, rather than "of, by, and for the people"' (Hayden 2008, p. 38). Nevertheless, despite such statements and the occasional use of the word 'revolutionary', the call in this statement was rather for participatory democracy, and even the highly reformist idea of encouraging the Democratic party to live up to its left-liberal ideals in dealing with both domestic racism and foreign policy. In other parts of the statement, it is concerned with 'values' that are decidedly humanist, and critical of capitalist, technocratic alienation: 'We regard men [sic] as infinitely precious and possessed of unfulfilled capacities for reason, freedom, and love' (Hayden 2008, p. 41). If there is anything Marxist here, it was clearly the early humanist Marx of the critique of alienation. Such idealism, and the interconnection of the personal with the political, continued even when the SDS became torn between different Marxist-Leninist factions, at least within the one that would become known as Weatherman. In short, while some theoretical moves had already taken place to establish a new American left, it was the Port Huron Statement that formulated this project in activist terms, aimed directly to politicize students in relation to immediate, national, and international problematics of power and democracy.

By the mid 1960s, and in response to both escalating police repression and radicalizing protest against the Vietnam war, the SDS became much more explicitly socialist, anti-imperialist, and, in some groupings, communist. It was at this point that the faction later known as Weatherman and ultimately as the Weather Underground, began to form, especially on campuses such as Columbia and Michigan. In a parodic revisiting of the Port Huron statement, David Gilbert and others at Columbia composed the 'Port Authority Statement' in 1967, which essentially advocated a directly revolutionary role for students and marginalized youth in their particular version of the shift from protest to resistance. It should be emphasized that, at this point, this was only one of several tendencies within the SDS, even if it expressed particularly clearly a process that took place across the student movement, for example, in the radicalization taking place at the University of California, Berkeley, which shifted from merely protesting

the war to trying to shut down the Oakland draft centre; this type of civil disobedience was becoming increasingly common and also attracted harsh police responses. Equally inspirational for this shift was the emergence of the Black Panther Party, which, following in the footsteps of Malcolm X, advocated a revolutionary form of black liberation 'by any means necessary', overtly styling themselves after urban guerrillas, carrying weapons publicly and theatrically, and inventing a whole new style of black militancy.³⁴

The event that really galvanized the shift from protest to resistance in the SDS, however, was the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago, which can be seen as a last-ditch effort on the part of the antiwar movement to directly influence mainstream representational politics in the form of the Democratic Party. In Chicago, a massive but largely peaceful protest met with massive and violent repression on the part of the Chicago police in what became known as a police riot; the Chicago police arrested key movement leaders, including Abbie Hoffman and Tom Hayden, who became known as the Chicago Eight, on conspiracy charges. While some SDS members and leaders like such as Gitlin (c.f. Gitlin 1987), wanted to continue within a nonviolent liberal framework, others – and none more than the Weatherman faction – saw this direction as both blocked and ineffectual; instead, these groups wanted to 'bring the war home', meaning not only to end the war, but to make the United States ungovernable, to attack repressive imperialist institutions from the army to the police, in order to demonstrate that they were not invulnerable against the 'critique of arms'.³⁵ This project, expressed as the transformation from a student to a revolutionary youth movement (RYM), was developed over the following year by prominent SDS members, including Gilbert, Bill Ayers, Bernadine Dohrn, Jeff Jones, Mark Rudd, and Terry Robins. A This project came to a head at the 1969 showdown between this faction and a Maoist group, Progressive Labor (PL), whose discipline and organization saw them virtually ready to take over the SDS, even though they were an external group for whom the SDS was merely a source of recruits for their version of Maoist labour struggle.

While the 1969 expulsion of the PL from the SDS met with widespread support from the student movement, the way in which it was done and its final results were seen as troubling by some and alarming by others. Clearly, liberals such as Gitlin could only see it as a hostile takeover, which betrayed the history and democratic legacy of SDS and Gitlin barely differentiated between the Weather faction and the PL.³⁶ Tom Hayden was more ambivalent, even coming to speak briefly at the Weather-organized Days of Rage, and he carefully contrasted the 'disciplined' approach towards violence of the Weather faction (who were deliberately organizing a planned riot in

Chicago, coinciding with the trial of the Chicago 8), with the spontaneist violence of the Yippies. Hayden, while remaining critical of some aspects of the Weather's practice, still appreciated their willingness 'to go beyond the pseudo-radicalism of the white left into a head-on showdown with the system' (Hayden 1970, pp. 297-298). Other sympathetic participants in SDS saw the guerrilla direction advocated by Weather as a missed opportunity for building a more broad-based revolutionary youth movement that would be able to reach out, not only to students and marginalized youth, but also to workers. Part of the problem seemed to be that, in order to counter the PL, Weather had been forced to articulate a more revolutionary programme that they were then compelled to implement; however, this tendency towards becoming a revolutionary and violent anti-imperialist movement predated the showdown with the PL and, in fact, stemmed from a combination of the environmental factors already mentioned. These environmental factors included the radical opposition to the Vietnam War and growing support of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front (NLF); the challenge to respond to the increased radicalism of black liberation movements; increasingly violent policing; repression leading to the deaths of both Black Panthers and, later, white students (for example at Kent State), along with multiple injuries and punitive arrests and judicial sentences; and the desire to do as much as possible not only to protest against US imperialism, but to interfere with its actual operations. In short, the Weather faction sought to transform the SDS into a revolutionary war machine for combating the US military-industrial apparatus, and it was this express purpose that led to the so-called Days of Rage.

At this point, some of Thoburn's critiques of the militant diagram of Weatherman can be confronted precisely by viewing Weather, as the name suggests, as a processual ecology rather than in terms of a fixed and closed political or ideological model. Because Thoburn restricts his account of Weather to the period between the end of the SDS and the beginning of their clandestine existence as the Weather Underground, he freezes what was, in fact, a dynamic, contingent, and unpredictable process in a militant model that is not fully applicable to Weather, even in this particular 'Weatherman' phase of its development. More than any of the groups already discussed, Weather was constantly shifting in its strategies, tactics, modes of operation, and, crucially, relations to outside others, in ways that are only partially captured in the *Weatherman* collection (Jacobs 1970), the main source material for Thoburn's analysis of the group. This collection itself should be viewed in processual, ecological terms, not as the key to unlocking a full understanding of the group that, in 1970, was

still developing and transforming itself into a clandestine organization, but rather as an extension of Weather's own expressive ecology by means of a diverse range of contemporary articulations, both critical and affirmative, in proximity to the Weather organization itself. As the editor Harold Jacobs puts it, 'It should be viewed as a medium through which Weatherman confronts, however indirectly, its critics on the left' (Jacobs 1970, pp. xi-xii); in other words, it is a textual media ecology in proximity to the political media ecology of Weather itself.

While lacking the direct involvement of the key Weather leaders who, by the time of the book's appearance had gone underground, the collection presents a diverse assemblage of texts from Weather and ex-Weather members, sympathetic and unsympathetic observers in the new left, theoretical articulations and blow-by-blow descriptions of political confrontations, a good deal of which were culled from the flourishing underground press. If nothing else, and despite the critical reactions of many of the authors included, the collection demonstrates the connectedness of Weather with contemporary problematics of the new left, late 1960s counterculture, emergent radical feminism, the current state of the student movement, and resistance to the Vietnam War. To reduce all of this to a narrow militant diagram, is to do violence to a political dynamism that, relative to other contemporary groups, was remarkably open to transforming itself, in profound communication with a range of outside political formations.

One place to start in describing Weather as an ecology is theory, even if it was a movement generally seen as privileging action over theory.³⁷ In *Weatherman*, the initial Weather faction position paper 'You Don't Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind's Blowing' that circulated the last SDS convention in 1969 is reproduced in full (Ashley et al 1970, pp. 51-90), as well as several critiques of it from various positions within the new left on the part of writers such as Carl Oglesby, Jack Weinberg, and Todd Gitlin. These critiques, which Thoburn echoes uncritically, tend to insist upon a clear separation between theory and practice, and take the Weatherman document to task for compromising clear theoretical articulation with pragmatic, tactical concerns, such as overcoming the Maoist PL faction of SDS. David Horowitz, for example, describes the statement as a form of 'hand-me-down' Marxism, accusing it of at once being a return to the old left and a submission to an uncritical Maoism (Horowitz 1970, p. 99ff.). Others such as Gitlin take the Weather faction to task for abandoning the legacy of what he calls the 'visionary prerogative' that had previously been exercised by SDS (Gitlin 1970, p. 109). More tellingly, International Socialists Jack Weinberg and Jack Gerson attack the statement at its weakest point,

from a Marxist rather than a liberal position, emphasizing its negativity or even hostility towards the American working class and claiming that 'Weatherman [...] have, as their ultimate goal, taking away from workers what they already have' (1970, p.111) and concluding that 'the central driving force behind Weatherman is desperation' (1970, p.117). This last point seems to be a general consensus between both liberal and Marxist critics, many of whom predicted that Weather would not last one year in its current form.

While some of these critiques have theoretical validity, especially the critique of alienating the American working class by situating it on the side of colonial oppression rather than as a potentially revolutionary subject, none of them really address the pragmatic nature of the Weatherman statement, which was not meant as an abstract summation of the situation of the new left, but was rather meant to serve a specific pragmatic function of expressing what the SDS and the youth movement more generally could become at a precise moment in its history. More specifically, some of what is invariably described as its rhetoric had the express purpose of defeating the doctrinaire Maoists of the PL at their own game by articulating a superior version of the revolutionary potential of the movement in Marxist-Leninist terms and to oppose its incorporation into typical Maoist strategies of infiltrating industrial workplaces and using students and other youth movements as mere resources for this labour strategy. The only critic to partially grasp this process is Carl Oglesby, who nevertheless goes on to reject the Weatherman statement in the harshest possible terms: 'Any close reading of the RYM's Weatherman statement will drive you blind' (1970, p. 129). Nevertheless, he is the only critical voice to acknowledge the shift to what would now be called a postcolonial perspective in the Weatherman statement, and is in agreement that the US needs to be understood in terms of global imperialism rather than via a conventional class analysis as a separate nation-state. Oglesby, nevertheless, claims that Weatherman is ambiguous in its treatment of the industrial proletariat that, at times, appears as having a 'momentarily stifled revolutionary potential' and, at others, as a reactionary 'labor aristocracy' (1970, p. 130).

The most serious charge Oglesby levels at Weatherman is the reifying reduction of class relations from a process to a thing, thus fixing social groups such as blacks, students, and workers in fixed and cliché positions. Nevertheless, he also detects moments in which Weatherman 'forgets its static model of class [...] and give[s] freer rein to its sense of history and process. At such moments it comes close to saying something really important' (Oglesby 1970, p. 131). This 'something really important' closely resembles the Italian Workerist account of class composition as processual

and contingent, an account that neither Weatherman nor Oglesby, for that matter, fully articulate. Nevertheless, there are clearly the beginnings of such an approach within the Weatherman statement as a minor political tendency within it, however subjugated they are to the overarching anti-imperialist perspective and the articulation of vanguard politics. Writing several decades later, Bill Ayers, one of the authors of the statement, acknowledged the criticisms that, for the uninitiated reading this statement 'could drive you blind, or leave you gasping for air' (Ayers 2001, p. 145). He claims that the message was simple,

The world was on fire; masses of people throughout Africa and Asia and Latin America were standing up everywhere [...] the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle has a counterpart within the borders of the US – the black liberation movement [...] The revolution was at hand, the question of power in the air, and along [with that] the question of armed struggle (Ayers 2001, pp. 145-146).

Examining the statement itself, the key analytical idea is clearly taken from Lin Piao: 'the main struggle going on in the world today is between US Imperialism and the national liberation struggles against it' (Karin Ashley et al. 1970, p. 51). Regardless of whether this perspective is accepted or rather seen as an oversimplification, everything that follows in the statement is a pragmatic consequence of this political hypothesis. It is from this perspective that the above criticized class politics emerges: 'if the goal [of global anti-imperialist struggle] is not clear from the start we will further the preservation of class society, oppression, war, genocide, and the complete emiseration of everyone, including the people of the US' (Karin Ashley et al. 1970, pp. 52-53). While it is clear how this could be read as being an anti-working class position, in reality what it opposes is the linkage between the working class and bourgeois power, expressed through a reactionary union movement that had remained inactive even in the face of massive student opposition to the Vietnam War. In fact, the only difference of the statement to conventional Marxist politics is tactical rather than theoretical, in its belief that it is working class youth *before* their entry into the disciplinary apparatus of the industrial factory assemblage, who were the most potentially revolutionary subjects in the conditions then prevailing in the US. Bearing in mind the pragmatic goal of building a revolutionary youth movement, the simplifications of this class analysis, which does receive further elaboration (Karin Ashley et al. 1970, pp. 64-68), mobilize Marxist ideas for the practical purpose of identifying those

subjectivities that are likely to have the greatest interest in and desire for revolutionary change and the least investment in preserving the status quo. The departure from classical Marxism's insistence on the centrality of the industrial proletariat reveal to what extent this is not just a dry repetition of stale Marxist ideologies, but rather an attempted cartography of emergent class composition, which does not assume this will correspond to existing, conventional, and fixed categories of class. It is anti-working class (and no less anti-student for that matter), to the extent that it insists that all classes should question their political position in the global perspective of US imperialism and anti-imperialist struggle.

A key part of this cartography of class composition is the positioning of Black Americans as an 'internal colony' engaged in a necessarily socialist and revolutionary 'national liberation struggle' (Karin Ashley et al. 1970, pp. 53-55). In this, they merely respond actively to the ideas of Malcolm X as developed in more Marxist terms by the Black Panthers, both of whom emphasize the result of slavery was the creation of a form of invisible colonialism that could only be resisted via a massive awakening of a revolutionary black consciousness. Quoting Huey P. Newton, they argue that black liberation is necessarily revolutionary since black 'self-determination requires being free from white capitalist exploitation in the form of inferior (lower caste) jobs, housing, schools, hospitals' (Karin Ashley et al. 1970, p. 56). The original aspect of the Weatherman statement is to attempt to map an active white response to this situation that consists neither in subordinating black struggle to white leadership nor in leaving blacks to 'take on the whole fight – and the whole cost – for everyone' (Karin Ashley et al. 1970, p. 58). Clearly influenced by the escalating police and FBI war against the Panthers that had already led to several deaths and many imprisonments, the Weather faction strongly insisted that white people should take on as much of the burden, and the risk, of revolutionary action, rather than hiding safely behind nonviolent protest or abstract radical theory. It is by pragmatically articulating what this might consist of that Weather formulated its strategy for a revolutionary youth movement.

Given the above analytic propositions, the Weather proposal for a revolutionary youth movement was to target proletarian youth before entry into the factory – as the part of the white population both most directly oppressed by disciplinary institutions such as the family, school, law enforcement agencies, and the judiciary, and with the most to gain from a revolutionary transformation of the US – to fight in tandem with black and international national liberation struggles. The proposed tactics involved not the denial of local struggles, but their connection with a global

anti-imperialist perspective, as in the case of Berkeley's People's Park that is affirmatively cited.³⁸ The proposed way of organizing the movement would consist of three elements, namely 'mixing different issues, struggles, and groups', 'relating to motion', and building a 'movement oriented toward Power' (Karin Ashley et al. 1970, pp. 83-84). In other words, these tactics involved first reaching out to multiple groups and issues and demonstrating the interconnections of their specific struggles with global anti-imperialism; demonstrating the nature of struggle through practical means by provoking confrontations and thereby catalyzing the extension of local struggles; and, finally, emphasizing radical change as a power struggle and not just a matter of achieving limited reforms.

In order to do this effectively, the statement proposes developing fighting revolutionary cells that would not only develop their own means of self-defense by learning techniques such as karate and the use of weapons, but would also use this training to attract rebellious youth already fighting with the system but without any articulation of their rebellion within a broader anti-imperialist framework. Specifically, this meant involving youth in increasingly large-scale fighting against the police as key representatives of imperialist power in order to both maximize 'anti-pig consciousness' (Ashley, et al. 1970, p. 86) and to demonstrate that the repressive force of the police, and therefore of imperialist power more generally, can be overcome. Again, this owes a good deal to the Black Panthers who pioneered the ideas and practices of collective self-defense, while also insisting that the white movement should take on an offensive rather than merely defensive role since they have the tactical advantage of not being immediately targeted by the police. As with the RAF, there is the idea here of the revolutionary cell 'breeding revolutionaries' through practice, and while a future clandestine organization is envisaged, the immediate task is presented as the building up of these revolutionary cells amongst proletarian youth, including but not limited to students and the counterculture; a phase of Weather strategy that would receive its ultimate test in the 'Days of Rage' that was organized in Chicago a few months later: 'tying the city-wide fights to community and city-wide anti-pig movement, and for building a party eventually out of this motion' (Ashley et al. 1970, p. 90). Whatever the practical feasibility of this project, it was clearly based on activating the movement of bodies and on confrontational practice, rather than on the imposition of preformulated Marxist theory that it was accused of being; in fact, the 'reading difficulty' on the part of the aforementioned new left critics can largely be put down to the very 'privileged' preference for theory over practice that Weather believed it was both correct and necessary to challenge, by placing

themselves on the frontlines of violent confrontation with the forces of imperialist order. Beyond this, the statement constituted a dramatically open 'diagram' of militancy whose form could only be determined through the coming struggles.

Already on the SDS floor, the Weather faction had operated as a kind of war machine, using words as weapons and spouting out lines 'like the clanging of steel on armor flashing across the room' (Ayers 2001, p. 145), leading to the expulsion of the PL from the SDS and sowing the seeds for the dissolution of the latter organization into what Weather hoped would become a revolutionary youth movement. But rhetorical battles amongst the politically engaged are one thing and street fighting with alienated youth and police quite another, as Weather soon discovered. Nevertheless, they proceeded to put their ideas into practice by ranging over parks, schools, universities, and beaches, talking, arguing, fighting when necessary, anywhere that new recruits for the revolutionary youth movement might be found. While the slogan of the breakaway group RYM 2 was 'Serve the People', Weather instead would 'Fight the People', using their bodies and risking violence and injury in order to persuade potential members of the movement that they were serious and courageous. One example of this kind of action to reach out to 'high school kids, freaks, community college people, bikers, greasers' (Motor City SDS 1970, p. 152) was what became known as the Metro Beach riot: 300 'cadre' swept the beach in Detroit distributing leaflets about the planned Chicago action and carrying red flags. They provoked heated arguments that soon escalated into a mass physical fight, the SDS contingent apparently held its own against more patriotically inclined youth, before beating a retreat, chanting communist songs.

Through actions like these, it was hoped that even initially hostile youth, especially those already involved in rebellious activities such as bikers and freaks, would be persuaded to join the movement and take part in the forthcoming National Action. Other actions known as 'jailbreaks' involved taking over and barricading community college or school classrooms, to deliver the anti-imperialist message and exhort young people to abandon their education in favour of participating in revolutionary action. Some of these actions were led and entirely conducted by women, since there was a feeling that the original Weather statement had not engaged sufficiently with women's issues and the emergent feminist movement, despite strong female leaders like Bernadine Dohrn and Cathy Wilkerson, the latter writing about the project of forming a 'revolutionary women's militia' (Wilkerson 1970, pp. 91-96).³⁹

Once formed into collectives, the activities ranged from martial arts and self-defense training in the morning to the experimentation with nonmonogamous relationships at night, since Weather strongly maintained that the personal was political, and all existing bourgeois social forms, habits, and institutions were to be called into question. While such activities were hardly uncommon at the time, their incorporation into a disciplined process of political subjectivation was less common, as was the newfound abstinence or at least restraint in relation to drugs and alcohol. Again, almost all of these activities were inspired by the Black Panthers but were developed in a more accelerated and even exaggerated way, as they sought to form as large a fighting revolutionary force as possible within the time of a single summer. In Ayers's words, 'all through the summer we worked, and fought and practiced, and when we got time for a breather late at night, we criticized ourselves for not doing enough' (Ayers 2001, p. 160). Criticisms like those of Thoburn of such Weather practices as self-criticism and the 'gut check' often miss the point that it was a matter of producing movement, of generating as powerful a machine as possible, for which it was necessary to eliminate forms of resistance such as fear of violence or even death that would slow down the maelstrom. In fact, Ayers specifically describes this experience as being caught in a cyclone, comparing it to a ninety mile an hour gale that is not just three times a thirty miles an hour wind but an overwhelming experience that 'sucks your breath out as it howls through your empty head' (Ayers 2001, p. 160). While the Weather self-criticism sessions did not match the extremity of their Japanese counterparts in the United Red Army, some of whom did not return from these sessions alive,⁴⁰ their task nevertheless demanded an intense subjectivation process in which fears, doubts, and inadequacies had to be overcome by all possible means. While Ayers today laments the excesses whereby from the rule of 'art and politics, joy and struggle, love and engagement' (Ayers 2001, p. 162), the first of these pairs of terms tended to be eliminated, nevertheless it was clear that to transform student and youth activists into street fighting revolutionaries would not be possible without an affective hardening, not only of bodies but of feelings and behaviors.

The Days of Rage as the October 1969 Chicago National Action has come to be known, has been the subject of many accounts (Kopkind 1970; Berger 2006; Gitlin 1987) all of which emphasize the disproportion between the hoped for thousands of street fighting militants and what actually happened. The choice of Chicago was no accident as it was also the time and place of the trial of the Chicago 8, the anniversary of the Democratic Convention at which the movement was subject to mass police violence

and arrests, as well as being the two-year anniversary of the execution of Che Guevara. Weather prepared for the event by the explosion of the Haymarket police statue, a much hated symbol of the Chicago police's repression of labour activists in the nineteenth century, and this was only one of several occasions in which it had been targeted. For this planned attack on the city of Chicago, however, only a few hundred of the hardcore Weather cadre showed up, and even some of the Black Panthers, including the soon-to-be-murdered Fred Hampton, were critical of the action, the latter describing it as 'anarchistic, opportunistic, individualist, chauvinistic, and Custeristic' (Hampton cited in Berger 2006, p. 108).

To make matters worse, although the Weather believed that their action supported the Panthers and other groups such as the Young Lords, these groups had instead endorsed the nonviolent Revolutionary Youth Movement (RYM 2) action, essentially a conventional protest against the conspiracy trial. Nevertheless, the small group that had assembled in Lincoln Park was determined to go ahead with their planned action, and, after some rousing speeches descended on the wealthy Gold Coast area of Chicago, smashing windows, damaging property, and fighting with police. The Weather militants were armed in the sense of wearing helmets, and carrying baseball bats, rocks, and lead pipes, but no firearms, which had been a directive of the organizing Weather Bureau. At the sound of breaking glass (provided by a Weather affinity group already in town) the signal was given to march into town ostensibly to attack the Drake hotel, where one of the conspiracy trial judges lived. On this first night, the police were still unprepared for what was to follow, as a few hundred militants literally attacked the city, smashing shop-front and car windows and offensively rather than defensively fighting the police. While a terrifying experience for the militants, it was also largely recollected as an exhilarating one, with several Weather members reporting it as the first time they really felt part of a revolutionary movement; nevertheless, only a few of the militants were able to break through the hastily regrouped police lines and the wave of insurgency dispersed before reaching its objectives, although not before doing significant property damage to the area they had surged through. By this stage, the police did not hesitate to fire on the insurgents and several of them received gunshot wounds. Subsequent events were less effective; particularly a planned action of the Women's Militia that failed to even break out of Grant Park, and within days the National Guard had been called in to quell the disturbance. The result, in the end, was around 300 arrests, multiple injuries on both sides, and more than a thousand smashed windows of shop fronts and automobiles (Berger 2006, p. 112). The reaction to

the event was highly mixed: with Weather claiming the level of confrontation, and the fact that the national guard had to be called in, as proof of its success, and also claiming that they received the support, and help, of Black Chicagoans while many of the new left were at the very least ambivalent about the action, many preferring the nonviolent but interethnic RYM 2 action. Ironically, while some Black Panthers had criticized the action as too confrontational and insufficiently thought out, others like Eldridge Cleaver considered this a reactionary criticism and argued that the problem was that the action was not violent enough; if guns were available, and the police would be using them, it was suicidal not to employ a comparable level of armed force (Cleaver 1970, pp. 293-295). Andrew Kopkind, a sympathetic observer/participant in the events, described them as 'a political psychodrama of the best and worst kind' (Kopkind 1970, p. 291) and concluded in his report that 'the Weathermen did not shrink from the fight, and we all thought in the cell-block that night that simply not to fear fighting is a kind of winning' (p. 292).

From a media-ecological point of view, the Days of Rage have to be seen as the culmination of experimentation with a particular mode of expression of the Weather assemblage, the physical testing of their theses on forming a mass revolutionary youth movement, supporting global anti-imperialist struggle via direct confrontation with the forces of order; the event in which all the 'jailbreaks', gut checks, and self-criticism had culminated. In expressive terms, this entailed a reduction of discourse in favour of corporeal action and risk, and the direct posing of the question of what a white revolutionary organization might look and act like.

Despite the aspects of these events that were hailed as successes, overall the action could hardly be seen to have achieved its objectives since, far from stopping the conspiracy trial, or the functioning of the city, it only did minor property damage and was much less effective even in that than the events associated with the Vietnam War moratorium in Washington one month later. Furthermore, if the Days of Rage are evaluated in terms of guerrilla struggle, namely the performance of exemplary military actions in order to sustain a force of belief and hope amongst the population, the Days of Rage were a dismal failure. Apart from engaging in a kind of action that could only really work in a prerevolutionary situation, the very line of Weather that they were 'fighting the people' even if this was supposedly in their own 'real' anti-imperialist interests, meant that this action resulted in a shrinking rather than a growing of popular support for the movement. It is during this phase alone that Weather were fully guilty of the kind of elitism they have often been accused of, an elitism that all the Weather

leaders subsequently repudiated. If the Days of Rage are seen in the context of a much wider shift within the movement from protest to resistance, however, there is some legitimacy in seeing the Weather action as, however misguidedly, anticipating the future direction of confrontation between the movement and the forces of order. The Days of Rage also seem remarkably premonitory of some of the 'black bloc' actions associated with the post-1999 alter-globalization movement, even if their tactics were relatively undeveloped and unfocused. In that specific historical moment, characterized as it was by the fragmentation of the student movement, the severe repression being meted out to the Black Panthers and their supporters, and an apolitical white working class, it was clearly not a sustainable strategy and there would be no further Weather organized mass demonstrations of political rage.

By the end of 1969, it was clear that the goal and idea of a mass revolutionary youth movement was falling apart. While RYM 2 had more or less imploded, Weather had shrunk down to a hardened core, many of whom seemed intent on a strategy of armed struggle against the state that would necessarily have to be clandestine. At the December 1969, War Council in Flint, Michigan, there was the added impact of the brutal and unprovoked murder of Fred Hampton, the Chicago Black Panther who looked set to take on a major role in the national leadership. While this was only one of 'twenty-seven Panthers [...] murdered and 749 arrested in 1969 alone' (Berger 2006, pp. 120-121), its absolutely unprovoked nature as a political assassination by the hated Chicago police of one of the brightest stars of the organization, was probably one of the key impulses leading the Weather group towards direct armed struggle. At Flint, slogans like 'over the holidays we plotted war on Amerika', or simply the sarcastic 'Piece Now' were used, accompanied by a cardboard machine gun. In the speeches, direct and affirmative reference was made to the Manson-led murders of the Tate-La Bianca families and a fork salute was introduced, referring to the way that The Family not only killed and disemboweled their victims but attempted to eat them with a fork (see Berger 2006, p. 123).⁴¹ On a more serious note, the conference announced the final end of the SDS and the shift towards anti-imperialist armed struggle. This announcement, however, would be heard much more loudly shortly afterward.

This 'announcement' came via the other key event in the trajectory of the Weather organization, namely the townhouse explosion of 6 March 1970, which claimed the lives of Diana Oughton, Ted Gold, and Terry Robbins, as accidentally crossed wires detonated part of a massive stockpile of explosives in the basement of a New York townhouse. While there are some

questions about the intended use of these explosives, the consensus is that the intention was to set off a massive explosion at an officers' dance at Fort Dix that, if successful, would have resulted in multiple deaths.

While the Weather organization was already on the path to becoming an underground, clandestine one, the explosion and the media and law enforcement attention it gave rise to, precipitated the flight into an underground and clandestine existence, as well as a new direction in Weather strategy, relative to the one envisaged at least by the New York section. Bill Ayers opens his book *Fugitive Days* with a vivid account of this precipitation into flight in the wake of what became known simply as 'The Townhouse' in Weather circles: 'The fuse is already lit, little sparks flickering forward in a desperate, deadly dance. The steel hands on the big clock tick-tick-tick relentlessly onward as the world spins further and further out of control. My whole life is about to blow up' (Ayers 2001, p. 1). The explosion was felt, not as an exterior event that only affected others, but also as a detonation within the movement itself, as each of its members experienced in an imaginative but perfectly real way the question 'How does it Feel to be Inside an Explosion?' (Anonymous 1970, pp. 504-509), as a poetic Weather response to the bombing was entitled. Hearing the news via a prearranged telephone box call, Ayers writes of screaming: 'NO! And then a deathly quiet, just the rushing of air and the pumping of blood, the echo of escape' (Ayers 2001, p.3) upon learning that Diana Oughton (his girlfriend at that time), had died along with the others.

Ayers' account of this experience is compelling in that it deploys the concept of 'fugitive days' not merely on the literal level of describing days as an underground fugitive, but because it connects this experience up with an ontogenetic one of the flights of time and memory, the impossibility to fully recall events, even people, especially when lived in a type of temporal whirlwind, the rushing to an unknown destination via multiple shifts in identity. This is the kind of experience distilled so well in the Talking Heads song 'Life During Wartime', partly inspired by the (imagined) experiences of underground guerrilla movements: 'I've changed my hairstyle so many times now, I don't know what I look like' (Talking Heads 1979). Ayers' account is also revealing of the material experience of life 'underground' that strips away its mysterious and romantic veneer and reveals its pragmatic, inventive aspects as a life lived not nowhere or elsewhere but in a particular relation with the world:

We disappeared then not *from* the world but *into* a world, a world of invention and improvisation, a romance of space and distance and time,

an outpost on the horizon of our imaginations. [...] The underground was without border or a point on the map [...] In a sense it was so easy to find – we simply walked out into the world and we were underground. In another way it was a leap away from complicity. (Ayers 2001, p. 216)

As faces featuring prominently on wanted posters, the members of Weather, as with other underground organizations, had to disguise their real appearances and identities, but this was less a cloak-and-dagger game with fake mustaches and wigs as using one's very self and desire for survival as a mask to pass undetected in the very society from which one was, at the same time, in flight; in a nomadism and disappearance in place that was facilitated by multiple ID sets and a network of safe houses. In this, Weather seemed to excel since its members managed to remain underground in some cases for the whole decade, rather than the one year that the FBI had predicted (many other clandestine groups were not able to exceed this one-year mark by much). This has also motivated criticisms of Weather that the organization focused on the well-being and survival of its members ahead of its expressed solidarity with black liberation groups, at crucial times denying the latter material help in order to safeguard their own survival.⁴² In an early audio communique, 'Declaration of a State of War' (in Dohrn, Ayers, and Jones 2006, pp. 149-151), from this first underground period and broadcast on alternative radio, Bernardine Dohrn gave the impression that this underground life was especially facilitated by the nature of the US counterculture:

Freaks are revolutionaries and revolutionaries are freaks. If you want to find us, this is where we are. In every tribe, commune, dormitory, farmhouse, barracks, and townhouse where kids are making love, smoking dope and loading guns – fugitives from Amerikan justice are free to go (2006, p. 150).

Such statements, however, had a definite PR and recruiting aspect, as did the early action of 'liberating' Dr Timothy Leary, guru of the LSD culture, who was imprisoned in California for possession of marijuana. In reality, while safe houses might occasionally have been located within the counterculture, they were just as likely to be in anonymous suburbs and towns, in which the Weather fugitives would outwardly adopt regular appearances, jobs, and modes of life. The sheer size of the US and extensiveness of antiwar networks did, nevertheless, facilitate a type of disappearance virtually impossible in the more highly policed European nations such as West Germany, in

which the necessary paperwork to establish residency, or the lack of this, was enough to expose many underground militants.

Having established an underground existence as fugitive revolutionaries, Weather members needed to show how they were 'adapting the classic guerilla strategy of the Tupamaros' (2006, p. 149) to US conditions. The declaration of war had promised not only talk but action, which was forthcoming 20 days later in a bomb explosion at NYC police headquarters; the explosion was accompanied by a warning to evacuate the building, and a communique explaining the action as retaliation against the murders of Fred Hampton and other activists at the hand of the police; it also demonstrated that the police were not invulnerable.

This pattern of bomb explosions, accompanied by warnings and increasingly sophisticated communiqués explaining their significance was repeated in attacks on the Capitol, the Pentagon, and other targets, causing greater and lesser degrees of property damage but, in no case, resulting in loss of life. The reasoning behind this strategy was explained most fully in the December 1970 'New Morning-Changing Weather' statement that sought to respond to both the Townhouse explosion and the forced adoption of a clandestine political praxis. According to this statement, the Townhouse and the intended massive use of its explosives constituted a 'military error' (Dohrn, Ayers and Jones 2006, p. 164). Against this glorification of violence for its own sake, the 'tendency to consider only bombings or picking up the gun as revolutionary' or that 'only those who die are revolutionary' (2006, p. 164), this statement endorses radical bombings of carefully selected targets as a political rather than a military strategy: 'Most of our actions have hurt our enemy on about the same military scale as a bee sting. But the political effect against the enemy has been devastating' (2006, p. 165). Despite the apparent continuity in continuing to plant bombs, 'New Morning' underlines the fundamental shift from a military to a political strategy in which it is not the physical explosion so much as its impact as 'armed propaganda' – in other words a type of mind bomb against the establishment – that is capable of revolutionary effects.

The origins of Weather as an aboveground activist organization were always present and, despite the impossibility of working directly with the aboveground movement, there was a strong emphasis on multiple alliances, not only with activists, but with rebellious youth, minorities, and feminists. Furthermore, both the use of explosions as armed propaganda and the increasingly professional handling of publicity around these events transformed Weather into a type of underground media organization, whose activities increasingly resembled as much those of the radical media as

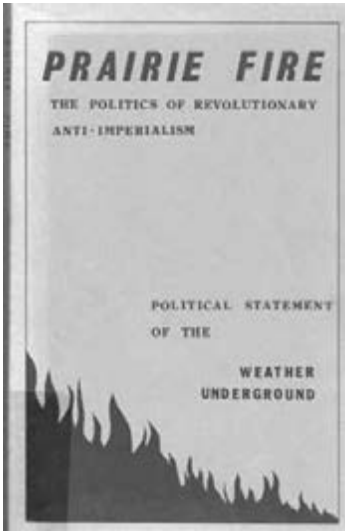
those of the urban guerrilla. As Dan Berger puts it, Weather members in the 1970s were as much media professionals as the professional revolutionaries they styled themselves as: 'Most of the group's communiques were press packets, often seven or eight pages long and as thick as the press releases of the corporate or government agencies being attacked' (Berger 2006, p. 175). In some respects, the communiques were of more significance than the bombings or, rather, the latter served mainly to draw attention to the former, which were broadcast in full on alternative radio and reproduced in the alternative press, as well as fragments of them finding their way into more mainstream media coverage. These communiques not only communicated information about what Weather was doing, but also served to forge links with aboveground movements, often providing incisive analyses of domestic and world political events to which legal movements would actively respond. In this, the network of the underground press – operating through such papers as *The Berkeley Tribe*, *Ramparts*, and *The Quicksilver Times* – formed a vital part of the Weather media ecology, and provided a virtual space in which underground and aboveground political experiences could encounter one another. This was another advantage of Weather's strategy relative to those of European red brigades, whose actions tended to alienate aboveground movements and render political communication impossible.

Looking at Weather's development as a whole, communication, popular culture, and media played a remarkably central role, and one that would only increase throughout the 1970s. Even at the height of Weather's 'war against the people', the War Council in Flint, Michigan had been accompanied by a type of Weather songbook, mostly the *détournement* of well-known songs now given anti-imperialist content, for example, 'Stop your imperialist plunder' (to the tune of 'Stop in the Name of Love'), or 'White Riot' (to the tune of 'White Christmas').⁴³ Many Weather texts, both at the time and subsequently, have also played with Bob Dylan and other rock lyrics, not merely making further reference to Subterranean Homesick Blues, but also using lines such as 'Who do they think could Bury you' from 'Sad-Eyed Lady of the Lowlands' or the Rolling Stones 'Honky Tonk Women' to give just two of many examples. Even the term Weather itself was subject to multiple variations from Weatherman to the Weather Bureau, the Weathermachine, Weatherwomen, and so on, as a type of poetic expression of the different phases and aspects of the Weather Organization.

Despite the origins of the name in the Bob Dylan song, the name weather is an explicitly ecological and mutable one, and the poetics of how this term

was variously used given an indication of how Weather itself functioned as a variable media ecology, with each event that it precipitated functioning as a kind of unpredictable storm in the political landscape. The production of media, whether in the form of communiques, longer texts or poems, and bombings, were inseparable modes of expression; some of the bombings, such as the multiple bombings of the Haymarket police statue, even had an ironic and humorous side. Regarding the activities of Weatherwomen, they not only formed themselves into some all-female collectives, but continued to make approaches to the feminist movement, criticizing the earlier, 'macho' phase of Weatherman and even submitting a collection of Weatherwomen poems for publication by a feminist press under the title 'Sing a Battle Song' (Dohrn et al. 2006, pp. 71-117). These poems, whatever their literary value, constitute a form of minor literature in that they directly express the implication of the personal in the political, as Weatherwomen refracted through words political events, from the Vietnam War, to the actions of the Symbionese Liberation Army, to their own underground lives. In the words of one of the poems the Weatherwomen constituted a 'world web' (2006, p. 87), a unique form of communication among women both within and outside Weather, despite the nonacceptance of the movement on the part of most radical feminists. All of the above can be seen as a type of fabulation, the creation of the 'Weathermyth', which, while arguably out of sync with dominant political realities, was expressive of the specific minor reality of an underground political life. These modes of expression would reach a climax in the mid 1970s, when the Weather Underground branched out from communiques, bombs, and poems into becoming a veritable media factory, producing a widely distributed book entitled *Prairie Fire*; a regularly appearing magazine, *Osawatomie*; and even cocreating a film with Emile de Antonio, simply called *Underground*. Finally, Weather members involved themselves via their aboveground allies the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee in the organization of the activist conference *Hard Times* that would, however, almost prove their undoing as a viable political organization.

All this media activity meant that actual bombings started to take on a secondary role in the Weather activities, while, as far as mainstream media attention was concerned, they were eclipsed by more visible groups like the the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) with their high-profile kidnapping of Patricia Hearst, bank jobs, California food hand-outs, and fatal confrontation with the police and FBI in Los Angeles, in which six of the group died after a prolonged fire fight that reduced their safe house to an inferno.



Figs 5 and 6: The Weather Underground Media Ecology: *Prairie Fire* and *Oswatomie*.

The SLA is a particularly interesting counter-example to Weather since its politics seemed almost a parodic exaggeration of Weather's, while its tactics, both in terms of armed actions and media expression, were absolutely distinct. First of all, the SLA had its roots in the volatile encounters between radicalized white activists in Berkeley and Afro-American 'political' prisoners, especially as facilitated by the Vacaville prison Black Cultural Association (McLellan and Avery 1977, pp. 56-58). Whereas Weather theorized their practice as, in principle, following an African-American vanguard, they worked separately from any black groups in practice; the SLA insisted that white radicals needed to have Afro-American leadership, which came in the form of the escaped prisoner Donald DeFreeze, aka Cinque Mtumbe, who escaped from prison with an already formulated plan for a guerrilla army.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the SLA documents insisted as strongly as any black nationalists on the need for ethnic separation and self-determination, balancing principles of fusion and autonomy by means of a cosmic and mythic diagram: the seven-headed snake or *Naga*, derived directly from the black nationalist United Slaves Organization (USO) started by Maulana Karenga. This symbol combined black nationalism with a synthesis of African and other non-Western religions (the figure of the seven-headed *Naga* derives from Sri Lankan Hinduism). While maintaining the USO idea that each head represented a different attribute (Unity, Responsibility, Collective Work), in the SLA it also stood for a federation of all separate races and movements, as described in their original 'Declaration of Revolutionary War', written by

DeFreeze in collaboration with other members of the SLA prior to any armed actions: 'We of the Symbionese Federation [...] have joined together under black and minority leadership [...] We are a United Front and Coalition of members from the Asian, Black, Brown, Indian, White, Women, Grey and Gay Liberation Movements' (SLA in McLellan and Avery 1977, pp. 504-505). In reality, the Symbionese Federation was a single armed group composed of DeFreeze and an assorted group of white Berkeley radicals who had been independently contemplating the leap into armed struggle, a passage in which they were hardly alone, in an environment in which radical bombings, following the example of Weather, were becoming increasingly common. What distinguished the SLA was precisely this explosive force of the meeting of black and white radicalism, constituted by means of a diagram that was as much cosmic as it was political, or, rather, articulated radical politics on a cosmic plane.

On a level of actions, the SLA managed to alienate almost all of its potential supporters on both the black and white left by choosing, as its first action, the political assassination of Marcus Foster, a black Oakland superintendent of schools, who the SLA accused of introducing child surveillance in the form of a school ID card program. One of the surprising forensic finds was that this execution had been carried out using cyanide bullets, that is bullets that had been drilled and then filled with the poison. Although the doses of cyanide were too small to be fatal, the use of these cyanide bullets was explicitly emphasized in the group's first communique, which accused Foster of the 'implementation of a Political Police Force operating within the Schools of the people' (SLA in McLellan and Avery 1977, p. 133).

The SLA is, of course, most well-known for their second action, the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst, and, especially, for its aftermath in Patty Hearst's transformation into Tania, the gun-wielding urban guerrilla named after Che's guerrilla companion who was with him in his last campaign in Bolivia. The Hearst kidnapping has been well-documented in books, documentaries, and fiction, ranging from Paul Schrader's aestheticized but reasonably historically accurate *Patty Hearst* (1988) to John Waters's *Cecil B. Demented* (2000), in which the guerrillas are a group of radical filmmakers and in which Hearst herself played a minor role as she had in several of Waters' films. Nevertheless, in many of these media texts, there is a tendency to focus solely on the enigma of Patty Hearst's transformation from wealthy heiress to urban guerrilla with little real engagement with the SLA itself, whose members tend to appear as ridiculous and monstrous outsiders. Even relatively academic texts such as William Graebner's *Patty's Got a Gun* (2008), tend to settle on simplistic and reassuring explanations

of Hearst's metamorphoses, such as Stockholm Syndrome, which have no more explanatory power than the original trial defense of brainwashing (Graebner 2008, pp. 159-161), however much he reads Patty's transformation as expressive of 1970s cultural and pop-cultural anxieties (Graebner 2008, pp. 171-180).

A much better account was already given in 1977 by McLellan and Avery in their fascinating book *The Voices of Guns*, when they debunked the brainwashing theories by pointing out that, behind the mystique surrounding Chinese Maoist mind control techniques with which Hollywood was so enamored, was essentially a reeducation process based on compulsory criticism/self-criticism sessions, the same kind of technique that the SLA, like Weather and other radical groups, used as a regular part of its own political subjectivation processes: 'The impact and intensity of these self-critical "study sessions" can be extraordinary – particularly when they are integrated into the daily pattern of life in an isolated, hermetic environment' (McLellan and Avery 1977, pp. 264-265). It is therefore a distortion to see the process of becoming undergone by Patty Hearst as a mysterious, individualized one; it is rather that she entered into a volatile collective assemblage in which all the white members of the group were undergoing dramatic processes of becoming-guerrilla in a daily confrontation with their own subjective constitution as class-privileged white bourgeois subjects in relation to the radical otherness of 'Cinque', who was both their leader and, in many respects, an outsider and sorcerer. At the same time, DeFreeze underwent his own metamorphosis in relation to the political ideas and practices of the white radicals that, while it may have begun from his experiences as an imprisoned Afro-American, were certainly accelerated by his new role as political, military, and, in his own eyes at least, cosmic and religious leader of the group. The very concept of guns having 'voices', taken from an SLA slogan by McLellan and Avery, is, in a sense, a reversal of the Virilio thesis of media as an extension of war, by positing military actions as directly a form of expression, which may have accounted for their preference in using cyanide bullets in their first action. Once again, in the ecology of the SLA, there was no separation between political violence and semiotic expression, in the SLA's case, it aspiring towards cosmic dimensions.

In terms of media expression, despite the PR disaster of their first action, the SLA was able to effectively capture both alternative and mainstream media attention throughout the Hearst kidnapping, even if this was due in part to the novelty of a high-profile political kidnapping taking place within the United States. Nevertheless, the SLA was able to play the media very effectively not only because of the bizarre elements, such as the cyanide

bullets, seven-headed *naga*, and militaristic communiqués associated with the group, but also through a strategy that compelled widespread media coverage of their aims and concepts. Partly, this was achieved by making full publication, not only of their statements and tape recordings, but also of their founding texts a condition of Hearst's safe release, greatly facilitated by the fact that they were negotiating with Randolph Hearst, who controlled a massive media empire and was able to significantly influence the mass media in general. Secondly, relative to other radical groups, they showed a more incisive grasp of how the mass media functioned; rather than the rather dry and academic anti-imperialist texts of the WUO, the SLA produced emotive and subjective tape recordings, realizing early on that statements pronounced by Patty Hearst would have a far greater impact than their own voices.⁴⁵ This was not only a matter of proving that she was still alive, but of using her voice as an expression of the group itself, which, however much it began via acts of coercion, soon took on a semiotic autonomy, as expressive of Patti's transformation into Tania, as it was of the demands and politics of the group. Beyond this, their demands for a 'good will' gesture of a food-distribution program, not only placed a spotlight on domestic poverty and inequality, but also generated a veritable media event of a kind and a scale that the WUO were never able to achieve. Even the SLA's communiqués were very different from those of Weather, expressed as they were in a pseudo-military language, peppered with both threats of further violence and bizarre upper-cased pronouncements such as the frequently used culminating line 'DEATH TO THE FASCIST INSECT THAT PREYS UPON THE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE' (SLA in McLellan and Avery 1977, p. 517).

Particularly interesting with regard to the media ecology of the SLA was the slogan, partially adopted by McLellan and Avery for the title of their book, 'TO THOSE WHO WOULD BEAR THE HOPES AND FUTURE OF THE PEOPLE, LET THE VOICE OF THEIR GUNS EXPRESS THE WORDS OF FREEDOM' (SLA in McLellan and Avery 1977, pp. 511-512). Not only is this justification of armed struggle expressed emphatically in a Futurist style worthy of a Marinetti, but it makes a direct connection between military and political modes of expression, between words and guns. As with the other urban guerrilla groups that have been engaged with, not only do words function as weapons, but guns have voices, meaning that violence is considered as immediately an act of collective expression, even before any associated communiqué explaining its intended meaning. This underlines the way in which, in guerrilla conflict, there is no distinction between military and political lines, between guns and voices, both of which are equally expressive and are in a complementary and symbiotic relationship.

While this could already be seen in Che's comments about *Radio Rebelde*, in a mass-media-saturated environment such as the US, and in the absence of any revolutionary political movement, an armed group could only hope to make all its acts as intensely expressive as possible, something that the SLA seemed to accomplish intuitively, however strange the politics they expressed, and however far their delirious analysis of the US as an already fascist state exceeded even the most paranoid analyses of the far left.⁴⁶

While it could be argued that all of this media manipulation only confirms the extent to which the SLA was itself a merely spectacular parody of radical politics, the fact that the organization was able to command this level of media and popular attention and use it to dramatize the political issues with which it was concerned, arguably gave the SLA a more radical efficacy than groups such as Weather, which, for all its high-profile bombings of state and corporate targets, remained for the most part, an underground phenomenon. This created a problem for Weather, since the SLA clearly saw them as a model for their own political subjectivation and guerrilla practices, while departing drastically from Weather's relatively restrained tactics of armed propaganda (leading Weather to be characterized in the Hearst press as moderates, which must have been especially galling). The problematic relations between the two groups led to both guarded mutual acknowledgment and support as well as mutual criticism, with Weather supporting the Hearst kidnapping, but not the Foster assassination, while condemning the LA police actions against the SLA in Los Angeles, to which they responded with their own bombing. Later, Weather criticized the SLA for 'using the *foco* theory in the misguided belief that "guerrilla struggle itself politicizes and activates the people"' (Berger 2006, p. 214). Conversely, when the SLA was reconstituted after the flight of its remaining members following the LA massacre, it adopted a strategy as the New World Liberation Front, much closer to that of Weather, partly due to the influence of new members such as Kathy Soliah, Wendy Yoshimura, and Jim Kilgore.⁴⁷ Even more interesting were the SLA's attempts to incorporate radical feminism into its later practice; rejecting the attempts of Bill Harris to assume the mantle of SLA leader, several of the female participants in the second-generation SLA, including Patti Hearst (now known as Pearl), attempted to form feminist collectives and to partially respond to the radical feminism of writers such as Shulamith Firestone and their critiques of 'feminist politicians' (Firestone 1979, pp. 41-43). As in Weather, there was a rejection of its militaristic and male-dominated past, and the attempt to arrive at new collective practices in which feminism was to play a central role a process that had virtually led to the splintering and dissolution of the group by the

time its key protagonists were finally arrested in 1975.⁴⁸ Perhaps, in the end, this might have resulted in the kind of armed multi-ethnic feminist struggle imagined in the feminist science-fiction film *Born in Flames* (Borden 1983), or simply radical feminist collectives of a similar kind to the legal ones that were to be found throughout the country, although the past illegality of even the newer members made such an aboveground future improbable. In many respects, the SLA can be seen as functioning as the shadow or double of the armed anti-imperialism of Weather, and, however distinct the tactics of the two groups were, SLA's hyperbolic exaggeration of Weather's politics only serves to underline some of the limitations to which both groups were subject, namely the headlong flight into underground armed struggle in isolation from any real popular movement, especially amongst white Americans.

Meanwhile, Weather were producing what became known as *Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-imperialism* (In Dohrn et al. 2006, pp. 231-388), as the key prong in a media initiative that several of the Weather leaders and many of their sympathizers saw as more politically significant than anything else that Weather had accomplished up to that point: 'Our most ambitious project by far engaged our entire organization, pulling in the whole network of friends and supporters including the most far-flung contacts, going through a thousand readers and a zillion drafts, and taking over two years to complete' (Ayers 2001, p. 240). The production of *Prairie Fire* entailed the setting up of a clandestine press, a school for cadre, and a journal publication, as well as an extensive network to be mobilized for the book's distribution to alternative bookstores and other sites of dissemination. Ultimately, more than 40,000 copies of the book were distributed, many within a single night.

As for the work itself, it began life as a draft by Ayers in 1972 and then, via extensive collective readings and rewritings, developed into a collective project, the direct expression of Weather's politics, captured more effectively than anything they were able to produce before or subsequently. Whereas the original Weatherman statement was a confrontational, even hostile, text aimed primarily at hardcore cadre, *Prairie Fire* was an act of communication with the broader movement, with a newfound appreciation of American, 'native' traditions of resistance and political invention in the political work of figures such as Emma Goldman, Marcus Garvey, and Nat Turner. As one commentator put it, *Prairie Fire* was distinguished by its 'tact, intelligence, and enthusiasm [...] pages go by without one "belly of the beast" metaphor' (cited in Varon 2004, p. 292). Instead, there was the concerted attempt to recast the Weather Underground Organization (WUO) as a Marxist party,

and to bring together underground and aboveground political practices: 'Without mass struggle there can be no revolution. Without armed struggle there can be no victory' (Dohrn et al. 2006, p. 240).

While similar ideas can be found in the texts of the RAF or Red Brigades, what distinguishes *Prairie Fire* is its will to really engage aboveground activism and, in fact, the aboveground committee formed to distribute and discuss *Prairie Fire* actually became a real activist organization, the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee (PFOC), one that still practices grassroots activism on a range of political issues today. Combining sections dealing with US political history; third-world imperialism; black, feminist, and youth struggles in the US; and the need for a revolutionary strategy combining aboveground mass movements with clandestine armed struggle, *Prairie Fire* provoked a widespread enthusiasm in a range of progressive movements, some of whom had virtually forgotten that the underground group still existed. While some critics point to inconsistencies and unresolved problems in the text, such as its still problematic class analysis and relations with the white working class, it was still one of the most insightful analyses of the state of US imperialism and anti-imperialist struggle that was widely read everywhere from prisons to university reading groups. More than this, the document is misunderstood if it is seen, as is often the case, as a softening in the sense of an abandonment of bombings or other forms of armed struggle – if this had been the case, there would have been no reason for the WUO to continue operating underground. In fact, bombings continued throughout this time, if anything diversifying in the selected targets to take on such issues as US state and corporate support for the Pinochet coup in Chile. Instead, the main thrust of the text was the formation of a newly unified under- and aboveground revolutionary movement, united against a common enemy: 'aboveground and below ground we face the same political questions: Who do we organize? How do we bring our politics to life in practice? How do we sustain the struggle?' (Dohrn et al 2006, p. 375). While *Prairie Fire* does not definitively answer these questions, it strongly suggests that they can be answered by means of a new form of above- and below-ground combined organization, a constructive anti-imperialist organization that would not only fight over specific issues, but aim to sustain the organization of a movement based on multiple strategies and actions both open and clandestine, violent and nonviolent, and combining interventions around class, race, and gender within an overall anti-imperialist framework.

Prairie Fire and the journal *Osawatomie* were not, however, the only media activities engaged in by Weather at this time. These activities were

complemented by what seemed like a highly improbable proposition for a clandestine guerrilla group – a feature-length film about the group, made while they were still underground and successfully evading capture by the police and the FBI. The radical filmmaker Emile de Antonio, who had already made films strongly critical of the Vietnam War and Nixon's presidency, was an obvious choice to direct the film, as was the cinematographer, the director and cinematographer Haskell Wexler, whose radical sympathies were clearly evident in his film *Medium Cool* (1969), which included documentary footage of the protests outside the 1968 Democratic Party national convention. Part of the propaganda effect of the film was the mere fact that it was produced; de Antonio stated – at the time when the government was trying to prevent the release of the film by means of a grand jury – that releasing the film 'would embarrass a government whose vast resources had failed to locate a network of fugitives that a middle-aged filmmaker had found without any difficulty' (de Antonio cited in Berger 2006, p. 222). Of course, the preparation for the film involved well worked-out routines to conceal the whereabouts of its location and visual techniques ranging from shooting through cheesecloth and mirrors in order to protect the identity of its participants: the three leaders Ayers, Dohrn, and Jones, as well as Cathy Wilkerson and Kathy Boudin, the five most high-profile and well-known members of the organization. While this was done largely to conceal the identities of less well-known fugitives, it also alienated some of the WUO membership who saw it as a narcissistic action on the part of the leaders, and labeled the film 'Jaws' due to its verbosity. Other criticisms from within the WUO saw it as opportunistic on the part of its participants, in terms of raising their public profile and paving the way for their reemergence from the underground; as such, it seemed to go against the more collective mode of production, distribution, and reception of *Prairie Fire*.

Such political criticisms of the film, while justified, are an unfair assessment of a film made under very specific and quite difficult conditions. Obviously, the film had to be made quickly, and in cooperation and coproduction with the filmmakers. Watching the film, there is both a sense of mutual respect between the filmmakers and the participants, without disguising some political differences and the apparent lack of full mutual understanding. Furthermore, the use of visual devices, even those dictated by the necessity of making a film that would not compromise the underground identities of the WUO members, and the interpolation of archival footage – a specialty of de Antonio's that had been used particularly effectively in his film on the Vietnam war, *In the Year of the Pig* (1968) – fleshed out the



Fig. 7: Weather Underground members in *Underground* (1975).

political vision of the Weather Underground in a different way than a book or printed publication ever could. Complementing the political statement of *Prairie Fire*, the film gave expression to a range of voices, gestures, and everyday habits of the underground life of the group, and related these directly to a range of political events via the interstices with footage of the Vietnam war, Malcolm X, student protest, and a variety of modes of resistance. As such, both the film and the book can be understood as different facets of a minor politics that arguably constitute the highpoint of the Weather Underground as a media ecology.

While these media activities served to link the WUO to aboveground activism in new ways, it achieved something less than the formation of a combined revolutionary anti-imperialist organization that the group had been hoping for; this was for a number of reasons ranging from a perceived cult of personality of the Weather leaders, to frictions between underground and aboveground activists, to suspicions that the WUO wanted less to participate alongside other organizations than to lead them. This was not helped by the group's increasing retreat into a closed political language in the publication *Osawatomie*, which, although it started out as being as creative and expansive an endeavor as *Prairie Fire*, ultimately enacted a return to the strident and abstract language of late-1960s Marxism-Leninism, a language of correct lines including the correction of other 'incorrect' political positions. This retreat into a class politics based on Marxist-Leninist economism and communist organization perversely made the WUO increasingly resemble its old enemy the PL and was seen by

many in the organization as a step backwards. Nevertheless, *Osawatomie* was beautifully produced, with extensive pictures and artwork, and often contained insightful and well-written articles, within the limits of its somewhat stultifying Marxist-Leninist diction. The publication, however, was not able to escape its own material conditions of production as the publication of a clandestine group necessarily cut off from the people with which it wanted to communicate, and was torn between the desire to support anti-imperialist struggle in all its forms, and the need to justify the continued existence, if not the hegemony and prestige, of the WUO within the movement.

Such problems came to the fore in the PFOC-organized activist conference, *Hard Times* that took place in 1976. While ostensibly organized autonomously by the PFOC, the WUO participated as much as possible both in setting the agenda for the conference and even directly participating by having lesser-known WUO members physically present in disguise. This attempt to unite all sections of anti-imperialist struggle literally blew up in the faces of both organizations as they were vocally accused by both a black caucus led by the Republik of New Africa and a women's caucus, not without justification, of positioning themselves as the vanguard of the struggle and thereby reinforcing rather than challenging their own racist, sexist, and imperialist attitudes. The result was a disaster and also led to splits both within and between both the PFOC and the WUO; the former was angry with the latter's clandestine presence and the latter was disappointed by the perceived mismanagement of the conference on the part of the PFOC. As Berger puts it, in this way, "Hard Times" begat hard times' (2006, p. 230), in that the rift between the WUO and its most reliable supporters made continuing life and political work underground of any relevance increasingly difficult to maintain. Within a remarkably short space of time after the conference, the WUO effectively stopped functioning as an organization, and members began to surface, to continue their work as aboveground activists, and to face what, for most, turned out to be minimal legal problems, largely due to the fact that the investigative methods used by the FBI and CIA against Weather were so blatantly illegal that in the post-Watergate era it was more politically expedient to drop all charges against them. Other members continued their commitment to armed struggle by joining with other groups such as the Black Liberation Army, resulting in much lengthier jail sentences for some, such as David Gilbert and Kathy Boudin.

There were, of course, many other politically radical groups operating in the US, both clandestine and aboveground, that could also be explored in

terms of media ecologies, ranging from the white countercultural Yippies, and the Motherfuckers, to the Black Panther party, the Black Liberation Army (BLA), the American Indian Movement (AIM), and other groups emerging out of specific radical-political struggles, who combined both modes of political violence with other inventive modes of struggle and communication. Arguably, several of these groups went a good deal further than Weather in their will to really attack US imperialism and not to shy away from the fatal possibilities of violent political action, especially against the police.

For this reason, Weather has been seen by some activist historians, such as Moncourt and Smith, the editors of *Projectiles for the People*, and others, as simply not operating on the same level as the European red brigades or groups such as the BLA, precisely because of their unwillingness to cause anything more than symbolic property damage. This critique is made most forcefully in the text *False Nationalism, False Internationalism* (Tani and Sera, 1985), which strongly critiques all phases of Weather, only seeing even limited value in the collective anti-imperialist statement of *Prairie Fire*.⁴⁹ Furthermore, this text claims that Weather only posed as armed guerrillas, anti-imperialists, and Marxist-Leninists, and that their leaders exploited the prestige of the armed struggle to develop their own careerist and ultimately reformist ends, while denying any practical assistance to black urban guerrillas when this was requested. Such criticism has to be seen in contextual terms, namely of the impossibility of Weather to successfully wage an armed guerrilla struggle in the absence of any white revolutionary, or even prerevolutionary, anti-imperialist movement. Nevertheless, as the authors of this critique acknowledge, Weather certainly made strong steps towards resisting white supremacy and a genuine attempt to constitute a revolutionary form of struggle, even if they were necessarily incapable of fully realizing this potential or even ended up betraying it in specific situations and actions. At the same time, one could favourably compare Weather to the UK-based urban guerrilla group, the Angry Brigade, which pursued a similar strategy to Weather of radical bombings associated with warnings and communiques but were caught, however, within less than two years, due to a much less sophisticated underground network and the need to support their activities via petty fraud. Nevertheless, the Angry Brigade suspects, unlike the Weather leaders when they resurfaced, chose to conduct their trial defense politically, and suffered greater legal consequences, despite the relative lack of convincing proof that such an entity as the Angry Brigade actually existed.⁵⁰

This could give the impression that Weather deserve neither the positive nor the negative critical attention they are currently receiving on the part

of both activists and academics. Nevertheless, I would argue that that the fascination with Weather is precisely in the numerous changes it went through, from aboveground student activism, to the attempts to construct a revolutionary youth movement, to becoming radical bombers, to the attempt to communicate and participate with aboveground anti-imperialist movements via an inventive array of media interventions. It is precisely the inventiveness of Weather's ecology of practice that makes it an exemplary case of a committed political movement that constantly attempted to find new forms of struggle and creativity, against the prevailing powers of US imperialism and the decline of mass political and counter-cultural movements. While this distinctiveness could be attributed to the relatively privileged class origins of some of its members, the decision to adopt an underground existence and politically violent modes of struggle was an active way of acting against this privilege, and to take on themselves the potential risk of lengthy imprisonment, if not death. The fact that their losses were less than those they aimed to support does not undermine the real political risks they took, even while it does point to the class and race inequalities that remain within the US justice system. Most of all, the later attempts to pursue a variety of forms of media communication with aboveground activists is an exemplary expression of a minor politics, that shows the intimate proximity between violent and communicative modes of political expression. What Weather may have lost in this way as an effective urban guerrilla organization, they gained as a media ecology, in close proximity to a range of radical media experiments that can be seen as a bifurcating path from that of political violence. This is equally true for the Red Brigades in Italy and the RAF and other guerrilla groups in Germany, whose political courses were also in a profound contiguity with a range of radical media experimentation, with a considerable degree of mutual address between them. It is to some of these forms of radical media, especially in the spheres of free radio, popular music, radical cinema, and guerrilla television, that the remainder of this book will be devoted.

3. Autonomy Movements, the Nexus of 1977, and Free Radio

Introduction: Radical Politics, Bifurcations, and the Event

An infinite series of bifurcations: this is how we can tell the story of our life, our loves, but also of the history of revolts, defeats and restorations of order ... It is not we who decide but the concatenations: machines for the liberation of desire and mechanisms for control over the imaginary. The fundamental bifurcation is always this one. (Berardi 2009, p. 7)

So far, this book has focused on what could be described as one side of a series of bifurcations, both within modes of action and organization in radical politics and, as will be shown in the remainder of this book, between radical politics and radical media. It is not simply the case that certain individuals chose to adopt a clandestine, guerrilla mode of political organization, as opposed to either continued involvement in mass political movements or the elaboration of radical modes of media expression, even if this decision seems to characterize the biographies of some of the participants, especially of RAF and Weather. The bifurcations were rather collective and machinic processes of splitting and transformation that affected entire political movements as they encountered different and antagonistic series of events characterized both by the increasing radicalization of social movements and their increasing repression at the hands of police and other repressive state apparatuses, such as state security forces of various kinds.

In the 1970s, this turn towards clandestine political violence was by no means a marginal phenomenon, even if it was engaged in by a minority of even the most politically engaged militants. At the same time, these phenomena have been persistently misunderstood, whether as irrelevant or marginal to the movements from which they emerged, or as responsible for their destruction whether inadvertently or as part of some conspiratorial state strategy. Such seems to be the point of view of critics as divergent as Todd Gitlin on the one hand, and Felix Guattari and Toni Negri on the other; the latter describing, in *New Forms of Alliance*, what they call the terrorist interlude as follows: 'from all points of view, red terrorism was a disastrous interlude for the movement' (Guattari and Negri 2010, p. 70). Alternatively, the same 'red terrorism' was seen in spectacular terms by theorists such as Jean Baudrillard as a 'figure of the transpolitical' (Baudrillard 1990,

pp. 55-73), or 'our theater of cruelty' (Baudrillard, 2007, pp. 108-111), seemingly in order to celebrate its putting the final nail in the coffin of the (new) left, or any narratives of radical political emancipation, if not of politics more generally. What both these accounts lack is any real attempt to evaluate the events associated with these groups in relation to the surrounding events of political contestation between shifting movement and state strategies, as well as between youth insurgencies and restorations of order, Fordist and post-Fordist modes of production, and Keynesian and neoliberal modalities of capitalism. The preceding chapters have attempted to address this by evaluating each of the groups as complex machines, with specific relations to their social and political environments or, in other words, as expressive ecologies.

Because politics is ultimately an antagonism over the production of value, and value in contemporary capitalism has increasingly come to be defined and experienced in terms of communication, these groups have also been presented, however counter-intuitively, as media ecologies. This is not merely because – alongside bombings, kidnappings, and other violent events – these groups produced communiqués, manifestos, theoretical texts, poems, songs, and films, or because they provoked media responses ranging from news coverage to fictional films to political analyses, but because they were themselves expressive events, or, rather, the nexus of antagonistic series of events echoing much wider articulations of events of both power and resistance. It is not merely the case that these groups were complex machinic ecologies subject to change; more than this, they were expressive of political change and mutation in the 1970s as such, on all the levels of economics, labour, social relations, gender, race, and geopolitics, all of which underwent radical and contested transformations over the course of the 1970s.

Such an understanding of these groups necessitates a more in-depth engagement with theories of the event, in order to distinguish them from being mere artefacts of the common-sense idea of 'current events' as presented via the newspaper headlines and sound bites of the mainstream media. Current events are irremediably actual however much they are produced by processes of selection and construction according to media formats, news values and corporate and state interests, they become naturalized as what is presently or actually taking place in the world at a given moment, hence their French appellation, *les actualités*. Philosophical understandings of the event, however, insist on the event as a radical break in an established state of affairs, or on the virtual, internal dimensions of the event, prior to its actualization as part of current events or history. The event has, of

course, been approached in many different ways by different contemporary thinkers, but these accounts tend in two general directions. In the work of Derrida and Badiou, the event is a call from the past that interrupts the order of the present and demands a fidelity, in Badiou's terms, to the truth of the event. This can be seen as a transcendent and retrospective account of the event, and has been critiqued as such by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri: '[Badiou] concentrates on the intervention that retrospectively gives meaning to the event and the fidelity and generic procedures that continually refer to it [...] [He] fails to grasp the link between freedom and power [...] from within the event' (Hardt and Negri 2009, p. 60). They contrast this with Foucault's account of the event, which is also developed in a related manner by Deleuze, that is not just concerned with responding to now plural events, but precipitating them:

Foucault emphasizes the production and productivity of the event, which requires a forward- rather than backward-looking gaze [This gives] us access to the rationality of insurrectional activity, which must strive within historical processes to create revolutionary events and break from the dominant political subjectivities (2009, pp. 60-61).

Such an active, immanent, and prospective account of the event is more fully developed in the work of Deleuze. In *The Logic of Sense*, for example, the event is presented as an incorporeal and pre-personal 'quasi-cause' (Deleuze 1990, p. 148) that is distinct from its actualization in a present state of affairs. Deleuze presents, as the only sense of ethics, the formula 'not to be unworthy of what happens to us' (1990, p. 149), which means to respond actively to the virtual potential for change expressed in the event; it does not mean resignation any more than it means resentment of what happens but to will 'not exactly what occurs, but something *in* that which occurs, something yet to come which would be consistent with what occurs [...] the Event' (1990, p. 149). Inasmuch as radical politics involves an active response not only to actual states of affairs, but to their potentials for change, both for better and for worse, it is also an art of being worthy of the event, of willing the event of revolution or radical social transformation that is not given as an actuality, or even as a possibility, but that inheres as a virtual potential of any social regime subject to the contestation of antagonistic forces. In this context, 'willing the event' means conjugating the past history of struggles, however much they might have been prone to error and failure, with the conditions of the present, in order to actualize the necessary force to tip a current state of affairs into a process of radical transformation. Whether

in the cases of mass protests, student and worker movements, clandestine organizations, or radical media practices, such a process of the opening up to and willing of the event of radical change is a necessary component of any radical politics.

Such an account of the event shifts the terrain from mere empiricism, or empiricism of the actual, to what William James refers to as radical empiricism, which necessarily comprehends incorporeal, virtual elements such as experience, subjectivity, relations, and events as every bit as real as material realities. While the preceding chapters may have inhabited the messy realm of empiricism, it was always with a view to demonstrate the virtual forces at work in concrete political struggles and what was ultimately registered as 'current events'. One aspect of this was to show how groups such as the Italian Red Brigades operated at the nexus of antagonistic series of events, both in the articulation of mass worker and student movements and of state repression. Moreover, there was a focus on the incorporeal aspects of these groups; their specific processes of militant subjectivation; and the associated cultivation of singular attitudes, behaviours, and affects. At the same time, there was an emphasis on the expressive dimensions in which all the groups engaged, which was undertaken precisely to show the ways that each group attempted to be adequate to the event, both in their chosen political and military actions and in their other expressive practices, as a means of actualizing radical political potentials in present conditions. The evaluation of each of these groups was based precisely on their capacities to actualize political potentials expressively or, in other words, on their responsiveness not only to contemporary conditions and their possibilities, but their often seemingly *impossible* potentials for radical transformation. What has to be remembered is that revolutionary change is never given as a possibility but is always an apparent impossibility from the perspective of an actual situation; it is only once a revolutionary event takes place that it becomes retrospectively 'possible', as was the case of the Cuban or Russian revolutions, for example. Prior to this actualization of the virtual event, these successful revolutions were no more possible than revolution in the United States or Europe in the 1970s, even though the militants engaged in these former revolutions proved more capable both of reading the revolutionary potentials of their respective eras and conjugating them with the present via their chosen political, military, and expressive strategies. Nevertheless, there is always something contingent and unpredictable about events that escape even the efforts of even the most sophisticated and capable practitioners of radical politics, since events necessarily bring something

new into a given state of affairs that is, by definition, impossible to predict in advance but is only possible to will.

This account of the event of radical politics can be further articulated by means of the concept of the event as nexus, as developed by the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. For Whitehead, all actual entities are in fact a type of event, what he calls an occasion, in that all apparent objects or bodies are in fact processes of becoming, however imperceptible these processes might be to us. While an event may consist of only a single occasion, most events are groups of singular events articulated together or a multiplicity of occasions; this is what Whitehead refers to as a nexus. From this idea of nexus, Whitehead is able to develop a novel way of conceiving of 'societies' in evental terms. As Steven Shaviro puts it, 'when the elements of a nexus are united, not just by contiguity, but also by a "defining characteristic" that is common to all of them, that they have all "inherited" from one another, or acquired by a common process, then Whitehead calls it a society' (Shaviro 2009, p. 18). While what we would usually think of an enduring object, or a body, or an organism, would all be examples of societies, so too is any political collective, provided it has 'defining characteristics' and has undergone a 'common process'. In some ways, this is echoed in the theories of social assemblages articulated by Manuel DeLanda that, as we have already seen, can operate at any scale from an individual organism to an entire nation. The concept of nexus, however, as the articulation together of contiguous events, allows for differentiations between assemblages that are blurred by seeing them in purely material terms as DeLanda tends to do. What matters in an assemblage or society is not only its characteristics, its material and physical components and properties, but its common process, without which it may not really constitute a society or assemblage at all. There are many thousands of clubs and associations that are aimed at particular constituents, but these are only societies in Whitehead's sense if their relations are more than just random or accidental collections of individual bodies and constitute a nexus or series of events in common. Even political groups and parties are not necessarily societies in this sense, if they do not open themselves to events in the sense of both being responsive to occasions and precipitating them, which would be a minimum requirement for any group or practice to be considered radically political. It is in this sense that both the groups that have been examined so far in this book, and the radical media practices in the following chapters will be understood: as assemblages or societies constituting nexes of common occasions or singularities in becoming, in order to tap into and to promulgate radical change and novelty within a given state of affairs.

The second part of this book will also enact both a shift from a relative focus on political violence to radical media and also from the early to the latter part of the 1970s, specifically to the year 1977, which will be considered itself as a 'nexus', as singular in terms of political and cultural transformation as the much more frequently emphasized year of 1968. Before coming to 1977, however, it is necessary to trace the emergence of the modality of politics that became known as autonomist that played a key role in both political and media contestation in 1977, although its roots go back much earlier.

Italian Workerism and *Autonomia*

Histories of Italian *Operaismo* or Workerism have received widespread attention recently, especially in the wake of the success of the series of works drawing partially on this inheritance by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, beginning with *Empire* in 2000 (Dyer-Witheford 1999; Wright 2002; Thoburn 2003), although lone voices such as Harry Cleaver had engaged with workerist Marxism since the 1970s (Cleaver 1979). One of the key innovations that explains this ongoing interest is the reversal of perspective especially associated with Mario Tronti, whose renewal of a political reading of Marxism emphasized the idea that capitalist development was actually driven by worker struggles, rather than the reverse (Wright 2002, pp. 36-41). This 'Copernican revolution' had several consequences, one of which was a shift away from the Marxist, 'scientific' focus on the internal development of capital driving economic change, towards an emphasis on 'the internal history of the *working class*' (Tronti cited in Wright 2002, p. 4). This shift in perspective allowed for the development of what became known as class composition, meaning the analysis of shifting practices of workers both in terms of work and productive cooperation, but also in terms of organizing, strikes, sabotage, and other forms of resistance to capitalist relations of production. It also set the scene for the development of what would later become known as autonomist politics, since, if workers and their practices were primary to capitalist production and development, then this opened up the possibility that they could subtract their activities from capitalist relations of production, increasingly conceived of in terms of domination, in a process of autonomous self-valorization.¹ Finally, despite the apparent, almost fetishistic emphasis on the industrial worker, Workerism, as it developed its methods for the analysis of class composition, increasingly looked outside the factory via concepts such as the 'social factory' and

the 'socialized worker', ultimately leading to the engagement with the postindustrial 'immaterial' forms of precarious labour that are the focus of Negri's later work, but were already anticipated in the concept of the transition from the mass to the socialized worker.

Several writers on the inheritance of Workerism have agreed that one of its most important achievements was the development of class composition not merely as a concept, but as a new type of research methodology. If the practices of workers were to be seen as both the driving force of capitalist development and the potential locus for its revolutionary subversion, then it was necessary to study the working class and its relations to work, technology, money, and modes of organization, as well as its distinctive productions of subjectivity. In opposition to more orthodox Marxisms, such an approach insisted on class composition as a dynamic process and therefore insisted that it was not sufficient merely to assume nineteenth-century accounts of class as found in the texts of Marx and Engels, however insightful, as applicable to the contemporary conditions and practices of the working class. Clearly, such research was not going to be a form of 'scientific', quantitative sociology, even if the discipline of sociology itself in the Italian context was the site of considerable politicization. Instead, Italian Workerists and most notably Romano Alquati, developed politically the idea of *conricerca* or co-research, which had been first elaborated in American sociology, in the form of presentations of workers' diaries that insisted on the autonomy and difference of the everyday experiences and practices of workers from their cliché representations, including on the part of the unions and parties of the official left. Co-research, especially as it was developed outside even socialist sociology, but instead within the space of Workerist politics, meant not merely reproducing and analyzing workers' accounts of their experiences, but researchers and workers cooperating together in a directly political production of knowledge; rather than researcher subjects and worker 'objects', it was a cooperation of militant and worker subjectivities, whose form of cooperation was perhaps the most important outcome of the research.

Crucial to co-research was that it not only abolished the pretense of objectivity by being explicitly political and partisan, but it also rejected ironclad distinctions between knowledge and action, theory and practice. Co-research was not just research into work conditions and worker subjectivities and struggles, but an active intervention into them:

On the one hand inserting militant-intellectuals, who were pursuing research into the object-territory (almost always the factory, and sometimes,

neighbourhoods), transforming them into additional subject-agents of that territory. On the other hand, actively implicating the subjects who inhabit that territory (mainly workers, and sometimes, students and homemakers) in the research process, at the same time, would transform them into subject-researchers (not merely objects)' (Malo de Molina 2004, n.p.).

In other words, co-research was conceived of as the production of both knowledge and action and functioned quite differently to the mediations of academic social sciences. Using the terminology introduced in the first chapter, this was a form of minor knowledge or 'anti-science', directly political in its articulation of research with militant practice, without any mediating representation. The distinction between co-research and other forms of militant inquiry is precisely in this direct connection between the production of knowledge and modes of organization. Militant inquiry can also be a form of situated, partisan knowledge that examines existing political conditions and struggles for the benefit of potential political intervention; nevertheless, it separates the activity of research from political action, circumscribing it as, at best, a preliminary phase in a political process. Co-research, in contrast, 'in its design, is a process that is open in advance [...] and its open processuality is its fundamental modality' (Alquati 1993, p. 12).² What this means in practice, is that co-research is less concerned with producing a body of knowledge in accordance with discursive scientific rules than with a militant production of subjectivity on the part of all the researchers involved.

The significance of co-research in the context of Italian Workerism and its engagement with class composition, was that it provided an extremely useful tool not only for understanding the transformations of the working class as a result of the delayed adoption of Taylorist working methods and Fordist industrial organization, but also for intervening in this new situation and inventing new modes of organization. Official communism had traditionally been based around the figure of the professional or highly skilled worker, but, with the advent of Taylorization, a new figure of the mass worker had appeared, characterized in the Italian context especially by mass migrations from the rural south to the industrialized north. Co-research developed precisely to investigate the political potential of this new figure of the mass worker, not only theoretically but in the material context of power relations and labour struggles. Put simply, the challenges of producing political knowledge *with* the mass worker necessarily involved processes of cooperation that constituted an experimentation with forms of organization not merely of the co-research, but also of alternate productions of subjectivity and struggle themselves. Class composition as engaged

with by co-research, was therefore less an analytic, cognitive category, than a mode of action that passed from an analysis of class composition to synthetic, militant recomposition. For these reasons, co-research can be seen as a kind of expressive ecology or machine, incorporating the subjectivities of both workers and militants and thereby producing new modes of both subjectivation and action. Furthermore, the difference between the compositional ecology of co-research and that of the vanguard, guerrilla cell should also be clear; while the latter is also a production of directly political knowledge and subjectivity, it is necessarily radically separated from the mass production of subjectivity in the work-place, as well as from innovations in working-class practices, relations with technologies and modes of cooperation. Co-research, in contrast, by being articulated with rather than apart from worker subjectivity and struggle, maintains a direct connection to mass practices of both production and rebellion, and therefore is therefore capable of producing quite distinct modes of subjectivation and forms of minor knowledge. It is this distinction that must be maintained when we return to questions of political violence in relation to autonomist politics.

Workerism was more than simply co-research, while, at the same time, less than an organized political program or unified school of Marxist thought, since its key theoretical protagonists often disagreed with one another as much as with the larger tendencies in Italian Marxism and political practice that they critiqued. Rather, Workerism was a field of interventions and debates, largely oriented around an influential series of journals, beginning with *Quaderni Rossi*, *Quaderni Piacenta*, and *Classe Operaio*. These journals, which, in many cases, only lasted a few years and had a limited readership, were of decisive importance because they marked the emergence not only of new concepts of class struggle, but a new concept of the intellectual, defined in relation to collectivities of both thought and practice; just as co-research functioned as an ecology of theory/practice in relation to particular factories and their articulations of class composition, radical journals also constituted a collective assemblage of enunciation on the more abstract plane of theoretical debates with both prevailing left orthodoxies and between the different Workerist currents themselves. Frequently, these debates became so pronounced that entire journals would split into new ones; this is precisely how Tronti and Alquati came to form *Classe Operaio*.

The culture of these reviews was a specific one that was constituted by an urban intelligentsia that was on the fringes of established parties such as the PCI and the PSI, while it was also critical of academic institutions, within which they also often occupied fringe positions. The journals were

therefore between both conventional intellectual and party formations and uniquely able not only to be critical of both these assemblages, but also free to forge new concepts and practices between them, rejecting the pieties and commonplaces of both contexts but nevertheless combining the most advanced tendencies in intellectual inquiry with an engaged but nondogmatic militant practice. As such, the journals constituted a specific media ecology. As Robert Lumley put it,

it was largely through reviews rather than through books that this cultural exploration [of radical ideas] was pursued. This particular cultural vehicle [...] facilitated the expression of a collective, as opposed to individualistic ethos such as that celebrated in the dominant culture's conception of the artist and the thinker (Lumley 1990, p. 35).

The key ideas of Tronti about working-class autonomy referred to above, for example, were first expressed in the pages of these journals, especially *Classe Operaio*, and refined through processes of discussion and debate, before being elaborated in book form in *Operai e Capitale* (Wright 2002, pp. 63-64). As the splits between journals associated with different key figures indicate, this ideal of a collective intellectual ethos was not always achieved, and, as Steve Wright points out, these splits often 'flowed from personal as well as political differences, with neither side able to claim to have only benefited from the separation' (Wright 2002, p. 62). Nevertheless, the collective modes of inquiry, analysis, and organization pioneered in these journals, were fundamental in the development of new forms of 'extra-parliamentary', new-left modes of political organization beyond the horizons of existing political parties, even if this was also beyond what Panzieri, Tronti, and other key figures in early Workerism would have embraced. The impact of this media ecology cannot be measured through the limited circulation of these journals, or the presence of the ideas they expressed in contemporaneous workplace struggles, since their effects were generally delayed and embraced more widely only after 1968 (in this respect, echoing the similarly delayed effects of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* and the Situationist International in France, whose importance only became apparent, retrospectively, after 1968). Nevertheless, in conjunction with the explosion of leftist publishing, facilitated by sympathetic publishers, especially Feltrinelli whose millionaire director himself became fatally involved in militant activity in the GAP guerrilla group, these journals constituted a laboratory for the experimentation with radical modes of thought beyond existing orthodoxies that would

have a profound resonance with the cycle of worker and student struggles that began in 1968.

As already stated, in Italy, as in other countries throughout the world, the late 1960s were marked by the explosion of the student movement. Exceptionally, this movement in Italy, however, encountered an highly developed worker articulation of both radical thought and militant organization beyond conventional parties and unions, and therefore a more consistent basis for combined worker and student struggles. This was in contrast with contexts such as France, where the PCF was able to facilitate a return to order, and impose 'normal' demands over wages and conditions after a few months of a general strike, not to mention West Germany and the US, where the student movements never really encountered any substantial working class militancy at all. Instead, even the initial period of student and worker rebellion in Italy lasted over two years, and was met by right-wing terrorism and a state in a sufficient level of crisis to give many the impression that a revolutionary transformation was both necessary and imminent. This is not to say that Workerism itself had anticipated the student movement; in fact, with its obsessive engagement with the mass worker, it had not really considered the university as a key site of struggle. Nevertheless, within the student movement, there had been not only engagement with the ideas of Workerism, but their creative extension to the changing situation of students, notably in the *Tesi di Pisa* (1967), that set out to analyse the class composition of students within contemporary capitalism, arguing that rather than a future elite, students had become proletarianized as part of a more complex social division of labour than fixed, conventional accounts of class would be able to articulate. The idea of students as future 'intellectual labor' (Wright 2002, p. 94) enabled an encounter with developments within Workerism that began to point to the socialization of the worker beyond the walls of the factory. More than this, other 'student power' factions within the student movement stressed that, regardless of their future class positions, students as students were already in a similar position of exploitation to workers and therefore able to pursue related forms of struggle and autonomy that would also be autonomous in form and organization from worker struggles: the student was not to be defined by a class background or future career, but rather by a specific experience of struggle.

The coming together of student and worker struggles was by no means unified under a single political ideology or organizational form, but was rather characterized by a proliferation of small groups that, while sharing the belief that radical insurrectional organization was needed outside of established party and union forms, differed greatly especially in terms of

strategies and tactics. We have already seen how one tendency involved the formation of clandestine armed groups such as the BR, and, as in many other contexts, student-worker militancy also expressed itself in terms of Maoist-style Marxist-Leninist workplace interventions of groups such as the much reviled *Unione dei Comunisti Italiani*. The two groups that emerged in greater proximity to Workerist thought and practice were *Lotta Continua* (the Struggle Continues, LC) and *Potere Operaio* (Worker Power, PO), both of which sought to link together student and worker struggles by means of new conceptual elaborations and new modes of organization. *Potere Operaio* had begun as a regional political group consisting mostly of student activists, many of whom later adopted leading roles in *Lotta Continua*, which was formed in 1969; meanwhile, a national *Potere Operaio* was formed as a direct continuation of Workerist ideas, (including some of the Workerists' key theorists like Negri), as was the Manifesto group that had broken away from the Italian Communist party, and who ultimately started the only daily far-left newspaper. While the labyrinthine maze of these various groups is difficult to disentangle (see Wright 2002, pp. 125-127; Wright 2005, pp. 73-103; Balestrini and Moroni 1997, pp. 349-381), what their formation proposed was the question of how to continue and intensify the combined worker and student struggles that had unfolded over the preceding years, with the aim of precipitating an imminent revolutionary transformation of Italian society.

Nevertheless, there were distinct differences among these groups, especially between spontaneist and organized approaches to political struggle. The spontaneist or movementist perspective of LC sought to coordinate and extend the new forms of struggle such as university, workplace, and housing wildcat strikes and occupations, arguing that 'no theory can develop outside of the ideas that the masses in struggle express, or of the way in which mass struggle reveals the functioning of society and the real possibilities of its revolutionary overcoming' (Balestrini and Moroni 1997, p. 371).³ In contrast, the new national *Potere Operaio* maintained the idea that industrial workers were at the vanguard of political struggle and that it was necessary 'to impose a worker direction on immanence, on the present and future cycle of social struggles. Simple coordination is no longer enough' (Balestrini and Moroni 1997, pp. 372-373). The first statements of *Potere Operaio* expressed a rejection of the need to continue an autonomous student movement, or even 'student-worker assemblies' (Balestrini and Moroni, 1997, p. 373), but rather to address how 'the relation between autonomy and organization, and the role of class vanguards, is the complex relation that links worker struggles with people's struggles in general' (p. 373).

Beyond this, within groups such as *Potere Operaio*, there were a number of conflicting tendencies, ranging from grassroots workplace organizations, to regional micro-factions, to those who sought to develop new means of creative expression, to those who wanted to organize PO as a new type of Leninist party. Steve Wright gives a detailed account of the attempts – and failures – of *Potere Operaio* to constitute itself as the ‘party of autonomy’ (Wright 2005, pp. 76-92), but what is perhaps more interesting was the tendency for autonomy to be conceived increasingly outside of and beyond the figure of the industrial worker. Responding to various struggles and pressures ranging from Black labour struggles in the US, to the feminist criticism of *Lotta Femminista*, to the new cycle of nonindustrial struggles in the south, PO began to propose a cartography of class composition far removed from the vanguardist notions of the industrial working class with which it began: ‘the central problem of recomposition became the relation between factory workers and the growing number of the unemployed’ (Wright 2002, 138). Opposing what they called ‘factoryism’, or placing the demands of industrial workers above and against those of the unemployed, PO began to advocate the social wage or universal basic income, an equal payment for all members of society, regardless of their direct contribution to production, a proposal not just sensitive to the needs of the unemployed and precarious workers, but also to feminist demands for wages for housework. This enacted a shift from what they saw as reactive economic demands for specific wage increases for particular categories of workers, to a political demand that could only be realized by a radical political reorganization of both production and the economy. While worker struggles in the wake of 1968 had already separated wages from productivity in line with the slogan ‘less work, more money’, the social wage was one step further in the separation of wages from labour itself, and thereby the affirmation of proletarian needs and ‘auto-valorization’ over the requirements of the capitalist extraction of value. In other words, it constituted the passage to the refusal of work that came to characterize the movement of autonomy more generally.

While *Potere Operaio* dissolved itself as an organization in 1973, the dynamics that it pursued were continued in other groupings, ranging from localized grassroots militancy to new national organizations such as *Autonomia Operai*. The period of the mid 1970s saw not only the shift from the focus on the mass worker of the factory to a range of new social subjects such as the unemployed, youth, and women, but also a new idea of autonomy as not simply the product of workplace struggles, but as an ‘archipelago’ of different initiatives ranging from workplace to neighbourhood struggles, to the occupation of new social spaces and the elaboration of new modes of

culture and communication. Given this diversity of practices and struggles, the idea of an 'area of autonomy' began to emerge that would encompass this range of practices, stressing their commonality, but without attempting to unite them from above in a particular party form.

At this point, it is worth recapping the various political meanings associated with the word autonomy to sharpen its sense within the *Autonomia* movement or, rather, the emergent area of autonomy. First of all, autonomy was not meant to indicate either the Enlightenment idea of the autonomy of the rational, individual subject nor the idea of the 'autonomy of the political', which is, again, an idea from the Enlightenment, but one also strongly associated with some currents in Marxism, especially those associated with Lenin. The idea of subjective autonomy was one strongly critiqued by Marx, in that he saw individual consciousness as produced within a specific set of material and economic relations. Hence, the ruling ideas of an era are in fact those of the dominant class rather than expressions of individual genius, operating *ex nihilo*. A corollary to that is that material, economic relations strongly condition (if not determine) political forms, which is why capitalism and economic class struggle are emphasized over forms of government in his analyses of contemporary societies. Nevertheless, within several tendencies of Marxism, there was a return to the idea of autonomy of the political, in the sense of a political vanguard that constituted the people's party; of course, this is meant to be the collective autonomy of a political strata, rather than enlightened individuals, at the vanguard of the working class itself, while not involved in immediate processes of production. The results of this autonomy of the political, however, was inevitably the creation of a bureaucratic class of managers, a situation no better for the working class than the rigid class distinctions of industrial capitalism.⁴ This kind of idea of the autonomy of the political was practiced in a different way in what was known as the Eurocommunism of the PCI in Italy, but with the same kind of results. As a separation of political representation from productive processes in the form of the division between unions and the party, the latter constituted an autonomous political class whose service to the working class belied the real function of managing it, which would become absolutely clear in the PCI's embrace of austerity and the Historic Compromise with the DC, and complete rejection and repression of nonunion and extra-parliamentary industrial and political actions.

The sense, or rather senses, of *Autonomia* were completely different to this autonomy of the political in any of its forms. First of all, following the thought of Workerism, it was applied to the autonomy of the practices of a collective, material subject for example, the working class conceived of in

processual, open terms, and not of any specialized political strata within or outside it. Secondly, autonomy was conceived as autonomy from capitalist relations of production, which were seen as relations of domination; the concept of autonomy was therefore a way to articulate not a Hegelian dialectical reversal as in economist Marxism, but a refusal of and escape from dialectics, by means of the refusal of work. Specifically, autonomy referred to processes of 'auto-valorization' or the self-production of value, as opposed to the subordination to the production of value embodied in capitalist relations of production, based on both economic and political exploitation.⁵ This follows directly from the Workerist thesis that workers or 'living labour' drive the transformations of capital, and are therefore potentially autonomous from capitalist relations. Auto-valorization has to be understood, however, not as a merely individual and voluntaristic act of conscious self-enlightenment, but an alternative collective production of subjectivity, and this is perhaps what was new in *Autonomia*. In one of Franco Berardi's several reconsiderations of the *Autonomia* movement, he strongly emphasizes this dimension of subjectivation:

In place of the historical subject inherited from the Hegelian legacy, we should speak of the process of becoming subject. Subjectivation takes the conceptual place of [the] subject [...] this also means that the concept of social class is not to be seen as an ontological concept, but rather as a vectorial concept (Berardi 2009, p. 74).

This proximity between auto-valorization and subjectivation not only shows the commonality between class composition and the post-structuralist thought of Deleuze, Guattari, and Foucault, but also gives a more concrete account of what this auto-valorization consisted, in the practice of the refusal of work:

Refusal of work does not mean so much the obvious fact that workers do not like to be exploited, but something more. It means that capitalist restructuring, technological change, and the general transformation of social institutions are produced by the daily action of withdrawal from exploitation, of the rejection of the obligation to produce surplus value and to increase the value of capital by reducing the value of life (Berardi 2009, p. 75).

There are several key points here that are fundamental to an understanding of the multiple social practices that constituted the area of autonomy. First

of all, *Autonomia* was a generalized alternative production of subjectivity, a becoming other than the capitalist-subjectified individual that took on multiple forms and was embraced by multiple subjectivities such as youth, women, students, gays, lesbians, and creative workers, as well as the conventionally understood industrial-working class. Secondly, and in contrast to the production of subjectivity to be found within guerrilla groups and even affirmed by some of the supposed leaders of *Autonomia*, this alternate production of subjectivity took the form of a withdrawal or exodus rather than the preparation for a deadly clash with the capitalist state; even acts of industrial '*auto-riduzione*' (go slows), factory occupations or sabotage were less about confronting capitalist power head-on than about withdrawing productive activity and workers' time from capitalist valorization processes in favour of their own. To give a concrete example, during the radical factory occupations in Turin, triggered by the occupation of Mirafiori in 1973, the workers expressed an idea of class struggle markedly different from both ideas of reformism and self-management: 'In 1920 they said let's occupy but let's work. Let's show everyone that we can run production ourselves. Things are different today. In our occupation, the factory is a starting point for the revolutionary organization of workers – *not a place to work*' (Mirafiori worker cited in Katsiaficas 2007, p. 26). The rallying cry of 'we want everything' from 1969, is here given a new content in that the 'everything' is clearly not just more money, and therefore more consumer goods, for less work, but complete freedom to determine the form of one's own activity.

Nevertheless, exodus as political strategy does not mean avoiding conflict altogether or non-violence; rather, since this withdrawal was not only of living labour, but also of sites and processes of capitalist production and reproduction such as the factory or the university, this exodus would hardly be tolerated by the forces of order and instead was likely to provoke as much, if not more, repression than a head-on confrontation. Exodus therefore becomes an art of selection both of territories and practices that can enable specific places, or rather space-times, to be subtracted from capitalist functions and used otherwise, whether this is done 'under the radar' or alternatively with sufficient force to defend successfully the liberated, 'autonomous zone' from its possible reappropriation.⁶ The previously mentioned Berkeley People's Park could be seen as just such a strategy if an unsuccessful one, since its act of withdrawal was too easily visible and inscribed in oppositional dynamics of force and therefore attracted an intense and violent counterreaction. Less spectacularly, the squatting practices that had been popularized since the 1960s, are clear cases of exodus

from capitalist relations of exploitation through rent and were strongly associated with autonomy movements not only in Italy but throughout Europe; in Germany, for example, squatting, especially in Berlin, was almost synonymous with the *autonomen* movement itself. As was already raised by the example of the People's Park, the question of what to do with and in a liberated space has given rise to many initiatives, ranging from simply a place to live, to experiments in communal, countercultural, and political modes of collective life, to alternative productions and distributions of knowledge via bookshops and information centers, to cultural centers incorporated anything from radical theory study groups to live gigs and other countercultural activities. Significantly, in Italy in the 1970s, such spaces were also the ideal sites for the free radio stations, which will be discussed more thoroughly later in this chapter.

In this sense, practices of autonomy were not only in advance of capitalist development, in the sense of anticipating and going beyond the deregulation and restructuring of the economy that took place from the 1970s to the 1990s, but also ahead of the formulations of many of the new-left groups that attempted to play a leading role in a movement that strongly resisted any such neo-Leninist *ceto politico* (political stratum) as both Steve Wright and George Katsiaficas have convincingly argued. The analyses of Antonio Negri collected in *Books for Burning* (2005), for example, that were contributions to debates taking place within first *Potere Operaio* and then what Negri simply calls *Organized Autonomia*, but more specifically the *Colletivi Politici Operai* via the associated newspaper *Rosso*, are a confusing mixture of class-compositional insights, such as the identification of the figure of the socialized worker in *Proletarians and the State* (2005, pp. 118-179); neo-Leninist reconfigurations of the party form in *Toward a Critique of the Material Constitution* (2005, pp. 180-230); and, most notoriously, the affirmation of sabotage as auto-valorization in *Domination and Sabotage* (pp. 258-290).⁷ It is redundant to add anything to the extensive discourse on the use made of these texts in Negri's trial for subversion of the state and for being the suspected *cattivo maestro* of the Red Brigades, which are dealt with especially well in the editor's introduction to the volume (Murphy, 2005, pp. ix-xxviii). What does emerge, however, from reading these pamphlets, is a more or less desperate attempt on the part of Negri to keep up with the practices of *Autonomia* and to contain them within some form of neo-Leninist model. This does not always mean, as Wright acknowledges, that the party form will necessarily lead the proletarian struggle; at times, Negri situates it more as 'the army that defends the frontiers of proletarian independence' (Negri cited in Wright 2005, p. 92), or, in other words, an

entity that does not interfere in processes of auto-valorization but instead defensively protects the advances that have already been made.

Nevertheless, as Wright also insists, up until his arrest in 1979, Negri never abandoned the need for some type of party organization of the *Autonomia* movement, an approach that characterized organized *Autonomia* more generally. This reactive and torturous approach can also be seen in Negri's obsessive focus in these pamphlets on the figure of the industrial worker, even while simultaneously proposing the concept of the socialized worker. In other words, even in the context of the dismantling of the disciplinary factory as a response to worker struggles, Negri pays little or no attention to the resistant practices of students, youth, women, the unemployed, or other non-worker subjects, but, instead, especially in *Domination and Sabotage*, romantically fetishizes the figure of the rebellious industrial worker, giving rise to the only passages in his writing history that could be made to resemble the armed vanguard discourse of the Red Brigades. This would prove to be a costly failure, not only in Negri's own case but also in the trajectory of *Autonomia* more generally, as it increasingly fell into the trap of being indistinguishable, at least from the perspective of power, from the armed vanguards that most of its participants would, however, strongly reject politically, strategically, and intellectually.

George Katsiaficas's account of Italian *Autonomia* as well as autonomy groups in other contexts like West Germany, has the virtue of distancing it from the Leninist perspective of organized *Autonomia*, in order to focus more precisely on the diffuse and heterogeneous practices that constituted it. Two areas that are key in this respect are the women's movement and youth countercultures. In terms of the former, there was a similar critique on the part of groups such as *Lotta Femminista* that could also be found of the new left in other contexts such as the US. However, what was interesting in the Italian case, was that some of these critiques were articulated in proximity to autonomist politics, rather than in separate and separatist spheres, making original and key contributions to autonomist thought and practice through struggles over such issues as abortion, divorce laws, and violence against women, even if they were not always fully acknowledged as such. For example, the demands made by *Lotta Femminista* and *Autonomia Femminista* for 'wages for housework' (Katsiaficas 2007, p. 33), was clearly an extension of class-compositional Marxism to include gender inequality and was at least partially acknowledged as such by groups such as PO. Radical Italian feminism was also very quick to reject 'equality feminism' as a limited concession by capitalism, easily incorporated into industrial

restructuring and, instead, to insist on a differential feminism of a kind later embraced widely in Anglo-American feminism. In this sense, the relation between autonomous feminism and *Autonomia* was double in that it operated both internally and externally, both as a critique, but also as a proliferation of autonomist concepts and political practices. For example, women participated in mass demonstrations, but also often constituted their own sections of them, and they also set up their own cultural centres and 'consciousness groups'; ironically, by organizing autonomously, the women's movement was able to constitute an exemplary component of the *Autonomia* movement, since autonomous organization and autovalorization were the basic principles of the movement itself. As such, even such neo-Leninist autonomist theorists as Negri were able to recognize (at least retrospectively) in the women's movement a key expression of autonomist politics:

The feminist movement with [...] its critique of politics and the social articulations of power, its deep distrust of any form of 'general representation' of needs and desires, its love of differences, must be seen as the clearest archetypal form of this new phase of the movement. It provided the inspiration, whether explicitly or not, for the new movements of proletarian youth in the mid-1970s (Negri cited in Katsiaficas 2007, p. 35).

What Negri does not say is that this novelty itself developed out of the youth culture associated with the late-1960s student movement, before its subordination to the more male-dominated factory struggles, making it hardly surprising that feminism would then return the gift to the next wave of youth and student revolt in the mid 1970s.

The creative and anomalous practices of youth culture had, of course, been instrumental in the struggles of the late 1960s, even if they had tended to be subsequently subordinated to new-left political agendas of one kind or another. Nevertheless, the student unrest was not merely political in the conventional sense but also countercultural, as Robert Lumley's account of the student movement attests. For example, Lumley notes the changes in appearance of the students, from the clean-shaven Milan architecture students, dressed in respectable suits and ties, who occupied their faculty in 1967, to the post-1968 students, whose male participants sported Cuban-style beards, blue jeans, and red handkerchiefs, while the women dispensed with makeup and dresses. As Lumley puts it, 'the new appearance cultivated by the student movement was experienced as an immense release from dull respectability' (Lumley 1990, p. 71), whether this meant men adopting bright

and expressive clothing, while women were freed from the compulsion to express themselves via their appearance. Significantly, the students identified as object of protest not merely oppressive relations of production and reproduction, but also cultural consumption, organizing actions against both the famous La Scala opera house and also against fashion department stores as part of a campaign against Christmas consumerism. While the anti-fashion of the student movement could be seen as a new conformity to a type of radical chic, its aim was more to express visually the desire for a less class-differentiated society, to critique dominant codes of appearance on both class and gender lines, and to embody a future society in which dress would either be of little or purely expressive significance, rather than an imposed code of social differentiation. This is only one example of the ways in which the student movement gravitated towards the idea of cultural as much as political revolution, a tendency that would become considerably amplified in the mid 1970s.

Another phenomenon that needs mentioning, is the explosion of counter-cultural expression in forms ranging from graffiti and street art to fiction, comics, radical theatre, and music. Wright gives the example of *Paparazzo*, the cartoon rebellious southern Italian worker who graced the pages of *Lotta Continua* during a key period, supplementing its theoretical analyses with a figure of affective identification (Wright 2002, pp. 131-132). Such figures also appeared in street art, which shifted during the course of the 1970s from merely the reproduction of movement slogans in the urban environment, to an expressive art form whose message became increasingly less important than the act of free expression itself. Other areas of cultural reinvention were found in theatre; for example, in the work of Dario Fo, which increasingly appeared anywhere but in a conventional theatre, and instead in Piazzas, bowling alleys, or factories: 'After his first year, Fo estimated that he performed in front of 200,000 people, 70 percent of whom had never before attended a play' (Katsiaficas 2007, p. 40). This is only one example of the many attempts to generate a truly popular, subversive culture. Another domain of cultural innovation was in music, which could range from the Classical modernism of Luigi Nono who performed his *musique concrète* industrial symphonies in factories, to the politically informed progressive rock of AreA: International POPular Group, fronted by the Greek singer, Demetrio Stratos, to a range of exponents of a politicized version of the Italian Canzone tradition such as Claudio Lolli.⁸ Cultural revolution and invention, however, was not only the domain of artists, and was shortly adopted in a very different way by the autonomist youth grouping that became known as the Metropolitan Indians.

As shown above, there was a countercultural, creative fringe of the 1968 student movement, but these steps towards cultural and lifestyle revolution tended to be marginalized in favour of the harder political concerns of the far-left organizations, which also tended to subsume student protest within the worker movement, perceived as a more politically radical arena for contestation. From the beginning of the 1970s, however, in addition to the dense tracts of Marxist-Leninist discourse found in the publications of the far-left groups, there also appeared reviews that were decidedly countercultural, such as *L'erba voglio* [I Want Grass] and *ReNudo* in Milan and later, *A/Traverso* in Bologna. Both the Milan reviews opened themselves up early on to discussions of feminist and gay and lesbian politics, but they especially promoted youth radicalism, combining politics with the organization of free rock concerts. Phenomena ranging from the American underground, drugs, hippie culture, psychedelic rock, and Reichian sexual liberation, to urban guerrilla groups like the Weather Underground and the Red Brigades could be found within the pages of these reviews, without submission to a particular correct line of evaluation. Part of this was a delayed importation of the style of the US counterculture, but, in the highly politicized environment of youth culture in Italy, it was more of the Yippie or Motherfuckers variety, or the 'Mao of western Marxism' with the 'long hair of American counter-culture' (Andrea Valcarenghi cited in Lumley 1990, p. 297). *ReNudo*, for example, claimed to have popularized three types of activity that would be central to this new youth underground: 'The organization [...] of the struggle to reappropriate free time' expressing itself via clashes at pop concerts to force the reduction of admission prices; 'the creation of free, self-managed events and spaces'; and 'the radical critique of the extraparliamentary Left's personal politics' (cited in Lumley 1990, pp. 297-298). Negri and others may have abstractly discussed the 'socialized worker', but, in the pages of reviews such as *ReNudo*, new proletarian figures actually emerged, composed of students, youth unemployed, squatters, and others who felt estranged, not only from bourgeois capitalism but also the far-left ideal of the disciplined militant.

By the mid 1970s, these new youth subjects and their practices of squatting and setting up alternative spaces and practices had begun to achieve a prominence well beyond the marginal status of the countercultural practices in the late 1960s. Even previous 'workerist' modes of rebellion started to change meaning; *auto-riduzione*, for example, was transformed from a resistance to production in the form of a go-slow strike, to the rejection of consumer society through the refusal to pay full prices. While this practice had originally emerged out of the worker practice of mass refusal to pay

increased service charges such as bus fares (Wright 2002, pp. 158-159), it was soon adopted in youth culture, largely in areas of consumption usually considered inessential such as movies, concerts, and buying records. The combination of widespread urban squatting, the formation of cultural centres and practices of *auto-riduzione* began to generate a whole alternative and vibrant social sphere that actually created the areas of autonomy that 'organized autonomy' was only able to theorize as the fruits of a successful clash with the state. Similarly the 'refusal of work' was also carried out in the literal sense of choosing unemployment or informal employment (known in the movement as 'the art of getting by') over regular work, as demonstrated when youth *en masse* refused the jobs offered to them as part of a work creation scheme in Milan. By 1977, such practices had become so formalized that youth groups were able to inform the organizers of a Santana concert in Milan that they could only guarantee it would not be disrupted if there was a massive price reduction. Finally, there was a development that was picked up on enthusiastically by figures as prestigious as Umberto Eco, namely a reinvention of political language via humour and irony. In some contexts, this political language drawing explicitly on the legacies of artistic, rather than political avant-gardes became known (humorously) as Maodadaism.

This transformation of language can be seen first of all in slogans. In 1968-1969, demands had been elegantly simple and direct, almost minimalist: 'less work, more money', 'we want everything', or 'all power to the workers' (cited in Lumley 1990, p. 225). In the mid-1970s youth counterculture, however, strange new slogans emerged, whose meanings often relied on several layers of decoding: 'A hundred policemen per faculty – send the whole army to university'; 'Free radios are a provocation – all power to the television'; or, referring to the austerity demanded of workers by the PCI leader Lama, 'Lama star, Lama star, we want to make sacrifices' (to the tune of 'Jesus Christ Superstar'). As is indicated in the second slogan, this reinvention of language swiftly gravitated toward the new medium of free radio. What was immediately striking, however, was the vast gulf between this new, irreverent language and conventional political discourse, which made the torturous theoretical discourse of the New Left seem, in contrast, barely distinguishable from that of the PCI.

No group was more expressive of this shift in political style than the Metropolitan Indians (MI). Coming from different class origins, but identifying strongly with the new youth culture, the MI painted themselves and dressed as American Indians for the performance of a range of spectacular actions, ranging from *auto-riduzione* to violent clashes with authority. The product of consumer and media society, this group, similar to the US Yippies,

formed small, fluid, and egalitarian communities and practiced 'revolution for the hell of it', largely directed at consumer society. Their demands ranged from free 'marijuana, hash, LSD and Peyote' to 'destruction of zoos and the rights of all animals to return to their native lands and habitats', the latter an extra-species extension of ethnic self-determination claims. The MI also resembled the Black Panthers in their endorsement of proletarian self-defense, most notoriously in ironic writings about 'our comrade, the P38', which will be returned to later.

The first official action of the MI was to storm a jazz festival in Umbria; the associated communique notes that 'the weapon of music cannot replace the music of weapons' (Cited in Katsiaficas 2007, pp. 39-40). In the pages of *A/Traverso*, the MI explain their action as directed against music as a spectacle and expressed their related rejection of mass demonstrations as a spectacular form of politics, promoting passivity. This points to another key element within the youth movement, namely Situationist thought and practice. Groups such as the MI were confusing for almost all sectors of Italian society because of their nonconformity, even with regards to the norms of revolt; while every-one was accustomed to rebellious industrial workers and middle-class students who sought to disguise their class origins via a 'workerist' extremism, the MI defied all existing class distinctions. Of largely proletarian origins, they nevertheless had no identification with the culture of work, not even the worker movement, but, instead, dressed even more expressively and unconventionally than students, and chose to dine at the best restaurants without paying, or to steal expensive food, clothes, and champagne.

Nevertheless, they conformed in unexpected ways with autonomist ideas, for example, by practicing their own version of 'auto-valorization', defining their own needs and fulfilling them directly without mediation, and by a refusal of work that, in many ways, went much further than that practiced within the workers' movement, even its most radical forms. Even their seemingly most serious actions, such as the raiding of an armory to obtain weapons for self-defense was not without its humorous side, as the MI also appropriated tennis rackets and fishing poles. In other words, the MI constituted a phenomenon not only like the Yippies, but also resembling the more violent 'mini-insanity' of the West German June 2nd movement, even if this was more of a case of aleatory Dadaist resonance than any possible influence. For these reasons, there is something about the MI, and the movement of 1977 more generally, that resembles artistic avant-gardes as much if not more than political ones, leading Katsiaficas to compare them explicitly with Dada:

the MI did to Italian cities what Dada had done to the European art world at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. As Dada's anti-art scandalized the world of galleries and parodied the seriousness of artists, the MI's antipolitics broke with traditional conceptions of political conduct and revealed a wide gulf between themselves and previous generations (Katsiaficas 2007, p. 40).

Of course, these original avant-gardes such as Dada were themselves both artistic and political, especially in the case of Berlin Dada, and operated via a decomposition and recomposition of all activities of modern life, an approach highly resonant with the post-political politics of the MI. It is the intensification of this emergent 'post-political politics' that will be examined next under the rubric of 1977 considered as constellation or nexus of distinct but interrelated and resonant events.

1977 as Nexus: The Movement of 1977, Creative *Autonomia*, and Punk

'Germany got Baader Meinhof, England got punk but they can't kill it'
(Text from a Crass poster 1977, reproduced on the 1996 CD reissue of *The Feeding of the Five Thousand*).

According to Franco Berardi, perhaps the writer who has devoted more attention than anyone else to the experience of 1977 in Italy, the events of 1977 have to be understood in a dual way, both as an explosion of creativity and as a shutting down of this creative potential in violence. This is eloquently expressed in the duality of his contribution to the volume *1977, l'anno in cui il futuro incominciò* [1977: *The Year in Which the Future Began*], entitled '1977: L'anno in cui il futuro finì [1977: the Year in which the future ended]' (Berardi 2002).

If the relationships between plural events can be understood as constituting a nexus, or even a society, what would it mean to look at a particular year as a nexus? Would this require an inventory of everything that happened in that particular year, however unrelated such a collection of incidents might appear, as Berardi himself recently attempted?:

1977 is not an Italian year: it is the year Steve Wozniak and Steven Jobs created the trademark of Apple and what is more the tools for spreading information society ... In that year Yuri Andropov, secretary of the KGB

wrote a letter to Leonid Brezhnev, arguing that the Soviet union was in danger of disappearance if the gap with the USA in the field of informatics was not bridged. It was the year in which Jean-Francois Lyotard wrote the book, *The Postmodern Condition*. The year when Charlie Chaplin died; the man with the bowler hat and cane passed away. This was the year of the end of the Twentieth Century. (Berardi 2009, pp. 14-15).

While not as random a list as the list of famous people who died on one day of a year, there is clearly something bordering on the absurd or the Borgesian about compiling such a list, even if the events that are mentioned are all, in some way, contained within a larger event of radical and contested political, cultural, and informatic transformation. In other words, while certain of these events might form some kind of larger nexus or society, the relations between them are far from clear and depend on other events that are not mentioned; filling in the gaps, even between these few events might result in an infinite regress in order to constitute a series or nexus in which both Andropov's letter and Chaplin's death, for example, can participate in some meaningful way. More than this, as described, these are the mere shadows of events about which we know very little, further complicating the construction of any meaningful nexus. At most, we can say that these 'current events' are symptoms of other more profound events of transformation, which may indeed constitute a society, however, we know next to nothing about them.

The purpose of discussing 1977 as nexus in this book is more modest in the sense of not attempting to catch hold of all the significant events, or even a selection of typical events, which can be left for nostalgic TV documentaries; such a project is irremediably confined to the actual and unable to grasp the event in the full or 'internal' manner alluded to earlier. Instead, I will limit myself to two chains or nexes of events in specific contexts: the Italian movement of 1977, and the series of events constituting the British punk explosion. There are specific relations between these nexes of events that could constitute a society, in profound connection with the larger world nexus of transformation taking place at that particular time. This is not to say that these events were hegemonic, or that these are the only events in 1977 worth engaging with in this way, but rather that relations can be established between these different series of events that, in turn, constitute a coherent society in Whitehead's terms, that give some indication of the larger event of contested transformation of which they form a part.

Accounts of 1977 in Italy usually begin with the events surrounding the occupation of the University of Rome in February of that year that

underlined the distance between the movement of 1977 and the earlier student movement. Provoked by a neofascist armed attack on unarmed protesting students on the 1st of February, the occupation began after the police opened fire with submachine guns on a subsequent demonstration. By the 9th of February, as many as 30000 people (Katsiaficas 2007, p. 55) – not only students, but also feminists, autonomists, hippies, and workers – were occupying the university in Rome, with check-points at all entrances to maintain security, and there were supportive occupations of campuses throughout the country. On 17th of February, Luciano Lama, chairman of the Italian Communist-controlled trade unions, ‘entered the campus on a flatbed truck with his own sound system and hundreds of hand-picked security men’ (Katsiaficas 2007, p. 56) and denounced the students as ‘petit bourgeois’ and even ‘fascist’, despite the fact that, with recent changes to the Italian university, many of the students (not to mention the other occupiers) were of decidedly proletarian origins. The general assembly had agreed to Lama’s intervention with the intention of defeating him politically, begun by the MI who, ‘armed with rubber tomahawks, streamers and water balloons, surrounded his platform and began to chant “Lamas belong in Tibet!” [...] and “We want to work harder and get paid less!” Referring to the military coup in Chile, they shouted “In Chile, tanks; in Italy, the Communists!”’ (Katsiaficas 2007, p. 56). As Lama continued referring to the students as parasites, he was met by a chant of ‘idiot, idiot’ (Katsiaficas 2007, p. 56) and a fight broke out between the occupiers and Lama’s security forces, ultimately leading to the expulsion of Lama and his entourage from the university; the communists then cheered when, after the rector called the police, the latter came to violently break up and end the occupation with tear gas and clubs.

The contextual significance of this antagonism should not be underestimated and certainly should not be seen as a conventional form of anticommunism. While far-left groups had long been critical of the reformism of the Italian communist party (PCI), especially after the party’s recent alliance with the Christian Democrats, there was generally a sense of being on the same side of the social struggle; in the events at the University of Rome, however, there was a profound rupture that characterized the subsequent events that year, in which the youth movement made a critical break from not only the party, but an entire conception of struggle rooted in the factory. From then on, antagonism played out directly in the social spaces of the metropolis, many of which were governed by communist leadership.

This is not to say that the movement was completely unified; in fact, there were profound differences between the feminists, MI, and the more

conventional political groupings within the movement. Tactically, this was played out in the tactical differences between what became known as 'organized *Autonomia*' that favoured raising the level of confrontation to a direct conflict with the state, and 'Creative *Autonomia*' that still favoured strong collective self-defense, but put more emphasis on creative modes of expression and struggle. Nevertheless, all factions agreed on a student general strike, to continue the conflict in the domain of the city, and to a national day of action on the 12th March. The day before, however, the activist Francesco Lorusso was shot in the back by police at the University of Bologna (Katsiaficas 2007, p. 58); and, as a result of the amplification of this event via Radio Alice, there was an immediate response the same night, which included torching two police stations and the occupation of the main railway station. Over the next days, there was a large-scale battle for control over the city centre, on a scale that eclipsed that of the national demonstration in Rome; the movement successfully beating back the police in many instances, occupying urban spaces, and setting up barricades. This conflict was echoed in many other cities with violent clashes between the movement and the police, the latter receiving strong support from the communist party and unions, who also called for the shutting down of free radio stations such as Radio Alice as 'organs of subversion'. In addition to radio stations, the police raided feminist centres, bookshops, newspapers, publishers, and other media of the far left, while the communists called on doctors and lawyers not to offer any help to the movement. For the first time in the century, tanks appeared on the streets, and the March 12th march in Rome was also violently repressed before the marchers had even left the assembly point. Nevertheless, a week later, autonomists were able to completely overwhelm and disrupt a PCI organized counter-march in Rome, showing that they had, by no means, given up; such contestations over the streets, especially in Rome and Bologna continued for several months, as well as further university occupations.

During this time, the level of violence increased from tear gas versus Molotovs, to shooting on both sides resulting in fatalities of both protestors and police. This type of violence has to be distinguished from the type of clandestine guerrilla violence practiced by the Red Brigades, occurring as it did directly and openly in relation to the clash of forces, yet, while some elements of the movement strongly rejected such an escalation, others argued for the necessity of forming armed guerrilla units (and some were indeed formed at this time). At any rate, the movement had become locked in this deadly escalation in which both sides responded to fatal attacks by means of further violence, such as:

when the police opened fire on unarmed demonstrators, killing 19-year old feminist Giugiana Masi and wounding another woman. The next day, demonstrations took place throughout Italy. In Milan 20 people broke away from the march and fired on a squad of police, killing one (Katsiaficas 2007, p. 60).

Such violent escalation robbed the movement of any social space for developing as a mass, radically democratic one and instead forced the choice between either withdrawal or the increasing tendency towards guerrilla actions: in addition to creative and organized autonomy, now a third wing emerged, armed autonomy. Even in this case, however, this was a very different phenomenon to clandestine groups such as the Red Brigades, in that it was composed, like the movement itself, of small autonomous groups or even individuals, choosing to continue the blocked movement by violent means, but without any submission to a strategically organized clandestine military structure. From the perspective of power, however, *Autonomia* became indistinguishable from these guerrilla groups and, over the next years, thousands of activists were caught in the antiterrorist net, and its new laws of policing and detainment without trial for suspicion of subversion against the state.

This dramatic chain of events, however, may serve to obscure as much as it reveals about the movement of 1977, which was, in a sense, forced to become other than what it might have been in the absence of such severe repression and the poles of guerrilla action and state antiterrorist reaction within which it became caught. A little more clarity can be gained from some of the more perceptive theoretical responses to the movement both from within the new left and relatively sympathetic (but still critical) elements of the Communist party. Initially, the movement was described, for example, by LC militants as a 'strange movement of strange students' (See Balestrini and Moroni 1997), referring not only to the transformation of the university into a new centre of the movement, but also to the strange behaviour, attitudes, and subjectivities of these students relative to preceding forms of political behaviour, even on the far left. More damning, but equally perceptive was PCI member Asor Rosa's account of what he called the 'two societies', drawing attention to the shift between the worker movement's aims to contest and to transform Italian society, versus the movement of 1977's apparent goal to form a second society, departing definitively from the first, and only interested in its own needs. While, in some respects, this was an attempt to paint the movement as anti-working class, a depiction belied by its largely proletarian constitution by proletarianized students, the

unemployed, and even industrial workers tired of PCI control, it nevertheless grasped something fundamental about what was new in this movement, namely, its tendency towards exodus from existing productive practices, especially those associated with the factory, and the embrace and invention of new modes of life, as foreign to the industrial labour movement as they were to industrial capitalism. More recent accounts of the movement tend to emphasize its grasp on postindustrial transformation, not that it would be a movement for post-Fordism, deregulation, or neoliberalism, but rather as a refusal both of disciplinary society and of its post-Fordist transformation. The movement, in this way, corresponded most closely to its description by Sergio Bologna as a 'tribe of moles' (in Lotringer ed. 2007, 36-61), burrowing under and subverting the existing order, while, at the same time, experimenting with new modes of life and new forms of expression, demonstrated especially by the embrace of network forms of communication as exemplified in the explosion of free radio stations and other movement media from street art and theatre to new types of publications, to new humorous and ironic modes of speech and appearance.

Inasmuch as the movement constituted new modes of political expression, rather than organization or ideas, it makes sense to understand it as an emergent media ecology. As suggested above, this was not limited to the actual use of media, although the media expression embodied in free radio stations such as Radio Alice, Radio Sherwood and Radio Onda Rossa played a key role in facilitating new modes of nonhierarchical communication, in blurring the boundaries between activity and passivity, and allowing for an inclusive collective assemblage of enunciation, rather than the intellectual specialization that still characterized even militant journals. These radio stations, however were not merely instruments for democratizing communication but were also part of veritable experiments in horizontal, network modes of self-organization, not only of communication, but of the movement itself. As such, they played a key role in cycles of struggle played out over the course of 1977; however, these new modes of communication and self-organization, which had the technical and social capacity to redefine what was meant by expressions such as 'autonomy' and 'self-valorization', were submerged within an increasing spiral of violence and counterviolence that deprived these experiments of the common space for any further development. This is not to say that free radio stations, or other forms of creative autonomy, were innocent, in that they fully participated in the momentum of the movement, including its momentum towards violence; nevertheless, in their operations of maximizing circuits of nonlinear communication, self-organization, and desire, they constituted a media ecology oriented

toward a different future than those elements of the movement that could only imagine autonomy as the result of a successful armed clash with the state. As such, this was less the construction of a 'second society' than what *A/Traverso* called a disaggregation, an exit or exodus from existing modes of social organization and the experimentation with new ones. In other words, those of Félix Guattari, rather than orienting themselves towards a future armed communist revolution, they precipitated an immediate 'molecular revolution', a production of the common, to use Hardt and Negri's terms, operating directly within the existing social spaces of the movement, less to organize it than to facilitate its own process of self-organization.

At this point, it is necessary to shift from this nexus of events to those taking place in the UK, to examine what they may have to do with the series of events constituting the contemporaneous punk explosion. Before spelling out some of the resonances between punk and *Autonomia*, it is worth quoting a different account of 1977, in the form of a song from the first album by the Clash: 'In 1977 I hope I go to heaven/Cos I been too long on the dole/And I can't work at all/You better paint your face/No Beatles, Elvis or the Rolling Stones' (The Clash '1977', 1977).

While not formulated in explicitly political terms, this song, as much through its delivery as through its lyrical content, expresses a similar form of disaggregation to that practiced in the Italian *Autonomia* movement: a rejection of dominant culture ('no Beatles, Elvis or the Rolling Stones') is combined with a refusal of work ('I can't work at all') and an urgency for cultural reinvention ('it can't go on forever') without specifying this beyond the enigmatic ('you better paint your face') resonating with the MI's painted politics, even though this was not a direct reference. Keir Milburn has written of this resonance between punk and *Autonomia*, modifying the statement by the band Crass, 'Germany got Baader Meinhof, Britain got punk' to add 'Italy got *Autonomia*' (Milburn 2001, n.p.), since there is far more resonance between punk and *Autonomia* than with urban guerrilla groups, despite punk musicians' predilection for wearing Baader Meinhof and Red Brigades T-Shirts. While it is impossible to recapitulate the event constituted by the punk explosion in Britain in as much detail as we have examined *Autonomia*, some salient points are worth outlining.

Punk is generally presented in one of two ways in the voluminous writings to which it has given rise:

- 1: As an 'explosion' largely centred on the dramatic series of events surrounding the Sex Pistols and the bands and scene that emerged around them in 1976 and 1977, largely based in London. Generally, this is seen

with various divergences in attributing agency between the entrepreneur Malcolm McLaren and his coterie of various post-situ-influenced designers and propagandists, and the band itself, as well as those that came in its wake such as The Clash, Siouxsie and the Banshees, The Damned, the Adverts, Wire, and numerous others (see Savage 1991);

2: As a tendency within rock culture, mostly in the US going back at least to the early 1970s if not the 1960s, comprised of groups such as the Stooges, Suicide, the New York Dolls, the Sonics, late 1960s garage bands, even moments in the career of glam rock performers as successful as David Bowie or Roxy Music. This was especially apparent in range of US punk or proto-punk groups immediately preceding the English punk explosion, such as Television, Richard Hell and the Voidoids, Blondie, Talking Heads, Pere Ubu, the Electric Eels, and others (see Heylin 2008, Home 1996).

Contradictory as these accounts might seem, they are, in fact, merely two sides of a similar coin. Clearly, many aspects of punk music were already developing, especially in New York in the mid 1970s, but it only took off as a cultural force when it met with British sociocultural conditions. As Roger Sabine put it in his introduction to a key revisionist collection on punk from the 1990s, *Punk Rock, So What*:

if we accept that one of the key defining elements of punk was an emphasis on class politics then it could only have begun in one time and one place – Britain in the late 1970s [...] the UK's economic recession can be seen as a catalyst [...] the quality of the experience in America was different, and much less politicised (Sabine 1999, p. 3).

The sense that US punk or proto punk was only an aesthetic rebellion whereas in the UK it became a political one is apparent on the earliest books dealing with punk, such as Dick Hebdige's *Subculture* (1979), and the recently republished *One Chord Wonders* (2015) by Dave Laing. While many of the later musical tendencies of punk, such as 'directness and repetition (to use more than three chords was self-indulgence) at the expense of technical virtuosity' (Laing 2015, p. 22) were already apparent in the groups labelled punk in the early 1970s, arguably already exhibiting a 'so bad its good aesthetic', this was a merely aesthetic rejection of the musical and economic excesses of progressive rock, rather than any coherent grassroots DIY movement. For Laing, British punk shared the US punk hostility to dominant forms of popular culture, but this led to the combination of three

previously absent elements: the embrace of a DIY attitude refusing musical industry norms and values, the challenging of criteria of quality in musical style, and the injection of lyrical content taken from everyday life, at times tackling taboo social issues and transgressive experiences (Laing 2015, p. 24). In place of disparate, isolated groups whose artistic rebellions merely enacted a return to 1950s rock and roll, was a vibrant and intense subcultural scene that seemed to have, not only a sound and a style, but an attitude, a volatile sociopolitical context and a potential politics.

But the question of what exactly this politics consisted of is highly debatable, especially when considered in ideological terms; was this the post-Situationist politics advocated by Malcolm McLaren, Bernie Rhodes, Tony Wilson, and other middle-class promoters, or the proletarian anarchism announced by Johnny Rotten, but only given any real content by second-generation anarcho-punk groups from Crass onwards? Was punk's 'white riot' an anti-racist and antisexist politics in line with such contemporaneous cultural phenomena as Rock against Racism, or was it full of reactionary tendencies extending to white power and the national front (see Duncombe and Tremblay ed. 2011)? Were political signifiers, from swastikas to 'circles with A in the middle', used according to their literal and conventional meanings, or subverted as part of a subcultural style calling dominant power relations into question precisely through an inchoate jumble of incompatible signs? Such debates based around ideology and signification, however, provide only limited understandings of punk, which has to be seen in ecological if not media-ecological terms.

As already indicated, the UK punk explosion cannot be explained in terms of a single cause or origin, but was rather the confluence of a complex series of factors including:

1. A moribund music industry that had abandoned its countercultural ideals in favour of supergroups distinguished by their technical virtuosity, material wealth, and distance from their audience;
2. A history of aesthetic challenges to this dominant tendency in rock music, in everything from lo-fi garage groups of the 1960s, to the Rock Maudite of the Velvet Underground, the Stooges, the MC5, Alice Cooper and the New York Dolls, to some forms of UK glam and pub rock;
3. Specific sociopolitical conditions combining extensive strike actions and unemployment with economic decline and a sense of crisis over resources, especially oil;

4. Spectacular media images of urban guerrilla resistance and state repression in Germany, Italy, and the US, but also in the UK in the form of IRA bombings and the less well-known actions of the Angry Brigade;
5. The existence of cultural entrepreneurs who combined ideals of revolutionary change from the 1960s and early 1970s with the desire to make money and the sense that both could be achieved via media manipulation;
6. The existence of a wide range of bored and disenfranchised youth, both middle- and working-class, and the spaces for encounter of this youth especially via participation in art schools and polytechnics;
7. The development of both printed and audiovisual media through such innovations as Xerox, video, and cassette culture, enabling the circulation of alternative media and the cheap production and reproduction of everything from flyers and posters, to records, cassettes, and live video.

It was only the confluence of all these factors that was able to generate the punk event, or, rather, nexus of events that became known as the UK punk explosion. Of particular importance in this was the confluence of a specific state of media development with the abovementioned sociopolitical conditions, catalyzed by agents from different class backgrounds and playing different roles within the emergent punk ecology. While it is an exaggeration to say that Malcolm McLaren created the Sex Pistols, certainly his Situationist-derived ideas of manipulating the media spectacle were instrumental in punk developing from mere local encounter of middle-class fashionable transgression with proletarian DIY rock and roll. For example, performing 'God Save the Queen' on a barge on the Thames as a counter-Jubilee anti-royalty celebration,⁹ or appearing on national television with Bill Grundy, were dependent on his cultural entrepreneurialism, even if the Sex Pistols themselves did not need much direction to generate moral panic via the mass media. Similarly, punk's interventions were generative of both attention and amplification by both the music press and a range of new amateur fanzines, both of which played a central role in its cultural dissemination on a national and ultimately international level. In this, there was a revival of early-1970s countercultural practices of alternative media, facilitated in the case of fanzines by advances in Xerox technologies that were not only pragmatic, but symbolic of punk more generally as a form of 'Xerox music' and culture. Even if the supposedly militant DIY attitude of punk was belied by most of its first-generation groups signing to major labels, it also quickly spawned an entire network of DIY

technological practices from groups such as the Desperate Bicycles and the Buzzcocks, producing their own singles without any record-label support, to the development of multiple independent record labels, and attempts to extend this autonomy into distribution via the formation of networks and cartels at a national level. Such enterprises often maintained and extended the practices of countercultural alternative media, especially in the case of Rough Trade, which was run more as a not-for-profit hippie collective than as a capitalist business, at least in the beginning. Finally, the punk ecology extended into forms of alternative radio, again reviving countercultural alternative media practices that had become dormant and giving them a new vitality, as well as producing effects in the mainstream media and recording industries as much through punk not being played on the radio, as through the exceptional moments when it was played as on the John Peel show.

For this reason, early attempts to capture punk in terms of only some of its dimensions were prone to failure however insightful these accounts may have been. Dick Hebdige's account of punk in terms of subcultural style, for example, only captured the practices of punk consumers/participants in sociopolitical and semiotic terms, paying little attention to the music itself, whereas Dave Laing's *One Chord Wonders* more or less framed punk as an intervention into the norms of the recording industry, bracketing out its sociocultural effects. Other more recent collections have expanded this frame to show the impact of punk on contemporary art, fashion, film, and other spheres as well as to interrogate its complex cultural politics (see Sabin ed. 1996). Nevertheless, too little attention is paid to punk as a



Fig. 8: The Sex Pistols on the Bill Grundy Show from *The Filth and the Fury* (Temple, 2000).

complex media phenomenon, already crossing between recorded music, film, television, fashion, graphic arts, music journalism, flyers and posters, live performance, records, and cassettes, and produced out of and through the confluence of these various technical media as a distinct and contagious media ecology that ultimately had global effects.

More specifically, punk was able to construct, out of this range of available media in a specific urban sociocultural environment, an intense expression of both reigning dominant forces and resistance to them via a rebellious range of mediated performances from new modes of urban dress and behaviour, to aggressive live performances, to the generation of a range of artefacts extending well beyond the music itself (films, posters, record covers, and homemade cassettes are only part of this extensive archive). In all of these arenas, punk, in relation to existing norms of rock music, operated very much in terms of noise. This is not only in the obvious sense of producing 'noisy' music, since psychedelic rock and heavy metal before punk were both exemplars of noise, sometimes produced more effectively than in punk. Punk, however, was noisy in a communicational sense precisely for its failure to meet a set of what had become standard requirements for rock music communication: technical proficiency and macho prowess over one's instrument, professional standards of recording and live performance, and appropriate behaviour of fans and consumers. In all these levels of what Paul Hegarty qualifies as punk's ineptness (Hegarty 2007, pp. 89-90 ff.), noise was generated especially in relation to the stadium virtuosity of progressive rock, leading him to affirm the Sex Pistols's *The Great Rock and Roll Swindle* despite, or rather because of, its obvious flaws and inauthenticity as a greater punk album than *Never Mind the Bollocks* (2007, pp. 95-97). This position, adopted from Stewart Home, flies in the face of writers like Savage, Laing, or Greil Marcus, who celebrate tracks from the former, such as 'Holidays in the Sun', as sophisticated works of punk rock authenticity, as opposed to the lacklustrely performed bad cover versions of the latter, expressly designed to promote McLaren's version of the Sex Pistols as his own fraudulent creation, a version of events John Lydon would only be able to correct through the formation of the decidedly post-punk Public Image Limited (PIL). But punk noise was not limited to ineptness in relation to rock norms, nor to the refusal to produce a quality product, even where it came to rebellion (something that bands like The Clash and Crass would certainly depart from). Rather, punk noise was a short circuiting of mainstream media channels both by producing punk's own forms of media and especially by presenting the mass media with messages and content it was unable to assimilate easily. The Bill Grundy 'obscurity' interview with

the Sex Pistols and its subsequent tabloid amplification is one example of this, but, on a smaller scale, so was the refusal of the Clash to go on Top of the Pops, leading their singles such as 'Bankrobber' to be presented in the form of interpretive dance. At its height, punk was a disturbance to norms of both media communication and the music industry, by being popular enough to be in the charts, while remaining unrepresentable in terms of both radio airplay and televisual representation, while also forcing a reluctant music industry to engage with material that was directly critical of its practices, as in the Clash's 'Complete Control' or the Sex Pistols's even more direct 'EMI': 'Too many people support us/An unlimited amount/Too many of them selling out'. In this sense, punk functioned not only as literal, musical noise, or the sociological, subcultural noise identified by cultural studies accounts like Hebdige's, but also as communicational, media noise, short-circuiting dominant modes of representation and opening spaces for alternative modes of expression.

It is in this sense of cultural noise, that punk comes into a strong relationship with Italian *Autonomia*, as Milburn suggests, even if punks in the UK were initially largely unaware of what was taking place in Italy, and the Italian autonomists were barely aware of punk, if the music played on Radio Alice was anything to go by, with a few exceptions such as the proto-punk of Patti Smith. However, this would change over the years after 1977 with a hardcore punk scene developing in Italy in the 1980s, while the post-punk group Scritti Politti made direct references to Italian *Autonomia* in songs such as 'Skank Bloc Bologna' (1978), and through their name – Italian for



Fig. 9: The Clash, 'London Calling' official music video (1979).



Fig. 10: Joe Strummer in Red Brigades T-Shirt from *Rude Boy* (1980).

'political writings'. Nevertheless, both shared the project of a 'post-political politics' practiced by a rebellious youth, highly suspicious of existing political groupings, and much more interested in the creation of autonomous spaces for an alternative culture, than in conventional ideas of either reform or revolution. For all its imperfections, punk as much as *Creative Autonomia* was a prefigurative politics, operating through widespread practices of 'auto-valorization' that indelibly transformed both its cultural and media environment: 'Punk and *Autonomia* were both born as reactions to and accelerations of the struggles of the 1960s. They were contemporaneous not just with each other but also with the start of the restructuring of capitalism, which would later become known as neo-liberalism' (Milburn 2001, n.p.).

This is particularly evident in squatting practices, which were not only prevalent in autonomist practices in both Italy and Germany as already discussed, but also in UK urban centres, especially London throughout the 1970s. It is an interesting synergy that one of the more interesting accounts of these practices in London, *Goodbye to London* (Proll ed. 2010) was edited by former RAF member Astrid Proll, who relocated to London under a pseudonym and became involved with the more political end of the squatting and radical art movements there. While both punk and autonomist movements 'inherited' squatting from new-left countercultural practices, they both gave it a new centrality as a means of creating alternative collective spaces outside of dominant capitalist relations of private property. Both can therefore be seen as practices of 'disaggregation' or 'exodus' in relation to dominant social relations and cultural forms, operating through

their distinctive and rebellious use of available media. In the next section, we will look at these same phenomena in a different context, namely that of the medium of radio, whose creative and rebellious potentials became fully activated in the free and pirate radio projects that played a key role in both UK punk and Italian *Autonomia* in the 1970s.

Rebellious Radio from Marconi to Free Radios

Long time ago there were pirates/Beaming in waves from the sea/But now all the stations are silent/'Cos they ain't got a government license (The Clash, 'Capital Radio One').

This is a public service announcement, with guitars. As shown in the above lyrics, The Clash were no less tuned in to histories of pirate and guerrilla radio than they were to the moment of 1977; in fact, they can be understood themselves as constituting a form of guerrilla radio as made explicit by the recent Julian Temple documentary on Joe Strummer, *The Future is Unwritten* (2007), as well as in their own track, 'This is Radio Clash'. While the Sex Pistols' various interventions were staged by Malcolm McLaren and others as a contemporary form of Shakespearean theatre, even if the actors did not always keep to the pro-situ script, The Clash operated as a kind of alternative world-information service, bringing such exotic political phenomena as the Sandinista revolution to punk teenagers who were previously unlikely to have even heard of Nicaragua. 'This is Radio Clash' exists in two versions, both making reference to the use of radio during the Cuban revolution: 'This is Radio Clash/Stealing all transmissions/Beaming from the mountaintop/Using aural ammunition', or even more explicitly in the more well-known version: 'This is Radio Clash from Pirate Satellite/Orbiting your living room, cashing in the bill of rights/Cuban army surplus or refusing all third lights/This is Radio Clash on Pirate Satellite'. This alignment with both histories of pirate and guerrilla radio require more unpacking before moving onto a more detailed analysis of the exemplary 1970s free-radio station Radio Alice. This will involve a detour through the archaeology of some of the tendencies of radio as a medium and its various modes of piracy, as well as an examination of some of the theoretical engagements with the subversive potentials of radio and media more generally that fed into the formation of Alice, in conjunction with the surrounding political movements and socio-technical context outlined previously.

Marshall McLuhan famously declared radio to be a hot medium, and, given its uses in everything from informal amateur communication to guerrilla warfare to state propaganda, it is not hard to see why. For McLuhan, the primary content of the medium is the human voice, and voices have a tendency to activate and to engage, even to cause conflict and strife. In this, McLuhan is closer than he would appear to the understanding of *Radio Rebelde* by Che Guevara previously presented. Radio also fits very closely with Kittler's understanding of technical media as the misuse of military equipment, as radio was, even more than cinema and other technical media, developed explicitly for military purposes – only after World War I did it acquire entertainment uses, initially as a way to sell off the radio sets no longer required by the military. Nevertheless, neither Kittler nor most other media archaeologists have given much attention to the medium of radio. Kittler himself was much more interested in the archaeology of recorded sound in the 'Gramophone' chapter of *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, while Zielinski's explorations of audio-vision engage critically with the assemblages of cinema and television with little consideration of radio, other than as a footnote in the development of audiovisual tele-technologies (Zielinski 1999, pp. 138-139). Wolfgang Ernst, however, is an exception to this neglect of radio, although typically he focuses on the technical apparatus rather than its social functions. Nevertheless, this engagement is significant for understanding radio's origins as a one-way medium.

Radio waves, as electromagnetic radiation with a typically relatively long wavelength, outdate radio technologies and were only identified and studied in laboratory conditions in the nineteenth century. Ernst is especially interested in the scientific work of Heinrich Hertz, who succeeded in generating radio-like phenomena in laboratory conditions: 'Hertz demonstrated that sparks are in fact ultra-frequent oscillations of electricity and transmit electromagnetic waves that behave as light' (Ernst 2012, p. 187). Nevertheless, there were several pieces still missing for this to constitute the technical assemblage of radio as it would develop, namely both technical and human receivers that would only be put together with transmission systems by entrepreneurs such as Guglielmo Marconi. For Ernst, this one-way propagation of radio waves is not only the prehistory of the mass medium, but 'the alternative approach to it' (Ernst 2012, p. 188). While this could be interpreted in several ways, the essential point for the media ecologies of free and pirate radio is that propagation is always in excess of its reception, waiting in advance of new receivers both technical and human. Ernst's subsequent reduction of radio history to the history of vacuum tubes, however, is not especially useful for understanding such

socio-technical assemblages and is an extreme example of the scientism and insistence on mechanical rather than social dynamics in a reductive sense of what constitutes radio as a machine. In fact, Kittler already proposed such an approach, pointing not only to the material substratum of vacuum tubes as Ernst does, but also to radio's destiny as the passage from military technology to rock music: 'What electrical information technology affords, maximally exploiting all modules and parameters, is the self-referential business of rock music [...] lyric poetry as it actually exists today' (Kittler 2014, p. 159). By tracing the genealogy of pirate radio from informal amateur radio and the imaginary radio of the avant-garde, however, Ernst and Kittler's media-archaeological insights about the prehistory of the medium of radio remain valuable correctives to linear medium histories.

Symptomatic of Ernst's 'machinic' account of radio is his dismissal of the role of Marconi vis-à-vis his techno-scientific antecedents like Hertz:

Radio thus was unconsciously invented in the laboratory (and only later put together by entrepreneurs like Guglielmo Marconi, who combined the Hertzian apparatus with Branly's [reception] device, and Popov's antenna to make a functional tool for transmitting morse code)' (Ernst 2012, p. 188).

This parenthetical activity of bricolage only becomes worse when, instead of transmitting digital morse code, it becomes the conduit for material such as voice and music, at which point Ernst's interest is only centred on the vacuum tubes that make this possible, before pointing to radio's digital transformation as a return to its techno-scientific roots as the propagation of pure information via RFID technologies (2014, p. 165). For Ernst, Marconi's flaw was precisely not only that he took radio out of the lab and into the public, human realm, but that he did so commercially: 'Like Edison, Marconi was also compelled to finance his invention as a business; he practiced wireless telegraphy' (2012, p. 163). However, such an extreme focus on technical materiality as the basis for media archaeology creates more problems than it solves. If a banal linear history of broadcast programming and content is circumvented, so too are the key activities of inventors, bricoleurs, pirates, activists, and artists who made heterogeneous uses of radio waves in different situations. As such, it provides a narrow account of radio as a social as well as a technical machine, or as both at once, effectively corralling it to the lab and its surrounding field of techno-science; thus, it is far from the most useful approach to radio for the purposes of the media anarchaeology that will be developed in this chapter.

For one thing, Marconi's contribution to the development of radio can be read in a markedly different ways, not only conventionally as the founder of broadcast radio, but of free radio, as 'the first pirate' (Hind and Mosco 1985, p. 7). Not only did Marconi transmit the first wireless signals first to the Isle of Man and then between Cornwall and Newfoundland around the turn of the century, but, in 1919, he also set up the first public telegraphy service, and made the first radio broadcasts, having developed the technology sufficiently to transmit human voices. In these activities, he was well ahead of state regulation, but, as commercial radio began to develop around the globe, the English authorities were cautious about this dangerous misuse of what they saw in quite Kittlerian terms as a military technology; they banned public broadcasts until they could issue a limited amount of licenses both for receiving and transmitting radio signals, an attitude that persisted throughout much of the twentieth century. Marconi, who had set up the station 2MT in 1921, was unwilling to be restricted to the 15 minutes a week he was allotted by the British authorities, and this uncontrolled use of the airwaves created consternation in the conservative press and parliament that ultimately led to the formation of the BBC as a nearly total monopoly over the British airwaves, although continental-based pirate alternatives to the Reithian BBC's mission to educate and elevate the tastes of the British mass audience soon appeared.

However, interfering in this transformation from bricolage to state control or, in other contexts such as the US, a commercial market controlled by powerful networks, were the activities of amateurs. Radio amateurs, or 'hams', were the first customers to buy the radio sets that become available in large numbers after the end of World War I, when they were no longer required for military purposes if they did not assemble their own crystal sets... Radio's origins in telegraphy as point-to-point wireless communication was enthusiastically adopted by amateur societies and clubs that, as early as the 1910s, also turned their attention to broadcasting. Such clubs were no more ideological than any other hobby club, but, even in this early period, they became politicized by the medium itself and early initiatives of state and corporate control over the airwaves. As Jesse Walker puts it, 'they espoused, often inchoately, only one political idea: that the airwaves should be open to the public, not monopolized by a powerful few' (Walker 2001, p. 13). In the 1920s, the airwaves became a battlefield between such amateurs and the state and corporate control that became progressively entrenched in the 1920s, only to be questioned again in the 1960s. As in the UK, informal, amateur, and illegal radio practices drove radio development both technically and institutionally and, to give one example, constituted a

significant socio-technical resource during World War I when thousands of ham radio enthusiasts became US Navy radio operators (Walker 2001, p. 26). But relations between amateur, commercial, and military radio were not without conflict, and, in fact, signal jamming derives from the practices of hams in relation to commercial and state radio operations: ‘amateurs [...] weren’t afraid to buzz their rivals’ (Walker 2001, p. 19).

Ultimately the three-way contest between the military, commercial interests, and amateurs squeezed out the latter, but the rebellious attitude would keep returning in a range of contexts and eras, of which 1960s UK pirate radio was only the most vocal and subsequently celebrated example. Interestingly, this turn to offshore piracy, in order to circumvent existing laws that only extended to territorial waters, reconstituted amateur radio as piracy, as it was still perceived in military terms as endangering shipping and naval communications.

Before moving on to a discussion of Radio Alice as an exemplary case of political free radio in the 1970s, it is necessary to examine some of the theoretical impetus behind such initiatives in the 1970s revival of the Brechtian notion of radio as a dialogical and dialectical medium, which the animators of Radio Alice combined with the legacies of Situationist practice and the Deleuzo-Guattarian anti-Oedipal critique of both psychoanalysis and militant politics. All of these theoretico-practical currents proved essential in the constitution of Radio Alice in the sociopolitical context of the *Autonomia* movement and its repression.

Media beyond ‘Socialist Strategy’: Enzensberger, Baudrillard, and the Genealogy of Radio Alice

By the 1970s, radio had already gone through another explosion of pirate activity in the 1960s, which, in the UK context, had been suppressed through a combination of legal repression and appropriation, with Radio 1 poaching key pirate DJs such as Tony Blackburn and John Peel after the pirate threat had been well and truly overcome at least in its offshore varieties. While 1960s pirate radio played a key role in the dissemination of pop culture, it was hardly any more political than ham radio, except in its struggle against the de facto monopoly of the BBC. In many respects, it was simply the exploitation of a gap in the market generated by the rigid control over the UK airwaves, in favour of the kind of ‘underground’ radio programming that had already become widespread in the United States. Even if these motivations were only a mixture of the commercial and the pop

cultural in the beginning, however, the eradication of pirate radio led to a politicization, one that informed future terrestrial pirate-radio projects, as well as theoretical interest in the untapped potential of free and pirate radio beyond state and corporate control.

Such radical potential was not lost on earlier theorists, especially Bertolt Brecht, who not only diagnosed the problem of radio as 'onesided when it should be two. It is purely an apparatus for distribution' (Brecht 1993, p. 15), but also proposed a remedy for this situation:

Change this apparatus over from distribution to communication. The radio would be the finest possible communication apparatus in public life, a vast network of pipes. That is to say, it would be if it knew how to receive as well as transmit, how to get the listener to speak as well as hear, how to bring him into a relationship rather than isolating him. (1993, p. 15)

In other words, Brecht imagined the technologically transformed listener and called for his/her 'mobilization and redrafting as a producer' (1993, p. 16).

This is precisely the 'future' problematic expounded upon by Enzensberger in his 'Constituents for a Theory of the Media', which exerted an influence on the formation of free radio stations in the 1970s like Radio Alice (see Gruber 1997, pp. 47-48, p.90; Berardi, Jacquemet, and Vitali 2009, p. 79). In light of both technological development and shifts in the political mobilization of media, there are, however, some key differences between Enzensberger's theory and Brecht's 'utopian' proposal. Enzensberger is especially critical of the new-left critical theory approach to the media purely in terms of manipulation, even in the more sophisticated form of Marcuse's repressive desublimation. While clearly true in a capitalist-media world in which Che Guevara can be used to sell office equipment (Enzensberger 1982, p. 53), this is no reason to abandon the search for an alternative use for the media since 'a socialist perspective that does not go beyond attacking property relations is limited' (1982, p. 51). Pushing further the term 'manipulation' as literally handling or the 'technical treatment of a given material' (1982, p. 54), Enzensberger proposes that the real question is not whether media manipulate but who is doing the manipulating – a revolutionary approach to the media must therefore put manipulation in the hands of everybody rather than a select few trained professionals serving existing power relations.

For Enzensberger, electronic media are structurally egalitarian, meaning that they are based on switching operations that are technically reversible and also that they are oriented towards action rather than contemplation

and the present rather than tradition. This much was already grasped by Walter Benjamin in his famous 'Work of Art' essay. In a contemporary context, it is clear that media equipment are not merely means of consumption, but also potential means of socialized production; far from being technically inherent in electronic communication, the gap between producers and consumers has to be artificially produced by economic and administrative means. This does not mean merely advocating individualized uses of technology such as tape recorders, Polaroid cameras, or Super 8 cameras, since even the operation of radio equipment done as an individual remains infantilized at the level of amateur hobbyism. Rather, these means need to be subject to a process of social self-organization, generating a collective mode of production counter to dominant capitalist norms. However anachronistic the material components Enzensberger's engaging with, it is clear he is imagining a networked mode of communication that seems to anticipate the digital present:

Communication networks [...] provide politically interesting organizational models. [...] Networklike communications models built on the principle of reversibility of circuits might give indications of how to overcome this situation: a mass newspaper, written and distributed by its readers, a video network of politically active groups. (1982, p. 59)

As we will see shortly, such initiatives, of course, already existed and were especially prominent in the alternative media surrounding the *Autonomia* movement. Beyond notions of 'consumer terror' and the critique of the spectacle, Enzensberger constructs a contrast between repressive and emancipatory uses of media (adapted from 1982, p. 62):

Repressive use of Media	Emancipatory use of Media
Centrally controlled program	Decentralized program
One transmitter, many receivers	Each receiver, a potential transmitter
Immobilization of isolated individuals	Mobilization of the masses
Passive consumer behaviour	Interaction of those involved, feedback
Depoliticization	A political learning process
Production by specialists	Collective production
Control by property owners or bureaucrats	Social control by self-organization

Such a diagram clearly corresponds to the kind of guerrilla use of media evident in Radio Alice and goes well beyond the limitations of previously existing forms of pirate radio and alternative media. In fact, Enzensberger

refers directly to guerrilla uses of media in Latin America, not only in the production of alternative media networks, but in the sophisticated manipulation of mainstream media via calculated actions. For Enzensberger, Walter Benjamin in the 1930s was far ahead of the formulations of Marshall McLuhan in not only grasping the idea that ‘the medium is the message’ in terms of new modes of communication introducing new relations of scale, but also in facilitating new social relations for the self-organization of both perception and action. These new relations are potentialized by the technical capacities of electronic media, however far the actual use of these media is from these potentials:

As at present constituted, radio, film and television are burdened to excess with authoritarian characteristics, the characteristics of the monologue, which they have inherited from older methods of production – and that is no accident. These outworn elements in today’s media esthetics are demanded by social relations. They do not follow from the structure of the media. On the contrary they go against it, for the structure demands interaction. (Enzensberger 1982, p. 72)

What Enzensberger seems to be proposing is a step back from the constituted operations of the mass media as consumer spectacles in the service of established interests and power relations, to its constituent power, to paraphrase Negri (see Negri 2009), that is its technical affordances for use in processes of social self-organization, affordances that were also explored in practices of collective production of militant film and video, as well as of radio in the 1970s. This Benjaminian optimism about the constituent power of media was not shared by Jean Baudrillard, however, even if it went well beyond existing left formulations of media in terms of manipulation, spectacle, and counter-information; furthermore, Baudrillard subjected Enzensberger’s text to a savage critique that was, in its own way, equally influential on the propagators of Radio Alice.

Baudrillard’s ‘Requiem for the Media’ (1981) gives a fairly detailed if sarcastic presentation of Enzensberger’s argument, claiming that, despite its apparent novelty, it merely repeats classical Marxist gestures of expanding the terrain of productive forces into what was previously considered the superstructure, and claiming the potential for use value to triumph over exchange value: ‘always the same dream haunts the Marxist imaginary: strip objects of their exchange value in order to restore their use value’ (Baudrillard 1981, p. 280). The problem for Baudrillard is in not grasping the fundamental operations of technical media that,

far from being egalitarian and communicative, are, in fact, based on non-communication: 'it is not as vehicles of content, but in their form and very operation, that media induce a social relation; and this is not an exploitative relation: it involves the abstraction, separation, and abolition of exchange itself' (1981, p. 281). For Baudrillard, media are fundamentally a form of non-communication or speech without response, so to simply reverse the roles of producers and consumers will not result in any fundamental change. In other words, all proposals to take over the media, to democratize its content, to control the information process, or to reverse its circuits are useless unless its fundamental one-way transmission structure is challenged. Therefore, for Baudrillard, McLuhan, despite his limited grasp of the social consequences of the media, is more incisive when he claims the medium is the message since, according to Baudrillard, media such as television are already a more sophisticated model of dissuasive social control by their very operations than any Orwellian model of mass surveillance.

In contrast to Enzensberger, who chastises the post-1968 left for its love of the outdated media of posters and flyers, Baudrillard claims that, if there was anything revolutionary in 1968, it was precisely the instantaneous proliferation of graffiti as a form of immediate response with no separation or transmission. There can only be this kind of reciprocal communication when the very notion of medium is liquidated: 'Reciprocity comes into being through the destruction of mediums per se' (Baudrillard 1981, p. 284). Such a perspective ultimately condemns reversibility as remaining within the limitations of communication theory, as formulated by Jakobson and others in terms of 'transmitter-message-receiver' and 'Encoder-Message-Decoder', a structure that Enzensberger's proposals left intact.¹⁰ The same applies to Umberto Eco's proposal for a semiotic guerrilla warfare (Eco 1997, pp. 135-144), based on alternative popular decodings of media messages, which essentially set up the matrix for cultural-studies engagement with the media audiences since the 1970s, via the work of Stuart Hall. For Baudrillard, this is a simulation model of information relay, in which no reciprocal, antagonistic communication can take place. The kind of network-like communication that Enzensberger envisages through his examples of newspaper or video collectives, can only really constitute reciprocal communication when there are no more transmitters, receivers, or messages, but an open and responsive process. All of this anticipates, in uncanny ways, contemporary critiques of utopian ideas of networked communication associated with ICTs and the Internet. In many respects, Baudrillard's critique resembles that of Galloway in *Protocol* (2004), that

the technical networked form of reversible communication is perfectly capable of maintaining control and hierarchies, since control is inscribed into its horizontal modalities of communication in the form of protocols. In a sense, Baudrillard's critique is also a protological, informational one; merely redistributing the nodes in a media network, rendering transmission reversible, does not eliminate power and control, since these are already inscribed into media circuits, whoever is 'manipulating' them. Again referring to the example of graffiti, or more precisely the graffiti subversion of billboards and advertising, this is subversive for Baudrillard not because it reinterprets and decodes alternative meanings from those intended by the mass media, but because it responds immediately by destroying media communication through direct response, 'it simply smashes the code' (Baudrillard 1981, p. 287).

It might seem paradoxical to take inspiration from such an apparently dissuasive text that, if it appears to make arguments for a more revolutionary approach to the media, only does so in order to show the impossibility of such a strategy, through itself adopting a form of parody and simulation. Similarly, the fact that it rules out the subversive or revolutionary potential of any technical media more elaborate than spray painting a wall, hardly seems to be applicable in a project for the elaboration of a free radio station. Yet, from another perspective, Baudrillard's text is closer to Enzensberger's than it might appear and can be taken more as a challenge than a barrier to generating a revolutionary form of media practice. In this sense, Radio Alice can be seen as enacting the Benjaminian/Enzensberger project for a radical use of media precisely by destroying the very communicational basis of media in the theories of communication critiqued by Baudrillard. Rather than or beyond generating a situation in which receivers and transmitters were reversible, they aimed to generate a media ecology in which the distinction between these terms ceased to operate, in favour of a collective assemblage or subject of enunciation.

The Media Ecology of Radio Alice

Italy's first free pirate radio station, Bologna's Radio Alice, clearly derived its name from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (2010), but this naming was no mere accident; it was, in part, a reference to Gilles Deleuze's reading of Lewis Carroll and nonsense in *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze, 1990). The name Alice announced this radio's desire to go beyond the rational limits of communication and politics in the directions of a surrealistic

play with sense and nonsense, to produce a desiring form of political communication in which poetic delirium would have as much of a place as political events, or, further, a space in which false information could produce real events. This section will explore this anomalous assimilation of Alice in the context of free radio and the Creative *Autonomia* movement of 1977 in Bologna, focusing on the way that what was at stake was not the mere expression of a political line but the invention of new forms of communication, drawing on sources as diverse as the historical artistic avant-gardes, Deleuze and Guattarian philosophy, Situationist practice, and, of course, *Alice in Wonderland* itself. Such a hybrid and inventive political media practice, which attracted the attention and admiration of cultural figures such as Umberto Eco (see Eco 2000, pp. 167-176), as well as repression on the part of the authorities for its role in the 1977 creative-autonomy movement, provides an exemplary case of the way in which a seemingly apolitical text from a completely other context can cross over into a different domain and produce powerful effects, as demonstrated by the dual evaluation of Alice as the becoming popular of the avant-garde (Eco 2000, pp. 171-72ff.) and as a demonic agent of cultural subversion.¹¹

In this context, it is worth asking why Alice was invoked as the name of the first and most significant of the free radio stations; other radios had other names, for example, Radio Sherwood, whose reference to Robin Hood makes obvious sense in relation to a movement that directly contested the unequal distribution of wealth and even its definition. The choice of the name Alice had several meanings for the animators of Radio Alice; as a figure of both youthful curiosity and femininity, but also and more crucially as a reference to nonsense, paradox, and unconscious desires. In a recent reflection on Radio Alice, its former animators write:

The choice of Lewis Carroll's fictional heroine was pointed; Alice was heavily linked to the world of feminine symbolism but also to the upside-down logic of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*. Next to Carroll, as a second godfather, the group selected the Deleuze of *The Logic of Sense* (1990), a book which deciphered the paradoxes of identity encountered by Carroll's heroine as a metaphor for the loss of identity (for Deleuze, Alice wanted to be outside all logic, and the mirror – as symbol of identity – had to be continually crossed over) (Berardi et al. 2009, p. 78).

The several tributaries flowing into the constitution of Radio Alice included the reinvention of the semiotic experimentation practiced by the historical

avant-garde, already evident in the practice of the Metropolitan Indians, Situationist media intervention, and pranks and theoretical attempts to grasp the transformations both real and potential of technologically mediated communication in the work of Umberto Eco, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, and Jean Baudrillard. The key reference point, however, was undoubtedly the schizoanalytic perspectives of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* (1984), whose machinic, molecular revolution Alice attempted to materialize via the generation of a mode of expression that crossed between sense and nonsense, the personal and intimate, and the social and collective, becoming a radical media ecology or, in Deleuze and Guattari's terms, a 'collective assemblage of enunciation'.

So how exactly did Alice employ nonsense as a form of technologically mediated mode of free communication? The point was, first of all, to open political communication to all those elements that would normally be excluded as nonpolitical, whether because too personal, too banal, or too strange. According to its animators, Alice transmitted: 'music, news, blossoming gardens, rants, inventions, discoveries, recipes, horoscopes, magic potions [...] messages, massages, lies' (Berardi et al. 2009, p. 82). This seemingly Borgesian impossible list in relation to the norms of radio contents was a deliberate attempt to exceed the limits of what radio-mediated communication could become, rather than merely using radio as a megaphone for a preestablished politics; as observers like Eco noted at the time, the very openness to the banal and the absurd was, in fact, Alice's politics. More than this, the reference to lies was far from accidental; one of the key ways Alice challenged existing modes of political discourse was to reject the idea of political communication as the revelation of 'political truth', by exposing the lies of power, and thus its serious pedagogical function. Instead, Alice made use of lies in the form of ludic pranks, such as impersonating key politicians, in order to provoke political events following the formula that 'false information can provoke real events'. Clearly, in these and other practices, Alice was inspired by the desire to cross the looking glass in a Carrollian fashion, to employ paradox, nonsense, and play to escape the well-worn rhetorics of stable political positions and to open the radio station up to the maximum of unfiltered popular speech.

Nevertheless, this was not simply a matter of play or comedy, but a serious attempt to articulate the struggles of the *Autonomia* movement with a powerful means of communication and feedback, without any attempt to organize or control it. This is why Radio Alice was so demonized by the authorities as the amplifier of the movement, all the more suspect for its lack of adherence to norms of political organization, even those of the far

1996, p. 82). While Guattari does not state it explicitly here, this corresponds very closely to the rejection of even micropolitical identities or political forms such as Organized *Autonomia* enacted by Radio Alice; it was not just a question of giving space for excluded and marginalized subjects such as the young, homosexuals, women, the unemployed, and others to speak, but rather of generating a collective assemblage of enunciation allowing for the maximum of transversal connections and subjective transformations between all these emergent subjectivities. Guattari refers to Alice as ‘a generalized revolution, a conjunction of sexual, relational, aesthetic and scientific revolutions all making cross-overs, markings and currents of deterritorialization’ (1996, p. 84). Rather than pointing to a new revolutionary form, the experimentation of Radio Alice was a machine for the production of new forms of sensibility and sociability, the very intangible qualities constitutive of both the molecular revolution and what he calls elsewhere the post-media era.

Guattari is somewhat more specific about these practices in the essay ‘Popular Free Radio’ (1996, pp. 74-78). In this essay, he poses instead of the question of why Italy, that of why radio? Why not Super 8 film or cable TV? The answer, for Guattari, is not technical but rather micropolitical. If media in their dominant usages can be seen as massive machines for the production of consensual subjectivity, then it is those media that can constitute an alternate production of subjectivity that will be the most amenable to a post-media transformation. Radio, at this time, had not only the technical advantage of lightweight replaceable technology, but, more importantly, was able to be used to create a self-referential feedback loop of political communication between producers and receivers, tending towards breaking down the distinctions between them:

the totality of technical and human means available must permit the establishment of a veritable feedback loop between the auditors and the broadcast team: whether through direct intervention by phone, through opening studio doors, through interviews or programmes based on listener made cassettes (Guattari 1996, p. 75).

Radio Alice, in particular, developed new ways of articulating radio and telephonic networks to generate a collective and influential approach to the production of news: ‘News was provided live by whoever called the radio, without any filter or editing’ (Berardi et al. 2009, p. 81). For Guattari, such strategies of feedback generated a distributed media ecology well beyond the transmissions themselves:

We realize [with Radio Alice] that radio constitutes but one central element of a whole range of communication means, from informal encounters in the Piazza Maggiore, to the daily newspaper – via billboards, mural paintings, posters, leaflets, meetings, community activities, festivals etc (1996, p. 75).

In other words, it was less the question of the subversive use of a technical media form than the generation of a media or rather post-media ecology, that is a self-referential network for an unforeseen processual production of subjectivity amplifying itself via technical means; in this way, going well beyond Enzensberger's socialist strategy and resonating more with the Baudrillardian idea of smashing or scrambling the code. In the words of its former animators, the distinction between production and reception 'was erased. [...] Every social subject became a producer of radio culture' (Berardi et al. 2009, p. 81). The term Guattari uses of 'post-media' may seem misleading or even naïve if it is taken to imply that participatory media based on many-to-many communication are somehow transparent and unmediated, which is certainly disproved by the contemporary phenomena of the Internet and the World Wide Web. However, if a post-media ecology is understood more as 'post-mass media models of communication', proposing



Fig. 12: The Radio Alice Media Ecology at Work.

instead an alternative networked model of cybernetic organization that is collective and participatory, and that scrambles dominant media codes along with the roles of producers and consumers, then all guerrilla media ecologies are in this sense 'post-media', which is not to say they are unmediated.

As Guattari points out, this is far removed both from ideas of local or community radio in which groups should have the possibility to represent their particular interests on the radio, and from conventional ideas of political radio in which radio should be used as a megaphone for mobilizing the masses, as was the case with *Radio Rebelde* in Cuba, for example. In contrast, on Alice, serious political discussions were likely to be interrupted by violently contradictory, humorous, and poetico-delirious interventions and this was central to its unique micropolitics. It was even further removed from any modernist concern with perfecting either the technical form of radio (for example, through concerns with perfecting sound quality) or its contents (the development and perfection of standard formats); listening to the recordings or reading transcripts of Radio Alice is more than enough to convince about this last point.¹²

All of these other approaches to alternative radio, that is the local, the militant, and the modernist, share an emphasis on specialization; broadcasters set themselves up as specialists of contacts, culture, and expression, yet, for Guattari, what really counts in popular free radio are 'collective assemblages of enunciation that absorb or traverse specialties' (1996, p. 75). What this meant in practice was that, on Alice, an extreme heterogeneity of materials was broadcast, tending towards a delirious flow of sonic material. Radio Alice's innovations included the instantaneous reporting of news in the form of callers telephoning directly into the radio broadcasts from demonstrations and other political events and the lack of centralized control over what voices or ideas could be expressed, a philosophy of openness that was later adopted by Independent Media Centres in the early digital era. This meant, in practice, that calls denouncing the radio producers as 'filthy communists' coexisted with calls to support a current demonstration to the caller who rang up just to declare that whoever stole his bicycle is a 'son of a bitch' (Berardi et al. 2009, p. 82). In short, there was a delirious flow of expression that disturbed the social order less through its content than by opening up channels of expression and feedback between this free expression and current political events culminating in the radio becoming a key actor in the explosive political events of Bologna in March 1977, at the climax of which the radio station itself was targeted by the police and several of its key animators were arrested. This event was broadcast live with

the police knocking at the door and the announcers comparing the situation to the German film *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum* (Schlöndorff and von Trotta 1975): 'I don't know if you've seen the movie [...] The exact same elements, the same – bullet-proof vests, guns drawn, stuff like that. [...] I swear that if they weren't breaking down the door, I'd think I was at the cinema' (Berardi et al. 2009, p. 92).

What this type of radio achieved most of all was the short-circuiting of representation in both the aesthetic sense of representing the social realities they dealt with and in the political sense of the delegate or the authorized spokesperson, in favour of generating a space of direct communication in which, as Guattari put it,

it is as if, in some immense, permanent meeting place – given the size of the potential audience – anyone, even the most hesitant, even those with the weakest voices, suddenly have the possibility of expressing themselves whenever they wanted. In these conditions, one can expect certain truths to find a new matter of expression (1996, p. 76).

In this sense, Radio Alice was also an intervention into the language of media; the transformation from what Guattari calls the police languages of the managerial milieu and the university to a direct language of desire:

Direct speech, living speech, full of confidence, but also hesitation, contradiction, indeed even absurdity, is charged with desire. And it is always this aspect of desire that spokespeople, commentators and bureaucrats of every stamp tend to reduce, to filter. [...] Languages of desire invent new means and tend to lead straight to action; they begin by 'touching', by provoking laughter, by moving people, and then they make people want to 'move out', towards those who speak and toward those stakes of concern to them. (1996, pp. 76-77)

It is this activating dimension of popular free radio that most distinguishes it from the usual pacifying operations of the mass media and that also posed the greatest threat to the authorities; if people were just sitting at home listening to strange political broadcasts, or being urged to participate in conventional, organized political actions such as demonstrations that would be tolerable, but, once you start mobilizing a massive and unpredictable political affectivity and subjectivation that is autonomous, self-referential, and self-reinforcing, then this is a cause for panic on the part of the forces of social order, as was amply demonstrated in Bologna in 1977. Finally, in

the much more poetic and manifesto-like preface with which Guattari introduces the French translation of texts and documents from Radio Alice, he comes to a conclusion that can perhaps stand as an embryonic formula for the post-media media ecology of Radio Alice and the Creative *Autonomia* movement more generally:

In Bologna and Rome, the thresholds of a revolution without any relation to the ones that have overturned history up until today have been illuminated, a revolution that will throw out not only capitalist regimes but also the bastions of bureaucratic socialism [...] Bosses, police officers, politicians, bureaucrats, professors and psycho-analysts will in vain conjugate their efforts to stop it, channel it, recuperate it, they will in vain sophisticate, diversify and miniaturize their weapons to the infinite, they will no longer succeed in gathering up the immense movement of flight and the multitude of molecular mutations of desire that it has already unleashed. The police have liquidated Alice – its animators are hunted, condemned, imprisoned, their sites are pillaged – but its work of revolutionary deterritorialization is pursued ineluctably right up to the nervous fibres of its persecutors. (Guattari 1978, p. 11)

Apart from anticipating many of the subsequent problematics of the counter-globalization movement, what this citation tells us about radical media ecologies such as Radio Alice is that they are not something that can be given in advance; they are, instead, a process of the production of subjectivity, the becoming of a collective assemblage of enunciation whose starting point is the emptiness and coerciveness of the normalizing production of subjectivity that the mass media currently enact. Radio Alice as a media ecology therefore serves as an exemplary instance of media-ecological practice, in its political, subjective, and ethico-aesthetic dimensions. In other words, it is less the question of the subversive use of a technical media form than the generation of a media or rather post-media guerrilla network, that is a self-referential network for an unforeseen processual and political production of subjectivity amplifying itself via technical means. This book will now shift to examine a range of radical audiovisual media ecologies taking place in film, video, and television, which, despite Guattari's privileging of radio, equally experimented with various modes of guerrilla media in the 1970s.

4. Militant Anti-Cinemas, Minor Cinemas and the Anarchive Film

Introduction: Destroying the (Cinema) Apparatus, Transforming the (Audiovisual) Machine

The statement and call of Situationist militant and filmmaker Guy Debord at the end of the 1950s that 'The cinema too needs to be destroyed' (*On the Passage of a Few People Through a Rather Brief Period of Time*, 1959) was answered in multifarious ways during the decade of the 1970s, perhaps beginning with Godard's own much later premonition of these developments in *Le gai savoir* (*The Joy of Learning*, 1969), in which the two protagonists call, not for a 'return to zero', but first to arrive there, as a prelude to creating something new out of the ruins of the cinematic apparatus. Paradoxically, yet significantly, this conversation takes place in a television studio. This reinvention of the audiovisual beyond the cinema as a technological mechanism and ideological institution is a concern that would be taken up in Godard's work in video, television, and cinema across the 1970s, but also in the work of a number of like-minded filmmakers, whether or not they actually embraced the use of new technologies like video or not.

In contrast, 'apparatus theory', as developed from the work of Christian Metz, Jean-Louis Baudry, and others was taken up in film-theory circles, notably in the journal *Screen* and by authors such as Laura Mulvey, Peter Wollen, Stephen Heath, Teresa de Lauretis, largely as a form of psychoanalytically informed ideological critique of mainstream Hollywood cinema. This was then developed as both feminist and psychoanalytic film theory in the 1970s and 1980s, assuming a hegemonic position in film studies, before being challenged from positions ranging from the empirical and the historical, to the phenomenological and Deleuzian (see Shaviri 1993). In the sphere of radical cinema and audiovisual production, however, the critique of the cinematic apparatus was taken up differently, as a challenge for a joyful destruction of the cinema machine and the creation of new audiovisual assemblages in its place.

These new assemblages can be seen in several different film practices, from militant film collectives like SLON, the Dziga Vertov Group, and Newsreel, to new developments of the essay film, to experiments with video and multi-media as Expanded Cinema (Youngblood 1970), but surprisingly, would especially be expressed by and on the fringes of television, ranging

from the radical auteur television of Godard, Fassbinder, and others to the proponents of guerrilla television in the US. This chapter will present the stakes of this attempted dismantling of the cinematic apparatus, leading to the discussion of the seemingly oxymoronic practice of radical television in the final chapter. It will argue that more recent methodologies, such as Zielinski's specific version of media archaeology as a counter media history presented in his work *Audiovisions*, coupled with the media-ecological approaches deployed elsewhere in this book, are able to shed light on this pragmatic reverse of apparatus theory in the 1970s via an emphasis on its radical televisual subversion.

These subversions of the apparatus were far from uniform, and involved a multiplicity of strategies, ranging from destabilization of sound/image relations in what was still technically cinema, through the incorporation and use of video and multimedia as expanded cinema, to the emergent field of video art, to practices of guerrilla television often more concerned with new modes of producing, distributing, and accessing content than with radical political or artistic content itself. In order to survey what could potentially be a vast and chaotic field of heterogeneous practices, this chapter will attempt a taxonomy focused on three main domains of practice. In the first section, the passage from militant cinema as developed at the end of the 1960s will be tracked under the general concept of anti-cinemas. This will initially involve the consideration of radical attempts to transform the cinematic apparatus by Godard's work alone and with the Dziga Vertov group, the anti-televisual work of Harun Farocki in the 1970s, as well as in examples of the work of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet who, despite ascetic modernist appearances, considered themselves to be guerrilla, if not terrorist filmmakers. This section will conclude with the consideration of the remarkable guerrilla filmmaking of Masao Adachi and Kôji Wakamatsu.

The second tendency to be examined will be engagements with anti-psychiatric minor cinemas broadly conceived, culminating with Alberto Grifi's *Anna* (1975), but also making reference to anti-psychiatric documentaries such as *Asylum* (Robinson, 1972), and the collective projects of Marco Bellocchio: *Matti da slegare (Fit to be Untied)*, 1975) and *La macchina cinema (The Cinema Machine)*, 1976). This tendency is important not just as a documentation of marginal subjectivities and challenges to conventional therapy, but as a diagnosis of the cinematic production of subjectivity itself. This will then be complemented by engagement with some key, yet neglected 'minor' works of more well-known filmmakers,; each of which diagnoses a different aspect of post-1968 subjective conditions in the work of Pier Paolo Pasolini, Chantal Akerman and Rainer Werner Fassbinder respectively.

Following this, there will be an engagement with Alexander Kluge's work, especially the collective film *Germany in Autumn* (1977), as a demonstration of film as an alternative public sphere, suggesting a form of counter-television, as he had already theorized in his written work with Oskar Negt. It will be argued that these works, rather than representing radical political movements, were resonant enactments of militancy by means of the audiovisual subversion of the cinematic and televisual apparatus. This will be linked to the identification of a third archival, or rather 'anarchival' tendency, in which the repetitions and montage of both cinematic and televisual archival materials become a new means for audiovisual construction of works that are immediately media-archaeological. This will be seen especially in the work of Emile de Antonio such as *Millhouse: A White Comedy* (1971) and *Underground* (1976), but also in Chris Marker's development of the audiovisual essay form, especially in *Le fond de l'air est rouge (Grin without a Cat, 1977)*.

These three tendencies will be seen as so many anti-cinemas or lines of flight from the cinematic apparatus and the invention of new modes of audiovisual production, even if much of it still functions nominally as cinema. In the following chapter, however, the focus will shift to radical television itself, beginning with the radical 'auteur television' of Godard, Anne-Marie Miéville, and Fassbinder. All of these filmmakers worked, to a large extent, in the orbit of television as much as cinema in the 1970s, and all produced works of television, in a variety of formats. In Godard and Miéville's case, this was through the radically experimental series *Six fois deux* (1976) and *France/Tour/Détour/Deux/ Enfants* (1976), whereas Fassbinder's series *Eight Hours are Not a Day* (1972/1973) and the science-fiction miniseries *World on a Wire* (1973) are seemingly more populist and conventional, even when compared to his own cinematic work at that time. However, this apparent difference will be shown to be deceptive, especially through a presentation of the machinic deconstruction of the cinematic and televisual apparatus in the latter. In the final section of the chapter, a markedly different development will be charted, that of guerrilla television, in the theories and practices of Ant Farm, Raindance Corporation, TVTV, and others, largely but not exclusively operating in the United States. It will be argued that this was another side to the project of radical television and the subversion of the cinematic and televisual apparatus, through the new modes of production, distribution, and reception made possible via the diffusion of domestic video technologies. If many of the tendencies already presented aimed to be collective, popular projects, in most cases the reality was that 'the people were missing', whether in terms of a still authorial

mode of production, or the lack of a radical, collective audience. Guerrilla television, however, enacted a radically networked mode of organization that signaled a similar shift from one-way modes of communication as had already been the case with some forms of free and pirate radio. Both of these developments can therefore be seen as guerrilla networks, prefiguring and suggesting alternatives to emergent networked modes of electronic and digital communication.

Given that this book set out to examine radical media ecologies, it might seem counter-intuitive that it leaves out collectives such as the Newsreel collective in the US, films made by the Lettrist and Situationist movements in France,¹ or collective projects in third cinema such as the multiple militant films made in the wake of Octavio Gettino and Fernando Solanas's *La hora de los hornos* (*The Hour of the Furnaces*, 1968). There were also several collective projects in radical feminist filmmaking such as Carole Roussopoulos and Delphine Seyrig's *Scum Manifesto* (1976), and, in cinefeminism more generally, to use B. Ruby Rich's term (Rich 1998, pp. 1-2). After all, these collective projects, in different ways, challenged not only modes of producing film, but also its modes of dissemination and reception in ways that would certainly be amenable to a media-ecological analysis. In some cases, this is because it is simply not possible to do justice to entire collectives and movements within a relatively condensed space, and, in others, these histories have already been the subject of painstaking and thorough research (such as the case of third and postcolonial cinemas and, to some extent, feminist cinemas). In still other cases, the paucity of material in terms of both the films themselves and contextual information makes such engagements difficult. In terms of Newsreel, for example, a few short texts are available, and it is possible to get hold of some of the films, but Newsreel is yet to receive much sustained critical analysis, beyond that provided by Bill Nichols and Thomas Waugh in the 1970s.² More than this, however, cinematic and televisual examples have been selected for formal reasons, in that they all undo, in different ways, the normal functioning of the cinematic apparatus in especially clear ways. This is not to say that other examples could not have been selected that also do this, but rather that these selections are not intended to be exhaustive but rather exemplary; showing how given film, television, and video practices, in given situations, were able to contest dominant ideas of the cinematic or televisual apparatus and suggest alternatives.

In order to grasp what was at stake in these different attempts to destroy the cinematic apparatus, it is necessary to revisit the once hegemonic yet now rarely revisited terrain of apparatus theory. While not without

precursors in classical film theory, especially that of Sergei Eisenstein, apparatus theory was a conjunction of structuralist variants of psychoanalysis, semiotics, and Althusserian Marxism, while, at the same time, a move away from criticism, especially romantic *auteur*-oriented criticism, towards a more scientific and academic approach to the cinema. This was especially developed by Christian Metz, who began with the formal, semiotic analysis of cinema as a specific type of audiovisual language, before developing a more psychoanalytically informed analysis of cinema as an apparatus for constructing subject positions, via processes of voyeurism and exhibitionism. For Metz, it is not the individual film that is exhibitionist, that knows and enjoys being watched, but cinema itself: 'the one who knows is the cinema, the *institution* (and its presence in every film in the shape of the discourse that is behind every film)' (Metz in Nichols ed. 1985, p. 547; emphasis in original). This already sketches out the key idea of apparatus theory that the very form of cinema, as a text, a space, and an institution – in short, as a *machine* – produces specific subject positions for a spectator to adopt, operating via the satisfactions of voyeurism. While, at the time, the focus of subsequent work tended to debate the construction of these subject positions, for example, via Laura Mulvey's feminist version of this theoretical approach, the real innovation was to consider cinema less as a medium of popular entertainment or artistic expression, than as a material-ideological machinery for producing subjectivity effects. There is already in Metz an attention to material, even ecological conditions, such as the isolated, privatized spectator in a darkened room, activated only by vision, looking at a spectacle of projected light, which is both temporally and spatially absent, which he compares to 'a kind of aquarium', but one with constrained visibility (1985, p. 547).

If Christian Metz's contributions to apparatus theory were fundamental, the term itself derives from Jean-Luis Baudry's short, but highly influential text, 'Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus' (in Nichols ed. 1985, pp. 531-541), first published in *Cinéthique* in 1970. In Baudry's text, there is an attention to technological operations such as framing, montage, and projection worthy of being described as an early form of materialist media archaeology; after all, we are dealing here with 'optical media': 'the camera – an assembly of optical and mechanical instrumentation – carries out a certain mode of inscription characterized by marking, by the recording of differences in light intensity' (Baudry 1985, p. 534). For Baudry, it is in the very technical constitution of a continuity of movement, via operations based firstly on the persistence of vision, and secondly on systems of mise-en-scène and montage, that reveal the cinema as an ideological machine,

disguising its material technological mechanisms via a false continuity of images in seamless movement. The point here is not to account for cinema in purely material terms, but rather to argue for this entire machinery as an ideological assemblage, via a series of analogies with Plato's cave and the Lacanian infantile mirror stage, and as, ultimately, an analogy for the working of ideology itself. This is because what the subject/viewer sees is not this complex mechanism, but an impression of a seamless reality, which is occupied as if taken as real via a series of identifications and points of view.

Not only are variations of content irrelevant to this ideological operation, but so are variations in elements of the apparatus itself, from the introduction and development of sound, to colour, to superior film stocks and new projection technologies, since the 'basic apparatus' has the same effect of substitution of an imaginary plenitude, via the disguise of its material basis as a particular mode of production, or, in other words, as ideology materialized.³ For Baudry, the only possible exception might be a filmmaker like Dziga Vertov, who reveals the very functioning of the apparatus itself since 'both spectacular tranquility and the assurance of one's own identity collapse simultaneously with the revealing of the mechanism, that is, of the inscription of the film-work' (Baudry 1985, p. 540). A more subtle approach to apparatus theory can be found in the work of Jean-Louis Comolli, *Cahiers du Cinéma* critic and later filmmaker, as well as co-author of the manifesto-like text 'Cinema-Ideology-Criticism' (1969) during *Cahiers* post-1968 Maoist phase. This original text classified films in such a way as to argue for the continued political importance of criticism as a way of distinguishing between films that merely have a political content, failing to challenge narrative and visual form, as opposed to films that attack the dominant ideology on the two fronts of both content and form. In relation to Baudry's more sophisticated reading of the ideological apparatus per se, however, Comolli refined these ideas into a more complex account of cinema as a 'machine of the visible' (Comolli 1980, pp. 121-142), in a much more unstable conception than Baudry's, as a machine at once social and technical, and therefore not only prone to all kinds of disturbances, but also capable of what he calls the work of disillusion:

Every image is thus doubly racked by disillusion: from within itself as a machine for simulation, mechanical and deathly reproduction of the living, from without as a single image only, and not all images [...] Yet it is also, of course, this structuring disillusion which offers the offensive strength of cinematic representation and allows it to work against the completing, reassuring, mystifying representations of ideology. (Comolli 1980, p. 141).

It is therefore not only, or perhaps not even, in Vertovian revelations of cinematic machinery, but in the work of many different approaches to cinematic form, that the rigid and unchanging vision of the cinema as a whole, as a monolithic ideological machinery, starts to break down. This more nuanced approach, informed by Comolli's own practice as a critic, clearly has affinities both with a more Deleuzian conception of the machine as a social as much as a technical assemblage (and Comolli quotes Deleuze and Guattari to this effect), but also has clear affinities with Siegfried Zielinski's project of an archaeology of audiovision by means of 'the triadic relationship of culture – technology – subject' (Zielinski 1999, p. 20). As Zielinski describes this in more detail concerning the place of apparatus theories as a complement to the historiography of technology and culture considered as a way of life following Raymond Williams:

They share a complex concept of apparatus; and the latter complements exceptionally well the other approaches which emphasize the social aspects because it prioritizes the position of the subject in the media discourse. The development of a concept of apparatus with cultural dimensions, a concept of culture where the technical is an essential component, and the integration and constraining of the subject within this complex of relations, roughly delineates my theoretical interest in this outline of a history of audiovision. (Zielinski 1999, p. 21)

One could object here that this is not yet Zielinski's fully formed anarcho-archaeological-media project that later emerged in *Deep Time of the Media*, in which the interest has decidedly shifted towards minor technical machines themselves and away from the social, the cultural, and, especially, the subject. Nevertheless, it is this type of attention to relations between the technical, the social, and, if not the subject, then processes of subjectivation that shed light on what was taking place in the radical anti-cinemas discussed in the first section of this chapter.

Militant Anti-Cinemas in the 1970s

Having sketched this theoretical matrix of the cinematic apparatus, what exactly were experimental, avant-garde, and radical filmmakers doing with this machinery? As several of the authors in *The Cinematic Apparatus* would agree, at times not very much. Nevertheless, in some instances, radical challenges were made in the fields of the production, dissemination,

and consumption of audiovisual media which, to paraphrase Zielinski, became 'No Longer Cinema, No Longer Television' (Zielinski 1999, pp. 219-272). Paradoxically, in key instances, this was performed in relation to television, whether merely in terms of financing and dissemination (or often non-dissemination), or through the use of video and other televisual technologies, or through constructing new audiovisual assemblages as alternatives to television in a social, institutional, and sometimes technological sense.⁴

This brings us back to the primal scene of apparatus change, enacted in Jean-Luc Godard's *Le gai savoir* (*Joy of Learning*, 1969).⁵ A man, Émile Rousseau, and a woman, Patricia Lumumba (played by Jean-Pierre Léaud and Juliet Berto, respectively), both known from previous associations with Godard and the Nouvelle Vague, meet in a television studio, in an attempt to enact what Deleuze would call, after Serge Daney, 'a pedagogy of the audiovisual image' (Deleuze 1989a, p. 247). For Deleuze, this is required when sound and image have become relatively autonomous and 'this new arrangement of the visual and talking occurs in the same, but consequently audiovisual image. A whole pedagogy is required here, because we have to read the visual and hear the speech act in a new way' (Deleuze 1989a, p. 247). While this autonomy of sound and image was already evident in some of Godard's earlier films such as *2 ou 3 choses que je sais d'elle* (*Two or Three Things I know about Her*, 1967), in which, at key moments, the sound is cut completely or replaced by Godard's whispered voice directly addressing the spectator/auditor, this is taken much further in *Le gai savoir* in which the two protagonists are surrounded and interrupted both by sounds and by images, not always with clear relations to one another. In fact, what is at first striking is the sound, which combines electronic tones, Godard's voice, and material from the mass media; the sound operates via a logic of pure noise that can also be extended to the images. The educational project of the two protagonists is to make sense of all this noise, to discern the relations among this chaotic proliferation of autonomous sounds and images competing for their attention, by means of a three-year project of audiovisual pedagogy. First, it is necessary to arrive at zero, to clear a space from this proliferated sea of sounds and images, in which it might be possible to discern *an image*, or *a sound*, and then begin to understand their relations.

This film is frequently misunderstood precisely because it is understood in cinematic terms, in relation to Godard's career up to this point, as an attack on narrative and characterization typical of even the modernist-informed project of 1960s post-new wave cinemas. This is essentially the wrong contextualization. For Godard, already anticipating the consequences

of May 1968 since this was actually produced just before, the cinema as a form of capitalist-commodified exchange of stories and stars for money was already over; after all, the end title to *Weekend* (1967) was 'fin du cinéma' and it was this film that enacted the destruction of narrative and mise-en-scène conventions of the feature film. *Le gai savoir* was already something and somewhere else, and, as Colin MacCabe suggests, 'can be taken as a model for all the subsequent Dziga Vertov films' (MacCabe 2003, p. 204). This new space was not exactly cinema, and it is important to stress that this was a project funded by the national television channel Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française (ORTF), even if this channel did not subsequently screen the results of this experiment, and the action takes place within a television studio after-hours. All that remains in this abstract space of production are the actors themselves and a few props, but they are not alone; instead they are surrounded by a heterogeneous array of sounds and images encompassing televisual material, still photographs, reportage in the form of both sound and image, advertising and political slogans, as well as some reworked and détourned media material. In a sense, Godard's previous films had often taken place in the same media landscape, but now, instead of even the outline of a narrative, there are only two figures attempting to make sense of this audiovisual detritus. It is perhaps not surprising that Deleuze refers to this condition of the autonomy of sound and image as 'an archaeology or a stratigraphy [...] the visual image reveals its geological foundations, whilst the act of speech and also of music becomes for its part founder' (Deleuze 1989a, p. 246). In the case of *Le gai savoir*, however, in the beginning is noise prior to any speech act or stratigraphic image, and it is this chaotic noise that both poses the problem and generates the pedagogy of the audiovisual. It is incorrect, however, to refer to this process as deconstruction, or deconstruction-meets-French Maoism as MacCabe does (2003, pp. 206-207). Not only does it not correspond to any Derridean notion of this process, this also disguises its audiovisual nature in which writing, even in a deconstructive sense, is by no means privileged over speech or vision.

So what, in fact, do we see and hear? It begins with a seemingly dark space accompanied by what sounds like radio static, as if attempting to tune to the right station; the man crosses from right to left, fully lit, and leaves the frame. Godard's voice, accompanied by electronic tones, whispers some seemingly meaningless statistics – '12,227 images speak of her' – as the woman enters the frame left to right, explores the space, and bumps into the reclining man, at which point the noise abruptly stops. After some brief introductions involving some rather surrealistic backstories of the characters, read out in the form of news reports, they acknowledge that



Fig. 13: Godard's *Le gai savoir* (1969)

they are not as alone as it may seem, since they are on TV, and TV is in everyone's homes. It is at this point that the purpose of their presence there is revealed: to learn.

It is only at this moment that we are confronted by a stream of sounds and images in, as they say, 'disorder'. On top of a piece of classical music in a minor key, we hear various speech acts, while viewing images that seem to alternate between banal street scenes and poster-like images with enlarged capital letters as in a primer for children combining image and text and featuring scenes of political contestation and war, of which the first is 'Revolution' and the second 'Image' followed soon after by 'Vietnam' and 'Son'. As the voices become a more strident and fragmented montage we return to the studio; Émile states, 'we don't understand' and Patricia replies, because 'they are speaking in disorder', an exchange repeated several times. Several text/images then appear with the word 'Savoir', the final one over a copy of Derrida's *Of Grammatology*, while the voices on the soundtrack make reference to Rousseau's search for origins, famously critiqued by Derrida in that work.

There are so many heterogeneous materials and levels of play between them here that it is insufficient merely to refer to this as deconstruction; it

is more a process of stratigraphic orientation proceeding, as Patricia says a little later, by studying 'relations, links, differences'. This is the point of departure: not *from zero*, since, from the beginning, we are surrounded by audiovisual noise, but in order to arrive at zero, to clear away enough of the noise to arrive at a blank page, empty canvas, or deserted studio, and to be able to 'look around for traces'. Such a process is already a type of media archaeology, and it is significant that, if the images make reference to Derrida, the sound also appropriates Foucault, as Émile says, that, for the human sciences, it is not a question of composing man, but dissolving him, a direct reference to *The Order of Things*. There is a strange pedagogical feedback loop at work here: since the French title of Foucault's work is *Les mots et les choses*, literally words and things, which is also enshrined in French primary education in the alternation of 'lessons of words' and 'lessons of things', which also formed the structure for Godard's later television series *France/Tour/Detour/Deux Enfants* (1977) that will be examined later. Rather than words and things, Émile and Patricia study images and sounds, but their project is an eminently archaeological, or rather media-archaeological one, since it is via these surrounding sounds and images that we construct our sense of identity and knowledge of society, as well as our politics; this is, above all, a process of individuation in Simondon's sense, that is nevertheless collective and social. This quest, which is mapped out over a three-year period as if it were PhD research, is also highly resonant with Godard's own subsequent *Histoire(s) du cinéma* project that is less a linear history than a multivalent archaeology of cinema, proceeding via linking cinema with a different technical assemblage, that of video editing. This is beyond the technical possibilities of *Le gai savoir*, yet the joyful knowledge Godard appropriates from Nietzsche is already moving in this direction and continued to do so across his experimental cinematic, video, and televisual projects in the 1970s.

While it is not possible to pay such sustained attention to Godard's subsequent collaborative projects, including those conducted with Jean-Pierre Gorin and as 'the Dziga Vertov Group', it is worth pointing out a few features of these projects, which have been until recently much maligned and relatively ignored within Godard scholarship. One aspect that needs to be underscored is the continued importance of sound and noise in these projects, notably in *Un film comme les autres* (*A Film like the Others*, 1968) in which 'boring' footage of workers and students in a field discussing the aftermath of May 1968, shot from the shoulders down, is accompanied by a competing montage of voices on the soundtrack, which is where the only action takes place, other than in the intercut silent black-and-white

Cinétracts footage from the events they are discussing. Here, once again, sound, while no less prone to noise and meaninglessness than the images, is the privileged site of expression, and the only space in which some meaning might be constructed out of the encounter of students and workers.

This approach was perhaps given its most extreme expression in the opening of *British Sounds* (1970) in which, during a slow track along a car assembly line, deafening industrial noise almost obscures the discussion and analysis of contemporary labour conditions from a Maoist perspective. To the complaints that viewers did not wish to subject themselves to ten minutes of industrial noise, Godard quipped that this was a very bourgeois perspective since workers had to put up with similar noise eight hours a day. The film is called *British Sounds* for a reason, as succinctly illustrated by the opening image in which the words 'British sounds' have been scrawled on a Union Jack after 'images' has been crossed out; the flag is soon punctured by a fist as a female voice intones 'the bourgeoisie has created the world in its image, comrades we must destroy that image'. Famously, a naked woman later walks up and down the stairs of a house, while another female voice on the soundtrack reads a text by Sheila Rowbotham, one of the first manifestations of British second-wave feminism. This voice is interrupted by some male interjections such as 'sexual perversion and Stalinism', as the image frames the women's pubic regions, a sound/image relationship whose politics is far from clear, and clearly problematic.

Nevertheless, despite some of the problematic politics of these films – for example, *Pravda* (1970), which, with its contorted Maoist line against both Russian intervention in Czechoslovakia and the liberalization that had preceded it, was, in many ways, even more problematic than *British Sounds* –, there are more productive ways of reading these projects in line with Godard's later comment that they are not movies, but they 'have some interesting moves within them' (Godard cited in MacCabe 2003, p. 216). As MacCabe goes on to suggest, it is less in terms of their Maoist politics than their sound/image relations that they are of interest today: 'Considered as conventional documentaries they are unwatchable; considered as experiments in sound and image they contain lessons even more relevant today than when they were mad' (MacCabe 2003, p. 216). Moreover, even if made on film (often as television commissions that were rarely screened as intended), the works were no longer cinema but a new type of audiovisual assemblage and this can be seen on every level of their ecologies. Firstly, these films were produced collectively, whether that collective was only Godard and Gorin or whether it involved others, and, depending on the particular project, creative decisions emerged out of the collaboration and, in some cases,

clashes between different participants. Secondly, while funded in a variety of ways, they were neither projected in cinemas nor shown on television, but rather in venues such as universities and film clubs, or sometimes for the militant groups that were their ideal intended audience. The producers frequently accompanied these screenings and heated discussions with the audience often followed. Finally, on a formal level, they destabilize norms of cinematic construction, by neither corresponding to fictional nor nonfictional genres, by avoiding and displacing narrative, and by calling all the components of audiovisual relations into question, from the dominance of image over sound, to ideas of documentary truth and realism.

As Godard said at the time, the point was less to make political films than to make films politically (cited in MacCabe 1980, 19), and this often meant that the process of production was more important than the work that was produced. This privileging of process over product or commodity was also aimed at a not-yet-existent audience, a people to come who would use the work for their own process of political subjectivation, rather than criticize the results as a poor product, as was frequently the case. In this context, the screen was more a blackboard on which to sketch and try out ideas, for which questions of generic structure and technical perfection were not only irrelevant, but an interference in the process of constructing a collective form of anti-cinema. Such investigations became more sophisticated later in the 1970s, in the works that Godard produced with Anne-Marie Miéville, whether as film, video, or television. These will be considered in the next chapter, but, first, it is worth considering some of the other experiments taking place in audiovisual relations by other filmmakers in parallel to Godard's distinctive yet far from unique experimentation.

One example of a film practice that very much departed from similar questions to those raised by *Le gai savoir* and Godard's subsequent militant work is that of Harun Farocki. Whereas Godard's work in this period was nomadic and heterogeneous, Farocki's work, despite working in a number of formats ranging from television commissions to austere feature films to low budget guerrilla filmmaking (and much later video installation), coalesced around the persistent focus on what a technical image is and what or who constructs it; with technical understood in broad enough terms to encompass such technical processes as makeup, or the presentation of a pair of shoes, while an image might also encompass any industrially or, in some cases, artisanally produced commodity. For Farocki, a pop single, for example, can be considered every bit as much 'an image' as a photo for German *Playboy*. Farocki's work, also complemented by a critical career at the important German magazine *Filmkritik*, was, in an essential sense,

media-archaeological, and it is hardly surprising to find him in dialogue with Wolfgang Ernst in the project for an 'archive of visual concepts' (Ernst and Farocki 2014, pp. 261-286).

Certainly, Farocki's multiple roles as a critic, installation artist, and university-affiliated lecturer in both the US and Vienna, enabled the wider dissemination of his later work, sometimes returning to and incorporating earlier work into new contexts such as in the installation *Schnittstelle* (*Interface*, 1995), which revisits his earlier work in the context of emergent interfaces for digital-video editing, and is thus literally a work of media archaeology. Approaching the actual work from the 1970s remains difficult as it largely remains inaccessible, with even the recent 'comprehensive' DVD release *Harun Farocki Filme 1967-2005*, losing the trail in the late 1960s only to pick it up again in the 1980s, with the exception of the atypically fictional work *Zwischen Zwei Kriegen* (*Between Two Wars*, 1978). Nevertheless, in terms of the long 1970s that is the focus of this book, the passage from *Die Worte des Vorsitzenden* (*Words of the Chairman*, 1969), to *Ein Bild* (*An Image*, 1982) and *Wie man sieht* (*How we See*, 1986) is of great significance. As suggested by the latter title, the focus is on, not just what we see via a range of technological mediations, but how we see, and, beyond that, how what we see is the result of often invisible production and labour processes.

Farocki's early films were often collaborative, especially with like-minded Berlin film-school associates such as Hartmut Bitomsky, Helke Sander, and, in the case of *Words of the Chairman*, Holger Meins, an association that was presented previously in chapter two. Meins was the cinematographer, and Sander the assistant director of *Words of the Chairman*, and all three of them and other film students had works that were included in the Berlin film-school compilation *Die Rote Fahne* (*The Red Flag*, 1968). *Words of the Chairman*, while engaged with Maoism, departs from any doctrinaire approach via its humour and irony. A man dressed in black and wearing a black mask leafs through Mao's *Little Red Book*, while a female voice intones Maoist rhetoric, as the shots increasingly focus on the pages of the book. After some time, the man tears out some pages of the book and folds them into a paper plane, which is 'weaponized' through the attachment of matchsticks and a sharp needle onto the nose of the paper plane. The plane is then projected at a couple at a formally set table with bags over their heads with images of the Shah of Iran and Farah Diba, resembling the disguises used by Iranian protestors at the protests against the Shah's visit to Berlin. As discussed earlier, this was an event that was also instrumental in the chain of events leading to the formation of the RAF. Despite the montage of the

dynamic flight of this projectile, which is edited in a nonrealistic montage style to show it flying both from left to right and right to left, accompanied by dramatic electronic music, the paper plane only manages to land in the Shah's soup, making him recoil in horror, but not causing any real harm. Nevertheless, the last image shows the book spinning in midair, to the sound of triumphant militant music. This short film manages both to embrace militancy and deflate it via a humorous literalism: yes, words may become weapons, but, unfortunately, not very effective ones, a critical reflection with clear applicability to debates around protest and direct action taking place with reference to these and subsequent protests of the German new left such as against the Springer press.

While Farocki made films engaged with several of these events, including the shooting of Rudi Dutschke, as well as engaging in direct intervention with Meins at the Knokke animation festival as documented in *Starbuck Holger Meins* (2002), his most dramatic film work in this period was very much a precursor to both his fascination with technical images, the relations between images and warfare, and, specifically, the Vietnam War. *Nicht lösches Feuer* (*Inextinguishable Fire*, 1969) begins with a setup not unlike the television news in which Farocki reads a statement from the Vietnam War Crimes Tribunal in Stockholm. In a deadpan unemotive voice, Farocki reads a first-person harrowing account of the effects of napalm, leading the subject's entire body to be covered with severe burns, and to endure intense pain, and fourteen days of unconsciousness. The newsreader then looks up and confronts the viewer directly with the statement:

When we show you pictures of napalm victims, you'll shut your eyes. You'll close your eyes to the pictures. Then you'll close them to the memory. And then you'll close your eyes to the facts. And then you'll close your eyes to the whole context.

Instead of following this logic of the media spectacle, leading to mere 'hurt feelings' followed by switching off, a demonstration ensues; the man attempts to hint at the effects of napalm by extinguishing a cigarette on his forearm, informing us that, while a cigarette burns at 300 degrees, napalm burns at 4000 degrees, a temperature thirteen times higher. The film then goes on to demonstrate the facts both about the effects of napalm and its production, combining both archival footage and reenacted scenes that show how students, engineers, and workers in the industrial production of napalm are unaware of their role in its final uses as a weapon of war and torture, singling out Dow Chemical in the United States. Yet napalm can

only be stopped at the site of its production, not at the site of its deployment where its fire, once unleashed, is inextinguishable.

Notably, one image, a victim with napalm burns, is substituted by another image, that of the demonstration with the cigarette on Farocki's own body. This is then supplemented with a montage of various perspectives on the production and use of napalm. What these perspectives show is that it is the nature of the capitalist organization of industrial production, via a division of labour in which each worker only works on one 'block', without seeing the big picture, that makes an industry of warfare and death such as the production of napalm possible. In the end, there is a seemingly absurd but logical demonstration that, whether a factory produces vacuum cleaners or submachine guns, depends precisely on workers, students, and engineers; as in the case of napalm, it is only via an intervention in relations of production that a different image or technical object is produced, including the image of a napalm burn victim. Such interrogations into the technical production of images, in the twin contexts of industrial production and warfare, continued throughout Farocki's work in the 1970s.

Most of the critical reception of Farocki's work concentrates on the period from the 1980s onwards, whether in terms of approaches around the essay film, documentary, or the later perspective of multimedia installation. For example, both Nora Alter (2004, pp. 211-234) and Laura Rascaroli (2009, pp. 52-63) focus especially on *Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges* (*Images of the World and the Inscription of War*, 1988) as an archetypal Farocki essay-film combining his interrogation both of images and war, or, more precisely, the effects of the militarization of perception, a thematic that has been explicitly linked to the work of Paul Virilio. This is hardly surprising, given the unavailability of Farocki's 1970s work, and even his own disparaging comments about it. Yet, the agenda of his future work up to and including his installation work, was already forming in this decade.

On one hand, there was a continuation of the agit-prop project of the 1960s films with the counter-pedagogy of films like *Die Teilung aller Tage* (*The Division of All Days*, 1970), attempting to translate ideas from Marx's *Capital*, while engaging with workers' educational initiatives. More central, was a dispute with television carried out in the form of television through such projects as *Der Ärger mit den Bildern* (*The Trouble with Images*, 1973), *Die Arbeit mit Bildern: Eine Telekritik* (*The Struggle with Images: A Critique of Television*, 1974), or *Moderatoren im Fernsehen* (*Moderators*, 1974). In a sense, this aspect of Farocki's work in which the poverty and instrumentalization of images on television was confronted for the first time, was the blueprint for the later more sophisticated essay films of the 1980s and 1990s, which

would be equally concerned with the materiality and effects of a range of technical images. These projects also reveal a different possibility for grasping Farocki's work as a whole more as a kind of counter-television than a counter-cinema; more than just an analysis of how the televisual apparatus works, such projects were also the blueprint for a different type of audiovisual apparatus that would later be realized via both essay films and video installations.

As several authors such as Elsaesser have emphasized, despite common and repeated themes, Farocki's films take several different subjects and forms (Elsaesser 2004, pp. 14-15) so that, to see in his work over the course of the 1970s a tendency towards the 'liberation from the ballast of language and of conceptual thought' (Siebel 2004, p. 49), is an oversimplification. It would be more accurate to describe this trajectory as the experimentation with several forms such as the slideshow-with-commentary of these mid 70s televisual critiques (still apparent in *How We See* and *Images of the World and the Inscription of War*), while at the same time developing other approaches in which an alternative audiovisual assemblage can be constructed without the need for commentary. This was particularly apparent in films focusing on the labour and production processes involved in the production of an image, whether in the application of makeup to a model's face (*Make-Up*, 1973); the completion of a feminist painting (*Ein Bild von Sarah Schumann, An Image by Sarah Schumann*, 1979); the production of a single record, which is also, from Farocki's perspective, a kind of image (*Single: Eine Schallplatte wird produziert, Single: A Record is Being Produced*, 1979); or, later, on simply *Ein Bild (An Image)*, 1982), on the production of a single photographic image for German *Playboy*. Later, such attention to labour processes behind spectacular commodities would be extended to training processes, from management seminars to training, for the long-term unemployed considered as a kind of involuntary Brechtianism in everyday contemporary capitalist life, for which no commentary would be needed either, beyond perhaps an ironic or critical title like *Die Schulung, (Indoctrination)*, 1987).

Across all these projects, what counts is the construction of a counter apparatus enables both the perception of the invisible (such as the labour processes behind a technical image, the images that are not shown on television, or neglected and forgotten histories), and the perception of the visible in new ways, to actually see the images presented via the media, or the images of war, in relation to these invisible relations of their production and circulation. For example, several commentators on *Images of the World*, including Farocki himself (2004, pp. 193-201), have noted the importance

of military reconnaissance images in this film, which should have made the existence of concentration camps apparent to the Allies, but, instead, the Allies only saw military targets, since the organization of vision is also the organization of blindness (see Rascaroli 2009, p. 54; Alter 2004, pp. 218-219 ff.). But what is key here is the way Farocki enacts a different way of seeing through a critique of these regimes of vision, an anti-pedagogy of the (in)visible that gives rise to a different audiovisual apparatus, one that would ultimately be realized in the form of installations. Thomas Elsaesser and others have pointed to the key dialogue in *Before your Eyes: Vietnam* in which a defeated soldier asks 'what is an image?', and further emphasized that for Farocki, all images need to be shown *twice*, not limited to, but certainly emblemized in, his re-presentation via montage of found archival materials. What is at stake, however, is not just an emphasis through repetition of the visible, but the liberation of an image from a preexisting machinic regime, whether military, commercial, or industrial, and the construction of a different audiovisual machine in which the (in)visibility of the image can now be seen and its multiple relations grasped. As with Godard, this is through the development of an audiovisual pedagogy via montage in which both filmmaker and audience ideally have the possibility to learn to see in a new way.

In a sense, both Godard and Farocki can be seen as quite literally heirs of the film practice of Dziga Vertov, in the idea that it is necessary to include everything in the film, including its processes of production, labour, and technology in order to undo both conventional narrative and specular illusionist relations. This is the kind of practice that was generally understood in the 1970s as Brechtian, as well as constituting apparatus critique through avant-garde practice. Yet, this was certainly not the only way of being Brechtian, and other filmmakers used quite distinct techniques resulting in different modes of audiovisual pedagogy. Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, for example, eschewed both explicit presentations of production processes, and often the use of montage, in favour of what many have seen as an ascetic or even classical style, owing more to Bresson than Godard. At the same time, their films radically subvert audiovisual conventions in manners that are arguably even more Brechtian than the militant filmmakers usually described in this way. Expanding upon Giberto Perez's stunning reading in *The Material Ghost of Geschichtsunterricht (History Lessons, 1972)* as emblematic of Straub/Huillet's films in general, this engagement will focus on that specific film, with only some reference to those that preceded and followed it, as a markedly distinct Brechtian approach to remodeling audiovisual relations.

Straub and Huillet were both French, but began to make films together in Germany in the mid 1960s, and they later relocated to Italy; as such, they were always internationalist outsiders, which makes it all the more extraordinary that their first two films, based on writings by Heinrich Böll, were the first films to engage in a reckoning with Germany's twentieth-century history of militarism and fascism. Unlike Edgar Reitz and Kluge, they were not signatories to the Oberhausen Manifesto, and yet, developed a radical cinematic practice, highly critical of German history and radically revising conventional film form. Nevertheless, their method was not immediately apparent, with their first film *Machorka-Muff* (1963) notable for an almost classicist approach to film form, albeit more in the Dreyer or Bressonian than the Hollywood sense. However, their second film *Nicht versöhnt oder Es hilft nur Gewalt wo Gewalt herrscht* (*Not Reconciled, or only Violence Helps where Violence Reigns*, 1965) was the first of many to anger and disorient audiences, as a complex story spanning three generations is told with so many gaps and temporal jumps, it takes several viewings to disentangle the various characters, events, and eras. According to Daniel Fairfax, the response to the film was antithetical and hostile, with the publishers of the book that the film was based on even threatening to burn the negative (Fairfax 2009, n.p.). Nevertheless, this film was still, arguably, an adaptation, even if the settings and décor were mostly minimal props to enable the reading of passages of dialogue from the book. However, the methods that Straub and Huillet subsequently adopted first became fully apparent in *Chronik der Anna Magdalena Bach* (*The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach*, 1967). In this film, music by Bach was presented rather than represented, as in actually played by the actors who were chosen more for their musicianship than acting abilities or physical resemblance to their historical roles, alongside Anna Magdalena Bach's fictionalized diary, which is read aloud rather than enacted. In other words, the film, while nominally fictionalized, is, in fact, largely the presentation of Bach's music as an historical document, leaving the audience a wide scope to interpret the significance of its interconnection with the material and personal conditions described in the diary. In a sense, their preceding films had already followed more a musical than a linear narrative structure, but, in *The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach*, both music and text were used as what Straub called 'aesthetic material', meaning neither as accompaniment, commentary, or even narrative typical of a biopic, but rather as material re-enactment. Rather than waiting for a story, audiences were invited to listen to Bach's music in new ways, as the product of the material conditions of its time and place, rather than as an ahistorical element of Western high

culture, and therefore to experience it in relation to the present (if the film is ultimately a love story, it is one that mirrors Straub and Huillet's own situation as artistic producers and collaborators).

Straub and Huillet's films of the 1970s added another layer to this interweaving of multiple times; by engaging with works with specific historical settings, from Biblical and Greek antiquity to the Arab-Israeli ten-day war, they were able to interlace the three different temporalities of the time presented in the original work, the time of the production of the original work, and the time of the present, (and, arguably, the time of the future). Nowhere is this more apparent than in *History Lessons*, which serves, in many ways, as the blueprint for their non-illusionist method from this point onwards. The fact that this was based on an unfinished novel by Brecht, *The Business Affairs of Mr Julius Caesar* (Brecht 2016), only reinforces the case for viewing this film as exemplary of their specific version of Brechtian aesthetics and pedagogy.⁶ If the late-1960s films have been read, by even sympathetic commentators, in terms of 'emotional deadness' (Halligan 2016, p. 189), the films of the 1970s were even more widely rejected as dull and of limited relevance to their own times. What these films achieved, however, was the honing of a political film praxis, no longer even making critical gestures towards conventional modes of cinematic representation, as could still be seen in the references to both the thriller and melodrama in *Der Bräutigam, die Komödiantin und der Zuhälter* (*The Bridegroom, the Comedienne and the Pimp*, 1968) made in collaboration with Fassbinder's action-theatre. Arguably, the break had already come with *Othon: Les yeux ne veulent pas en tout temps se fermer, ou Peut-être qu'un jour Rome se permettra de choisir à son tour* (*Othon: Eyes Do Not Want to Close at All Times, or, Perhaps One Day Rome Will Allow Herself to Choose in Her Turn*, 1970), which already juxtaposed un-emotive readings of the text by Corneille, set in ancient Rome with an undisguised contemporary Rome, but *History Lessons* developed this approach in a much more sophisticated way.

In Brecht's novel, a young researcher sets out to write a biography of Caesar 40 years after his death. But in a structure cinematically familiar from films like *Citizen Kane* (1941), what he encounters is not a simple truth, but an array of interested points of view, each of which has a truth, but a truth precisely based on point of view; the banker's perspective, for example, does not correspond to that of the peasant or the poet, and so the biographer becomes the repository of a series of contradictory accounts none of which tally with the idealized view of the historical figure of Caesar that the biographer had intended to write. Straub and Huillet roughly maintain this structure, but, rather than create an illusion of any setting in the classical

world, these figures, while dressed in Roman clothing, are interviewed by a man in contemporary clothing, in what is clearly contemporary Rome, underlined by the long car journeys the man takes in the city that are interspersed with the interviews.

According to Fairfax (2009, n.p.), these contemporary scenes were the ones that audiences and critics took most exception to, and yet they perform a very precise function in the film, although one that few commentators have been able to articulate clearly. Martin Walsh, for example, points to the way these scenes inject an element of contemporaneity into the film and work against any illusion of entering into an eternal image of the past. Instead, they present, following Walter Benjamin, a notion of history against the grain (1981, p. 63), but this is little more than the idea that these sequences 'make space for a theorization on the part of the viewer, on what may be involved in the notion of history in this film' (1981, p. 62). In other words, these sequences allow for a confrontation with history via film in the juxtaposition of contemporary with ancient Rome, in a relationship of both continuity and discontinuity. Gilberto Perez, however, looks more closely at the structure of these driving sequences and proposes that they embody the cinematic apparatus in their very constitution. Several theorists and, notably, Paul Virilio have commented on the relations between automotive travel and cinema, especially in 'The Last Vehicle' chapter of *Polar Inertia* (Virilio 2000, pp. 17-36). For Perez, the driving sequences in *History Lessons* make this connection, by setting up an analog for the cinematic apparatus in the framing of man, car, windscreen, sunroof, and rearview mirror:

Without any cuts or pans or even the slightest wavering, the city is photographed from that fixed viewing point inside the moving car, through a kind of compositional grid constituted by the two side windows on the left and right of the screen, the windshield at the center, and an open sunroof at the top [...] In *History Lessons*, the metaphor [of classical perspective as a window on the world] is changed to the material windows of a car out in the streets, subject to all the limitations of our concrete existence, our immersion in the world's circumstances. (Perez 1998, pp. 283, 288)

It is not just about establishing a Benjaminian dialectical relationship between the now and the historical past, but of constructing an audiovision machine capable of doing so. As Perez analyses so brilliantly in these pages, this set-up combining both stasis (a fixed and uninterrupted long take) and contingency (there is no control over what the camera/car will encounter in the busy streets of Rome), enabling a unique way of encapsulating both

the history of perspective, photography and cinema, and also the creation of a specific perspective, not exactly that of the young man, but of the world flowing through an audiovisual machine that is focused on his reflected eyes in the rear-view mirror; audiovisual because this world is heard as well as seen in real time. This also provides the basis for the subversion of narrative point of view in the rest of the film as Perez also indicates.

If these sequences are based on a technical set-up that both reproduces and denaturalizes cinematic perception, precisely via a repetition that foregrounds these processes, the rest of the film does something similar with point-of-view and editing conventions. The conversations between the man and various citizens of ancient Rome, already unnatural due to clashes between period and contemporary dress and setting, are further undermined by an unconventional yet precise displacement of shot angles and editing. In the first encounter with the banker, any normal sense of cinematic space is destabilized by a series of high-angle shots: firstly, a two-shot of both the banker and the researcher from behind that then cuts to a closer shot of just the banker, showing no respect for laws of continuity and eschewing the usual ways of constructing point of view via the shot/reverse



Fig. 14: The audiovision machine of *History Lessons*.

shot techniques of continuity editing. This is rather a form of discontinuity editing, breaking conventional film grammar, and thereby drawing attention to questions of point of view such as who is speaking, and who is perceiving their speech act, that extend beyond individual psychology towards discursive and ultimately political positions. As the successive shots of the banker continue, to the point where it is not even clear if the young man is still there, the camera eventually comes around to a position above and to the right of the banker where we get a shot of the young man responding to the long discourse of his interlocutor. After a brief restoration of something resembling shot/reverse shot, but unconventionally framed and timed, suddenly we have a mobile shot that only shows the young man as the two walk in the garden, continuing to converse.

As Perez points out, these destabilizations of position are far from arbitrary and enact shifts in power relations across the five encounters in the film. For example, in the next discussion, with the peasant, which follows, more or less, a shot/reverse shot logic, the man is initially framed frontally and the peasant in profile, but, as the conversation continues, the man is seen increasingly in profile, diminishing his importance and power, and the peasant is seen increasingly frontally. As Perez points out, this corresponds to a shift in power relations:

when he talks to the peasant his attitude is a bit patronizing, as if he knew the story better [...] gradually the roles shift and the young man is shown [...] more and more as the one asking the questions, and the peasant [...] more and more as the one who really knows the story (Perez 1998, p. 308).

Finally, in the last conversation, again with the banker, such displacements of point of view are repeated to show a shift in the young man's originally deferential attitude. This time, even though only the banker is speaking, more screen time is given to the young man who is increasingly shown frontally. Eventually, the reaction to the banker's final statement about Caesar 'my confidence in him had proved well-founded, our small bank was no small bank any more', is an expression of barely concealed anger and contempt on the part of the young man. This is not a simple psychological response, but instead, via the complication of point of view and identification, it implies a position of resistance to be occupied by the viewer; more than a mere reaction, it is an obligation to respond through adopting an attitude of resistance.

This raises the question of why such an oblique approach is adopted, via the enactment of a range of historical texts and their settings, whether

modern or ancient, rather than a direct engagement with contemporary political and social movements? The juxtaposition with the traveling shots in contemporary Rome indicates that this is not a mere replaying of a historical text, the era it represents, or the era in which it was produced, but an intercalation of all these different times in a stratigraphic and archaeological manner. The past of ancient Rome, and the past of Fascism against which Brecht was writing are all still inherent but invisible in the present and the elaborate audiovisual relations within the film are not a history lesson in a classically pedagogical sense, but, rather, a lesson in resistance working in complex ways through and against these past and present power relations. In Deleuze's terms, Straub and Huillet's films are all about wresting cinematographic speech acts from their original inscriptions and thereby giving them a new sense and agency:

this act must be torn from its written support, text, book, letter, or documents. This tearing away does not take place in a fit of rage or passion; it presupposes a certain resistance of the text [But] it is no longer enough to say that the speech act must be torn from what is resisting it: it is the speech act which is resisting, *it is the act of resistance* (Deleuze 1989a, pp. 253, 254; emphasis in original).

This wresting away of speech and, as Deleuze indicates, also music, especially via the *sprech-gesang* of *Moses und Aron* (*Moses and Aaron*, 1973) is at once 'infinitely patient' and 'extremely violent' (Deleuze 1989a, p. 254). This makes it more comprehensible why seemingly high-cultural films such as *The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach* (1967), or *Moses and Aaron* (1975) are dedicated to the Viet Minh and Holger Meins respectively (German television insisted that the latter dedication be excised); or why Straub famously referred to himself as a terrorist. These films, despite their classicism, partake of communist-guerrilla struggle, by means of a liberation of speech and music as struggle and resistance against dominant laws, discourses, and traditions, from ancient and biblical myths to contemporary political events and the very structure of the cinematic apparatus itself.

One final aspect of Straub and Huillet's films, more apparent in subsequent ones like *Fortini/Cani* (1976) and *Trop tôt/Trop tard* (*Too Soon/Too Late*, 1982), is the situating of these practices of speech in specific and resonant environments. In *Fortini/Cani*, the writer, Fortini, reads his own work, intercut with shots of specific places in Florence and the surrounding countryside, related to the heard speech, but often obliquely and out of temporal order. In other films, places such as where Italian Partisans we

massacred (*Dalla nube alla resistenza/From the Clouds to the Resistance*, 1978) or the Communards corpses were piled up to construct the hill of Père Lachaise cemetery (*Toute révolution est un coup de dés/Every Revolution is a Throw of the Dice*, 1977) add the past of physical struggles of resistance to those recounted in the texts. Ultimately, in *Too Early: Too Late*, there are no visible human figures, only voices and landscapes, as we hear readings of texts about class struggle from Friedrich Engels and from Mahmoud Hussein on the soundtrack, and see only French, then Egyptian landscapes. While the French landscapes are depopulated, with only the wind in the long grass, we see a version of 'Workers Leaving the Factory' in Egypt, a return to the beginnings of cinema. These are also some of the most extreme examples of so-called 'Straubian Shots', consisting of slow 360-degree pans of a landscape whose deeper significance only becomes apparent through durational attention to the unlinked image and sound.

Even though the text is entirely distinct from the landscape, the latter is given in all its materiality, encouraging the viewer to notice its subtle variations, such as the change in lighting when the sun disappears behind clouds or the sound the wind makes in a particular location. This leads the French film critic Serge Daney to describe the film in terms of 'Cinemetorology [...] Scene of the crime: the earth; victims: peasants; witnesses to the crime: landscapes. That is, clouds, roads, grass, wind' (Daney 1982). In a sense, the 'too early and too late' refers both to the experience of class struggle referenced by the texts cited in the film, and to the audiovisual pedagogy that the film constructs by filming the wind so that 'at moments, one begins to see (the grass bent by the wind) before hearing (the wind responsible for this bending). At other moments, one hears first (the wind), then one sees (the grass)' (Daney 1982). Of course, the sites where this experience takes place are far from arbitrary, and, in the French part of the film, are the very sites referred to in the Engels text describing the misery of the French countryside before the French Revolution. These landscapes have changed dramatically in 200 years of modernity, and yet, these historical traces inhere in the landscape if one takes the time to sense them, to both see and to hear these depopulated landscapes of failed revolution, for which only the landscape itself is a witness. In Egypt, the question of being too early and too late, is coupled with that of being too close or too far, as the camera is positioned at an exact distance from an Egyptian factory, so that it is neither a disturbance, nor a hidden and invisible witness: 'Too close for them not to see the camera, too far away for them to be tempted to go towards it. To find this point, this moral point, is at this moment the entire art of the Straubs' (Daney 1982).

This is the point at which the film becomes not only an archaeological practice, resurrecting the ghosts of past class struggles, but also a geological, stratigraphic one. In Deleuze's terms, 'History is inseparable from the earth [*terre*], struggle is underground [*sous terre*] and if we want to grasp an event, we must not show it, we must not pass along the event but plunge into it, go through all the geological layers that are its internal history' (Deleuze 1989a, p. 254). This sense of the landscape as containing the spectres of past struggles is both psychogeographical and hauntological, finding resonance in practices as diverse as Situationist psychogeography, and the cinema of Antonioni, especially the ending of *Leclisse* (*The Eclipse*, 1962), in which nothing takes place but the place itself. Straub and Huillet offer more than just a critique and alternative to the cinematic apparatus, but construct a veritable ecology of both the natural and the technological, class struggles and texts, pasts and futures, in which the absence of the people in the landscape is a call for a new people and a new earth.

A surprisingly resonant development took place in Japan under the name *fukeiron*, or landscape theory, even if it derived from a radically different source, namely, the radical critique of the mass-media representation of spectacular violence and the search for new and markedly different means to present radical politics. According to Yuriko Furuhashi, this tendency derived from a response to the dramatic and emblematic case of the young loner turned serial killer Norio Nagayama, which was 'All over the front pages of Japanese newspapers' (Furuhashi 2013, p. 113). Against the spectacular media coverage of Nagayama, who was explicitly associated by the mass media with the increasingly radicalized student movement in Japan, Masao Adachi, Masao Matsuda, and Kôji Wakamatsu became interested in a different approach to this case, focused largely on the idea of landscape and environment as a key contributing factor to these events, and therefore as the focus of their cinematic representation. Adachi, who had collaborated with Wakamatsu as a screenwriter on several 'pink' films that crossed pulp sex and violence with student radicalism, obsessively filmed the places where Nagayama had been on his murderous itinerary prior to his arrest. This ultimately constituted the film *Ryakushô renzoku shasatsuma* (*Aka Serial Killer*, 1969) in which these vacant spaces were all that was shown visually, while, on the soundtrack, Adachi gave a detailed account of the case. It was really the production of this film that gave rise to the *fukeiron* theory, which was then extrapolated beyond this particular case to a broader idea of how the political constitution and struggles leave traces in the landscape, which, in turn, conditions events and behaviour. Oshima, who was already becoming an internationally recognized filmmaker,

approached this perspective more obliquely in *Tôkyô sensô sengo hiwa* (*The Man who Left his Will on Film*, 1969), which transposes Nagayama's story to the milieu of post-1968 student protest. This film presents a contrast between footage of violent protest and of banal landscapes, which voices on the soundtrack debate and criticize. It soon becomes apparent that the person who shot the footage is now dead, whether by suicide or in the heat of conflict, and the voices debate his decision to record, not the political actions themselves, but these seemingly bland and generic environments. The key idea in both projects is to show how 'filming a banal landscape' (Furuhata 2013, p. 117), can counteract codified media images of violence and activism. In its place is a focus on how governance and control is built into the built environment itself, so that filming this environment, preferably in long takes enabling its temporal exploration, can give greater insights into power relations and class struggle than filming mediatized violent political conflicts. While ostensibly two separate projects by different filmmakers, there was considerable overlap and cooperation in both projects, as well as in the articulation of *fukeiron* theory, especially by Adachi and the militant and filmmaker, Matsuda. Furthermore, the transposition of this theory to the increasingly violent protest taking place as the 'Tokyo Battle' also points to the formation of the Japanese Red Army Faction, in which Adachi would participate and Wakamatsu would have close links. Significantly, both of these filmmakers made more conventionally narrative films about this political experience much later, and they arguably provide examples of even stronger links between guerrilla filmmaking and urban guerrilla activities than their European counterparts.⁷

For Furuhata, these landscape films can be contrasted directly with examples of third cinema such as Solanas and Gettino's *Hour of the Furnaces*, which, via radical montage strategies, emphasize the ways film can be used as a revolutionary weapon. These concepts were also operative in other parts of the world, such as in the US Newsreel collective and, arguably, projects like *SLON* and Dziga Vertov in France. These approaches to militant actuality were also adopted in Japan by documentary filmmakers such as Ogawa Shinsuke and Tsuchimoto Noriaki, who are clearly the targets of Oshima's film, as the idea of cinema as a weapon is debated on the soundtrack. Oshima's film displaces these ideas in favour of depopulated urban landscapes that more closely resemble the shots in *AKA Serial Killer*, or even some sequences in Straub and Huillet's or Chantal Akerman films, with which they also share a discrepancy between sound and image. Yet, as Furuhata points out, there is also a specificity to the *fukeiron* approach since it deliberately selects a highly mediatized sequence of events, and contests

this representation via the use of depopulated and uneventful landscapes, against the mass-media representation. *AKA Serial Killer* subtracts any scenes of violence of human interest, in favour of deserted train stations, staircases, and empty nightclubs. These can be seen as any-space-whatevers, or non-spaces, which are what Nagayama could have filmed as he passed from city to city, a potential later actualized in Oshima's film. However, as in Straub and Huillet's work, there is a sense that these banal urban spaces have more to reveal than their surface emptiness, in that they contain architectonic relations of force, determining the kinds of events that are likely to take place there. Furthermore, these landscape shots evoke early cinema in their frontal presentation, use of long static shots, sometimes followed by lateral pans or tracking shots that distance the spectator from psychological involvement with the image, but instead present the landscape as something to be analysed. As Furuhata emphasizes, these de-dramatized sequences more closely resemble early 'actuality' films, than the creative or, in other words, narrative treatment of actuality that characterizes documentary films, including militant ones. However, both films are structured by a temporal logic, that of recreation: just as in *AKA Serial Killer*, there is the attempt to recreate Nagayama's journey across Japan, to see what he might have seen; in *The Man who left his Will on Film*, one of the militants, Matoki, attempts to recreate the footage of his fallen comrade, but is consistently blocked in his attempt to do so. The implication of both films is that the urban landscape is something that needs to be confronted in order to reveal its masked power relations. According to Adachi, 'I felt that perhaps these suffocating landscapes had been Nagayama's enemy. Then, we thought we could turn these landscapes that keep stealing from us, into a method of interrogating landscapes, ourselves and images' (Adachi cited in Furuhata 2013, p. 134). Ultimately, what is involved in both these films and the landscape theory that surrounded them is an act of cartography, or cognitive mapping, in which the study of the urban non-places of capitalist societies becomes a critical confrontation. As Furuhata puts it,

By deliberately turning their camera away from mediated images of violence, toward the images of eventless landscapes, *A.K.A. Serial Killer* and *The Man who Left his Will on Film* explored the diagram of governmental power. [...] the discourse of *fukeiron* tried to make sense of this diagram (Furuhata 2013, p. 148).

This resonates with other attempts to dislodge the normative diagram of the cinematic apparatus by a range of strategies, many of which also

privileged durational presentations of specific environments, over narrative and continuity.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the film Adachi and Wakamatsu made in cooperation with the PFLP in Palestine. In this film, *Red Army/PFLP: Declaration of World War* (1971), in which similar techniques are used, but transposed to the context of the guerrilla struggle for the liberation of Palestine. Adachi and Wakamatsu were able to gain access to PFLP leaders and refugee camps, with the idea that their film would represent propaganda for the Palestinian cause. The resulting film, however, after its initial spectacular shots of both Japanese Red Army and Palestinian airplane hijackings taken from television footage, contains many sequences that subscribe to a version of landscape theory. After these opening shots, which are interspersed with titles stating that 'this is a news film for the construction of a world red army' and 'the best propaganda is armed struggle' (the latter a quotation deriving from the PFLP leader Ghassan Kanafani who is heard shortly on the soundtrack), all to the accompaniment of triumphant music, there is a shift from this spectacular newsreel footage to a long tracking shot from a moving vehicle down a Beirut street, that is no less 'formalist', than the contemporary shots in *History Lessons*. The history presented here is much more contemporary than that of *History Lessons*; as we hear Kanafani speaking about Palestinian struggles and the model of propaganda they have given rise to: 'propaganda is in fact information, information, information is to communicate the truth, and the supreme truth is armed struggle'. However, it is significant that the image coincides in no obvious way with this discourse, but is rather more in the form of a travelogue, giving the experience of navigating a foreign environment. Such discrepant use of sound and image continues throughout the film, as further descriptions of the role of armed struggle are accompanied by images of everyday life such as laundry hanging on a line, and slow pans over walls and buildings, lingering to emphasize such things as walls scarred by bullet holes and everyday survival activities. Adachi, speaking about the film, emphasized the filmmakers' interest in capturing precisely these banal moments of the everyday life of guerrilla struggle, rather than spectacular images of conflict in accordance with mainstream media spectacular logics. Instead, Adachi rejected the approaches of other Western documentary makers, producing films with the methods of 'ordinary PR films' (cited in Furuhata 2013, p. 173), using makeup and embellished lighting to show the armed struggle in the best possible light. Instead they wanted to 'document situations like the one where women are washing clothes in the kitchen, right next to a Kalashnikov',

since 'there is no use filming things that are already understood' (Adachi cited in Furuhata 2013, p. 174)

While this is a dramatic shift from previous films that parodied or rejected the model of news coverage to an alternative form of news as engaged propaganda, the form it takes still bears many of the traces of landscape theory. As Furuhata puts it, there is an uneasy tension in the film between this idea of film as direct propaganda in support of the supreme propaganda of armed struggle, and a much more ambivalent use of images ranging from everyday Palestinian life to Japanese television. If armed struggle, specifically in the form of airplane hijackings, is propaganda, they are acts of communication, using the existing mass media to deliver a message. While the film similarly seems to provide a supporting mode of communication by further remediating these events, it ultimately departs from this simple model of communication by providing a series of ambivalent images, implying that, like the landscapes of their previous films, they need to be 'read'. Furthermore, as Furuhata argues, 'the images do not disappear into the expressed contents of advertisements and news. Instead they draw attention to the mediating presence of television as a medium' (Furuhata 2013, p. 160). Again, the spectacular media representation of third-world struggle is resisted, even if the film ostensibly takes the form of a newsreel, by means of a cartography of sites struggle, with the focus placed on the spaces and movements between these sites, rather than militant action itself.

This mapping is a diagram of power in the sense that Deleuze applies to Foucault, revealing relations for forces within a given space or territory; such mapping is itself a guerrilla activity, beyond the militant clichés usually inherent in representations of militant conflict, and requires an active analytical response from the spectator. In a sense, one could argue that this film registers the passage from guerrilla media made within enemy territory, which must therefore be highly coded, and liberated media as armed propaganda, as elaborated by Che Guevara, ironically in the process seeming to become more conventionally aligned to notions of journalistic truth. The film, however, destabilizes such a clear-cut contrast, and rather opens the door to the kinds of questioning enacted in films such as Godard and Miéville's *Ici et Ailleurs* (*Here and Elsewhere*, 1974), a connection also noted by Furuhata. We will return to this work in the following chapter, but it is first necessary to examine a different mode of destabilizing the cinematic apparatus, namely by means of queer, feminist, and anti-psychiatric minor (anti)-cinemas.

Minor Anti-Cinemas: Anti Psychiatric, Heretical, Feminist, and Postcolonial

As the first chapter of this book argued, the concept of the minor is key for defining and delimiting what can be considered as radical and guerrilla media, although such delimitation is always open to disagreement and contestation. In order to expand the examples of the more obviously 'guerilla' modes of filmmaking examined in the previous section, it is therefore necessary to return to this concept of the minor in relation to cinema, and specifically to how it was articulated in a series of short essays by Félix Guattari. It will not be possible to give a comprehensive account of minor cinemas in the 1970s in all their various modes in relation to queer, feminist, postcolonial, and anti-psychiatric subjectivities or, rather, processes of subjectivation. Nevertheless, some of the contours of these multifarious practices in the 1970s will be presented in relation to the concept of 'minor (anti)cinemas'.

It is a truism of the apparatus theory presented earlier that cinema functions as a cultural symptom. Deleuze developed the idea of the work of art as a symptomatology rather than a symptom against this kind of approach, by means of which the artist diagnoses both him or herself and the world. First developed in Deleuze's presentation of Sacher Masoch's *Venus in Furs* (Deleuze 1989b), this idea can be seen as the first principle of the collection of essays entitled *Critical and Clinical Essays* (Deleuze 1997). Most importantly, this reading strategy critiques the medical treatment of works of literature as symptoms that are then projected onto their authors who are then seen as prime sufferers of the syndrome they present in their works. Instead, Deleuze argues that they should rather be seen as clinicians who identify and diagnose signs, that is to say, symptoms, 'the physician of themselves and of the world' (Deleuze 1997, p. 3). This not only reiterates the well-known defence of de Sade from charges of sadism by Georges Bataille and others since, as Deleuze points out, a true sadist would rather conceal the dynamics of sadism by using 'the hypocritical language of established order and power' (Deleuze 1989b, p. 17), but also argues against the reduction of Sacher-Masoch's work to a mere clinical curiosity. Turning the medical gaze against itself, Deleuze claims that these authors present to us an exalted 'pornology' (1989b, p. 18), a form of knowledge from which doctors and psychoanalysts should learn, instead of reducing these works and their authors to mere symptoms. A truly 'critical and clinical' approach to aesthetic works would then treat them less as pathological symptoms than as the critical diagnosis of modes of subjectivity and subjectivation

processes. The importance of this reversal of perspective in the critical and clinical analysis of aesthetic works for this chapter is that it informed not only Deleuze's cinema project, but also the work of Félix Guattari on minor cinema. While Deleuze's apparent auteurism can be seen as a type of shorthand for identifying particular arrangements of cinematic signs, it was in the work of Félix Guattari that the possibilities of cinema as a 'minor', symptomatological art are more directly developed.

As Gary Genosko has indicated (Genosko 2009, p. 134), Guattari devoted frustratingly few pieces of writing to the cinema in general or individual films, yet what he did write is exemplary in its use of a symptomatological approach, relatively free of the vestigial auteurism of Deleuze's cinema books. This is particularly apparent in the short essay, 'The Poor Man's Couch' (Guattari 1996, pp. 155-166), in which Guattari claims that cinema provides a type of mass equivalent of the psychoanalytic cure. For this reason, psychoanalysts are singularly unable to grasp cinematic symptomatologies since the cinema constitutes 'a normalization of the social imaginary that is irreducible to familialist and Oedipal models' (Guattari 1996, p. 155). The shift from the reductive Freudian readings of semantics to the Lacanian structuralist readings in terms of the signifier are, for Guattari, no great advance in psychoanalytic attempts to diagnose the cinema. Disputing especially Metz's approach to the cinema as being structured in a similar manner to the Lacanian unconscious 'like a language' through an assembly of syntagmatic chains, Guattari argues that cinema's 'montage of a-signifying semiotic chains of intensities, movements and multiplicities fundamentally tends to free it from the signifying grid' (1996, p. 161). This is not to say that Guattari has a utopian view of cinema, which he says is just as repressive as psychoanalysis, only in a completely different manner. What cinema, at least in its commercial forms, offers is a machinic, 'inexpensive drug' (Guattari 1996, p. 162) that, in its own way, works on the unconscious. Instead of paying for a professional witness as in psychoanalysis, at the cinema, the audience pays less money to be 'invaded by subjective arrangements with blurry contours [...] that, in principle, have no lasting effects' (Guattari 1996, p. 163).

In practice, what is enacted by cinema *does* have effects in that it models forms of subjective mutation, which remain as traces of the cinematic 'session', just as other narcotics do. As a machinic narcotic, cinema is a giant and much more effective process for the production of normalization than the psychoanalytic cure, but, paradoxically, it does this via a process of complete subjective deterritorialization. For this reason, cinema is both 'the best and the worst' that modern capitalist societies offer their subjects and

contains within its machinic production of subjectivity liberating potentials: 'a film that could shake free of its function of adaptational drugging could have unimaginable liberating effects on an entirely different scale to those produced by books' (Guattari 1996, p. 164).⁸ This is because cinematic language is a living language that, while, for the most part, is turned towards repressive ends, is uniquely able to capture and express processes of psychic semiotization and therefore could become 'a cinema of combat, attacking dominant values in the present state of things' (Guattari 1996, p. 165). This formulation is clearly highly resonant with the concepts of radical, guerrilla cinema already outlined.

Elsewhere, Guattari develops his own conception of minor cinema, related to but distinct from Deleuze and Guattari's elaboration of the minor in *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* (1986), as well as Deleuze's treatment of the minor in *Cinema 2: The Time-image* (1989a). The three key aspects of the minor, or, more specifically, minor language, as Deleuze and Guattari defined it in their book on Kafka, are 'the deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to a political immediacy, and the collective assemblage of enunciation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 18). Put more straightforwardly, the minor is defined as a mode of expression that is collective, even when produced by an individual; directly political; and that subverts and interferes with the normative functions of language. Despite the differences between textual and cinematic modes of expression, such a description is clearly applicable to cinema and especially to those modes of cinema that interfere with the norms of cinematic expression in order to directly express a political condition or potential, in direct relation to a collectivity. For this reason, it is hardly surprising that Deleuze refers to the concept of the minor in his discussion of what is usually referred to as third cinema (Deleuze 1989a, pp. 222-230).

As Gary Genosko has pointed out (2009, p. 134ff.), for both authors this conception of the minor has both similarities to and differences from theoretical and practical elaborations of third cinema and, in Guattari's case, certainly takes a distance from doctrinaire positions and narrow definitions of worthy modes of militant cinematic production. Guattari's examples range from obscure anti-psychiatric documentaries to the works of then-nascent American auteurs like David Lynch and Terence Malick. Guattari's cinematic examples share is that, in his reading of them, an elaboration of non-normative processes of desire, capable, in principle, of countering the normalization processes of both commercial cinema and psychoanalysis. For example, Guattari indicates several examples that could constitute a cinema of anti-psychiatry or sees in a film such as Malick's

Badlands (1973) a profound process of *amour fou* or schizo-desire worthy of the best productions of the surrealists (Guattari 1996, pp. 167-176). But cinema in the 1970s was full of such cinematic expressions of schizo-desire and *amour fou* of which it will only be possible to chart a few pertinent examples.

One arena to begin is in what could be called anti-psychiatric documentaries such as *Asylum* (Robinson, 1972), which Guattari discusses in passing along with Ken Loach's fictional *Family Life* (1971) as 'indirectly reveal[ing] an anti-psychiatric current' for a 'substantial audience' (Guattari 1996, p. 177). *Asylum* concerns a post-Kingsley Hall anti-psychiatric community care project of R. D. Laing in a London flat, in which, rather than obvious clinical or chemical intervention, the patients and therapists co-inhabit the therapeutic space; indeed at times, it is not always possible to distinguish them. As Genosko has pointed out, 'the commitment of the filmmakers was evident in as much as they stayed in the therapeutic community for six weeks during the filming [...] and over this period they not only recorded but played active roles in the group problem solving sessions' (Genosko 2002, p. 151). This kind of participatory engagement went beyond direct cinema approaches to such phenomena (cf. Wiseman, *Titicut Follies*, 1967), in that it incorporated the anti-psychiatric participatory breakdown of rigid group roles, even if there is no indication of the residents influencing the making of the film. Furthermore, as Genosko also indicates, the film reveals, to some extent, some of the problems with Laing and Cooper's mode of anti-psychiatry in that there are still attempts on the part of some of the therapists to Oedipalize the issues of the residents. However, the film also demonstrates some examples of collective breakthrough, for example in the transformations undergone by David, whose incessant, seemingly nonsense verbalizing eventually gives way to a more nuanced and calmer mode of expression, and, significantly, listening to others. For Genosko, this is 'an accomplishment of the group, who together insisted that David take personal responsibility for his actions in the house they shared and ran together' (Genosko 2002, p. 151).

Guattari was even more enthusiastic about the March 11 Collective film *Matti da slegare* (*Fit to be Untied*, Silvano Agnosti, Marco Bellocchio, Sandro Petraglia, Stefano Rulli, 1975), which documented the experience of one of Franco Basaglia's anti-institutional projects in the Parma Psychiatric hospital. Guattari was considerably more sympathetic to Basaglia than to Laing, and related more to the former in his own practice at La Borde clinic, devoting a significant essay to his work in which he labelled him affirmatively as a 'Guerrilla Psychiatrist' (Guattari 1996b, pp. 42-45). What

is notable about this film is that it goes further in affirming the speech and experience of all the participants and, unlike in *Asylum*, this is able to impact on the very production of the film itself. According to Guattari, 'it is the people involved who really get the chance to speak [...] children, educators, psychiatrists, militant groups [...] each sequence, each shot, was collectively discussed during the editing' (Guattari 1996a, pp. 178-179). What is striking in this film is the integration of the perspectives of psychiatric patients and industrial workers, and the ways relations are set up between them beyond institutional boundaries. For Guattari, this film is exemplary not only of the potentials of anti-psychiatry, but also of minor cinema in its potential to exceed other modes of political communication in becoming a "cinema of combat" [or] a form of expression and struggle' (pp. 178-179) against dominant representations. In this regard, it is worth noting that the collective's subsequent project was a TV series oriented around cinema itself, *La macchina cinema* (*The Cinema Machine*, 1979), in which, instead of a psychiatric institution, a whole range of aspects of the institutional machinery and subjective experience of cinema that was critically examined as an industrial production of subjectivity for the masses, very much in line with Guattari's insights about 'The Poor Man's Couch'.

While Guattari referred to several other examples of this anti-psychiatric anti-cinema, some of them catalogued by Genosko (2002, pp. 154-156), perhaps the most extreme example, was one he does not discuss, the film *Anna* (Alberto Grifi and Massimo Sarchielli, 1975), even if it was situated far from any recognizable clinical practice. One day, in the late 1960s, the actor Massimo Sarchielli met a sixteen-year-old girl named Anna near Piazza Navona in Rome. Anna was pregnant and visibly under the influence of drugs. After several suicide attempts and constant depressive periods, she had nevertheless rejected the interventions of reform institutions and had recently escaped from the last of these. Sarchielli decided to take care of her and took her to his house. Initially taking notes on the girl's behaviour, he began to film her, with the idea to make an eventual film. Since he was an inexperienced director, he asked his friend Alberto Grifi to collaborate on the project. Grifi was already becoming known as an innovative and experimental filmmaker, making films related to the Situationist critique of the spectacle, and conducting early experiments in video and special effects. Later, he directed the film *Il Festival del proletariato giovanile al Parco Lambro* (*The Festival of Proletarian Youth at Parco Lambro*, 1976), documenting a key moment of the developing Italian youth counterculture and the Creative *Autonomia* movement. Grifi agreed to participate and they started filming in 1972 and 1973, amassing eleven hours of video recordings, part of

which was transferred to 16mm using a device of Grifi's own construction, and resulting in a film of almost four hours. This was released in 1975 to a highly controversial reception, due to the intimacy, apparent extreme realism, and manipulation both of the film and the events transpiring in front of the camera. Located somewhere between the inheritance of Italian Neorealism and yet-to-be-developed reality television, this film is an uncomfortable document of an intersubjective 'therapeutic' process that is highly troubling. Referring to one of the most notorious sequences in the film of Anna in the shower while heavily pregnant, Andréa Picard writes: 'Troubling in more ways than one, [certain images] sometimes surpass their aesthetic worth and lodge themselves into the annals of memory where they continue to reverberate and disturb long after being encountered' (2013, n.p.).

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake simply to see this film as the prolongation of the aesthetics of Neorealism and direct cinema. It is also a work that defies genres in its combination of documentation and reenactment and also one in which the technologies used in the film are also highly significant. Grifi had already demonstrated his interest in bricolage through the assembly of found-footage films like *Verifica Incerta* (1965), which prefigured a whole wave of experimental film and, later, video art with its humorous repetitions of title and action sequences from numerous films. Such experimentation was continued in projects such as *Transfert per camera verso Virulenta* (1967) and *Orgonauti, Evivva!* (1970), which experimented with special effects such as colour diffraction and spatial distortion via mirrors and filters, again using equipment that Grifi had developed himself. This experimentation was not limited to images, however, but also involved the soundtrack with up to seven different soundtracks superimposed in *Transfert per camera verso Virulenta*. In the latter film, Grifi attempted to recreate, via distorted imagery, the effects of ingesting psychotropic substances. Certainly, Grifi moved away from this pure artistic research in the 1970s, in Annamaria Licciardello's words, rejecting 'any interest in artistic activities that are not capable of disturbing the "meaningless" reality of everyday life' (Licciardello 2008, p. 189).⁹ It is via this lineage that, despite appearances, *Anna* needs to be understood in the following terms: '*Anna* is a true and proper cinematographic experiment that constitutes a unique moment in the history of Italian cinema, and a limit-example of direct cinema' (Licciardello 2008, p. 189). Certainly, this brought the project into dialogue with questions of realism inherited from both direct cinema and Neorealism, but, above all, it was the fabrication of a kind of machinery to convert the extremity of subjectivity and everyday

life that Anna represented, into durational imagery, in an entirely new way, given the primitive development of analog video at this moment in time.

Grifi was fully aware of these technological conditions, which he saw as indispensable to the production of a film that was able to do away with the usual cinematic conditions of the cost of film stock, lighting, and production crews, thereby allowing for an entirely autonomous mode of production, and a heightened level of intimacy with the film's protagonists. In the following chapter, some arguably more sophisticated uses of video to destabilize the cinematic apparatus will be examined, but it is worth emphasizing the novelty and originality of its use in *Anna*, in which the possibilities of recording hours of a lived social and subjective experiment over a substantial period of time was integral to the whole project.

Beyond this, the film was very much a portrait of a specific time and place, namely the heterogeneous counterculture that gathered around Piazza Navona before it was fully transformed into an anonymous site for mass tourism. In the film, the denizens of a local café provide 'a motley Greek (yet very Roman!) chorus, providing the sociohistorical and political backdrop to the scene' (Picard 2013, n.p.), or, in Licciardello's terms, 'a fresco of Rome in the 1970s, and more precisely of that microcosm that was Piazza Navona, around which gravitated hippies, petty thieves and "decent people"'



Fig. 15: Alberto Grifi working on the video transfer of *Anna* (1975).

(Licciardello 2008, p. 190) that was unique to this moment of the early 1970s, between the late-1960s student political and cultural movements and the *Autonomia* movement that was still in formation. *Anna* is therefore as much a sociopolitical portrait of its time as a psychological one, and rather constitutes the first step in the 'anthropology of disobedience' that Grifi continued to develop around events on the borders of the *Autonomia* movement itself, and, tellingly, by means of a feminist intervention into a mass anti-psychiatric meeting in 1977 (*Lia*, 1977). Contrary to Genosko's focus on Marco Bellocchio as a filmmaker of Guattarian minor cinema, with his films focusing critically on the violence of the family, the media, the army, and other social institutions, Grifi's work took place on the frontlines of Creative *Autonomia* itself, resulting in such delirious titles as *Dinni e la Normalina, ovvero la videopolizia psichiatrica contro i sedicenti gruppi di follia militante* (*Dinni and Normalina or the Psychiatric Videopolice against the So-Called Groups of Militant Insanity*, 1978). As such, this work traces both the phenomena of *Autonomia* and its new subjective practices, as well as their subsequent repression.

In a less underground context, the idea of an 'anthropology of disobedience' was a fairly widespread one in 1970s European cinema, encompassing everything from docufictions on radical movements such as Antonello Biondi's *Seize the Time* (1970) on the Black Panthers, to the Brechtian works by more well-known filmmakers that were examined in the previous section. However, there are perhaps three key filmmakers who embodied this tendency in the 1970s in ways that relate specifically both to the destruction of the conventional cinematic apparatus and the expression of a minor, disobedient politics, however complex and ambivalent in relation to existing political movements, namely Pier Paolo Pasolini, Chantal Akerman, and Rainer Werner Fassbinder. In each case, one key film will be singled out that encapsulates their broader project at a particular moment in time in the 1970s.

Pasolini represents a particularly enigmatic case of an artistic response to the movements of 1968. Famously, he initially opposed the 1968 movements as tainted by bourgeois origins and sensibilities, clashing with the sons of the proletariat who made up the police, especially in his response to the 1968 Viale Giulia riots, when students first fought back against police violence. The poem from which this position is derived 'Il PCI ai Giovani' ('The PCI to the Youth') is usually translated as 'I Hate you Dear Students', the 'treacherous' title it was given by the sensationalist weekly *Espresso* (Viano 1993, p. xviii), although the poem is more ambivalent than the one-sided reaction this imposed title suggests.

Subsequent films, especially *Teorema* (*Theorem*, 1968) and *Porcile* (*Pigsty*, 1969), while hardly revolutionary tracts, nevertheless strongly embraced themes raised by the movements of 1968, especially the disintegration of the Oedipal bourgeois family, tackled already in a more mythical way in *Edipo Re* (*Oedipus Rex*, 1967). The documentary film Pasolini contributed to without official credit in conjunction with the leftist group *Lotta Continua*, *12 Dicembre* (1972) further provides evidence of Pasolini's leftist sympathies. This film concerns the same 'accidental death of an anarchist' – the death of Giuseppe Pinelli, who fell from a high window during police custody – that would also inspire the famous play by Dario Fo. The film also deals with the Piazza Fontana bombing on 12 December 1969, for which Pinelli was mistakenly held accountable by the police, whereas the bombing was later revealed to be a key part of the right-wing state terrorist strategy of tension previously discussed. The film, in many respects a straightforward talking-heads documentary, intersperses the statements of various figures ranging from middle-class citizens to workers, students, and Pinelli's family and friends on the events, interlacing these statements with outbursts of noise, suggestive of the 'shadow state' orchestrating these same events. While Pasolini's involvement in this project may have been limited – the opening credits merely stating 'from an idea of Pier Paolo Pasolini' –, the mere fact of this collaboration with *Lotta Continua* indicates a much more affirmative engagement with the post-1968 movement than that evident in his earlier poem, even if there were apparent disputes between Pasolini and members of *Lotta Continua* over the final cut of the film. By the early 1970s, however, Pasolini had abandoned what he referred to as the 'aristocratic and unpopular' period of his filmmaking influenced by 1968, and embarked on his trilogy of life series of films, which adapted medieval literature such as *Il Decameron* (*The Decameron*, 1971) and *I racconti di Canterbury* (*The Canterbury Tales*, 1972) in order to capture the sensuality, vitalism, and sexuality of proletarian culture before it was normalized and subjugated by bourgeois capitalism, a project he also finally denounced via nihilistic writings on the anthropological degradation of proletarian youth culture, as well as via his nihilist final film *Salò o le 120 giornate di Sodoma* (*Salò or the 120 days of Sodom*, 1975).

However, a key work in terms of minor cinema that is more rarely discussed, is his 1970 film *Appunti per un'Orestiade Africana* (*Notes for an African Orestes*) which warrants further discussion in this context. The idea of adapting Orestes in an African setting clearly fit Pasolini's series of films engaging with Greek mythology, forming part of his 'aristocratic' period. This film, however, is not a finished film, but rather an assembly of

audiovisual notes towards it. This in itself renders the film a 'minor work' and also in relation to other similar films he had made in such an essayistic format such as *Appunti per un film sull'India* (*Notes for a Film on India*, 1968), which similarly investigated a third-world setting, using a similar premise of notes towards a future film that was also never made. *Notes for an African Orestes* is composed of three interwoven elements:

1. Documentary footage shot by Pasolini in Africa, which combines Pasolini's recounting the story of the play and why it should be made in a contemporary African setting, with the search for possible locations and faces for the future film;
2. A discussion held with a group of African students in Rome over Pasolini's seemingly highly Eurocentric idea that the story of Orestes prefigures the situation confronted by contemporary progressive democratic states in Africa;
3. The performance of a free jazz composition by Gato Barbieri by his ensemble in collaboration with the singers Yvonne Murray and Archie Savage that would have been used in a key passage in the film.

So instead of a finished film, there are notes towards it that break it down into a series of potential elements: images, the search for places and faces; sounds, the performance of the jazz ensemble; and concepts, the thesis that contemporary Africa is playing out the same process described in Aeschylus's play which, in Pasolini's words, 'synthesizes African history over the last 100 years'. However, what makes it most interesting is that within and between these virtual elements of the potential film, there is a reflexive interrogation of the film's own premises and discourses, introduced by the opening of Pasolini in sunglasses reflected in a contemporary shop window in Tanzania. Similarly, the somewhat absurd projection of *Orestes* in an African context is already undermined by the gaps and the specificities of the faces he encounters, the inability to decide which real person might properly incarnate the Greek myth that is the basis of the play. The discussion with the African students takes these doubts further, in that, while the students display limited acceptance of Pasolini's thesis, they also question its Eurocentrism, one student stating that 'Africa is not a nation but an immense continent with different histories and cultures'. As Maurizio Viano puts it, 'it is an embarrassing moment, for, along with Pasolini, white viewers must confront their own habit of lumping the many African realities into one convenient password' (Viano 1993, p. 253).

Nevertheless, the mere fact that so many black faces are on-screen, and that at least some of their voices are heard, is already a progressive act betraying a desire to learn from modern African experience rather than merely to assume it follows a Western blueprint. Finally, the music adds yet another dimension to these discourses in a powerful and mixed-race aesthetic performance that is then superimposed over the other images, such as further footage taken in Tanzania. As Viano puts it, 'when we cut from the face of a student to the ominous silhouette of a Baobab, and Gato Barbieri's saxophone weaves an air of Latin jazz around it, then we are brought back to the essence of cinema' (Viano 1993, p. 253). Although this film presents a home-movie aesthetic that prefigures the rise of portable video devices and the possibility for anyone to create this kind of audiovisual poetry, this film is also a unique example of a 'tortuously elegiac' essay film (Viano 1993, p. 253) markedly different in its poetic weaving together of complementary elements to later exemplars of the essay film such as Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil* (*Sunless*, 1983).

As an example of minor, anti-cinema, a series of notes towards an unmade project, the film is one of the few in this period of Pasolini's work to generate a tension between the political and the mythological, as it confronts the contemporary political condition of African democracy with the myth of Orestes and vice versa. This confrontation produces surprising results that really take the film out of Pasolini's apocalyptic vision of the inevitable decline of Western societies under the totalitarian force of capitalist consumerism. In the film, mythology becomes something other than a lost plenitude, whether spiritual or sensual, and becomes, rather, the idea of what singularities from the past need to be preserved to generate a living present, or, in terms of the Orestes myth, how to conserve the Enrinyes (the Furies or witches of vengeance and destruction) as the Eumenides (or forces for justice, in alliance with the city-state as its political conscience). This fragile constitution of the old and the new was precisely posed, not in mythology, but in Greek theatre by Aeschylus, and this aesthetic gesture is repeated by the film's articulation of ethnographic and modern African faces and sites, with African voices and the interracial jazz performance. What began as Eurocentric hubris becomes, in this context, a profound and direct opening to the outside of contemporary Africa, and the idea that it is more the Western world (and also the socialist second world) that have something to learn from Africa than the reverse. It is therefore, in its own way, not only minor, but also a form of 'third cinema' guerrilla filmmaking.

It may seem quite a leap from the expansive and mythic exteriors of this film to the cramped interiors in the work of Chantal Akerman; nevertheless,

her work can be seen as no less a form of minor anti-cinema. First of all, the 1970s was a particularly rich period of experimental feminist film practice with other key filmmakers including Marguerite Duras, Agnès Varda, Helke Sander, and Yvonne Rainer, whose works frequently combine artistic experimentation with feminist political perspectives. Their works have been engaged by a range of feminist-film criticism of which perhaps the most notable examples are Judith Mayne's *The Woman at the Keyhole* (1992) and B. Ruby Rich's *Chick Flicks* (1998), alongside a range of works devoted either to women filmmakers working in specific national cinema contexts (see Flitterman-Lewis 1996 and Frieden et al. eds. 1993), or individual filmmakers, including several studies devoted to Akerman (Margulies 1996; Foster ed. 1999).

In a less avant-garde and/or radical vein, several female filmmakers addressed questions directly related to urban guerrilla figures, notably Margarethe Von Trotta in *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* (*The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum*, Schlöndorff and von Trotta, 1975), *Das zweite Erwachen der Christa Klages* (*The Second Awakening of Christa Klages*, von Trotta, 1978), and later in *Die bleierne Zeit* (*Marianne and Juliane*, von Trotta, 1982), explicitly based on the biography of RAF member Gudrun Ensslin. For all their 'sympathies for the urban guerrilla', at least as experienced by or affecting women, these films remain well-meaning liberal melodramas characterized by conventional narrative structures and industrial production standards, as Renate Möhrmann put it in relation to the second of these films, 'unlike the majority of films made in the 1970s by women filmmakers, *The Second Awakening of Christa Klages* is notably characterized by utmost professionalism' (1993, pp. 75-76). This does not render these films uninteresting in themselves, but outside the core interests of this book. The work of Yvonne Rainer in the USA, Marguerite Duras in France, and Helke Sander in Germany certainly correspond to the concept of minor cinema, and each of them produced works in the 1970s that were both formally and politically radical to varying degrees; Sander was also prominent in the development of feminist-film culture in Germany through the foundation of the journal *Frauen und Film*. It is Chantal Akerman, however, whose work is arguably the most formally radical feminist work in this decade and whose work is of the greatest relevance to this chapter.

The cliché view of Akerman's work of the 1970s, the work by which she is mostly known, is, to paraphrase the title of Ivone Margulies study (1996), one in which 'Nothing Happens'. This is especially applied to the film *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (*Jeanne Dielman, 23 Commerce Quay, 1080 Brussels*, 1975), the film most frequently commented on

in Akerman's work. By this point, showing nothing happening was hardly new, but, in fact, was a fairly prevalent modernist strategy, whether in the work of modernist 'ascetic' directors such as Robert Bresson or Michelangelo Antonioni, artistically experimental ones like Andy Warhol or Michael Snow, or, as we have seen, the more Brechtian work of Straub and Huillet or early Fassbinder. Many of these comparisons, especially to Warhol, have been made by perceptive critical accounts of her work. Of more interest, however, is the specific way her films show nothing happening from a gendered female perspective and for a female subject, whose identity is anything but fixed.

In fact, Akerman's films are a unique contribution to the aforementioned 'anthropology of disobedience', but this time to patriarchal norms, behaviours, and fixity; one could even read the title of her first short film *Saute ma ville* (*Blow up my Town*, 1968) as a statement of intent in this regards. This rejection of conformity to both patriarchal and cinematic norms is especially apparent in her first feature film *Je, tu, il, elle* (*I, You, He, She*, 1974), which both articulates possible grammatical subject positions and suggests a potential passage between them. In this film, we first see a character played by Akerman herself enacting rituals around the consumption of sugar cubes, and progressively rearranging and stripping down her apartment of furniture. She then leaves this apartment and is picked up by a truck driver with whom she has casual sexual relations. In the final section of the film, she goes unannounced to the apartment of her female lover with whom, despite initial awkwardness and distance, she also has sex before leaving, by implication, for the last time. In Judith Mayne's account of the opening segment of *Je, tu, il, elle*, 'there is a ritual quality to this section of the film, an almost meditative tone of quiet contemplation that characterizes Akerman's movements and the fit between her voice and her gestures' (Mayne 1990, p. 127). While these gestures reveal practices of the self that are, at once, 'contemplative' and 'undeniably obsessive' (Mayne 1990, p. 127), what is unique is the very focus on a woman's body, alone in a room, made all the more direct by the knowledge that the filmmaker and performer are one and the same, hence, cinematically articulating the voice and the gestures presented.

While it is perhaps an unfortunate characterization to describe Akerman and other female directors' work as not owing 'their importance to militant feminism' (Deleuze 1989a, p. 196), Deleuze's subsequent point that 'they have produced innovations in [the] cinema of bodies, as if women had to conquer the source of their own attitudes and the temporality which corresponds to them as individual or common gest' (1989a, p. 197) is important. What is

most interesting here is the relation between a body and a space of intimacy, whether that of her room or, in the later sections of the film, the cab of a truck and her female lover (or ex-lover's) apartment. As Mayne and others have noted, 'there is a fundamental connection between orality and self-expression' (1990, p. 130) in the whole film, ranging from the anorexic rituals around consuming sugar in the first section, to the oral sex in the truck in the second part of the film, to the importance of consuming food to enable the passage to the re-consummation of the lesbian sexual relationship in the third section (since, presumably, this was the lover to whom the main character composed a letter in the first part of the film).

As many critics have pointed out, neither of these sexual scenes correspond to erotic or pornographic cinematic codes, since the blow job in the second section is off-screen and the lovemaking in the final section is shown in such long static takes as to be entirely de-objectified, and boring, although not necessarily devoid of its own formal eroticism. At any rate, this sequence corresponds neither with romantic nor pornographic codes and, in fact, 'the usual codes of sexual portrayals in filmic images are so avoided that viewers are left with a singular depiction of sex [...] less that of women, of lesbian love, than that of a style of filmic writing' (Turim 1999, p. 19). As Turim has also noted, the combinations of intimacy and distance presented in the film as well as the fact that Akerman is both filmmaker and performer, and performs both intimate solitary rituals, and lovemaking with both male and female partners, presents both a unique form of 'gender trouble' and also 'tempts the analyst to come up with a "diagnosis"' (Turim 1999, p. 21). However, as she points out, this is to miss the authorial work of the film: 'the film works as a contemporary intervention precisely because it offers its own reading of the unconscious (and that of an authorial voice making a personal pronouncement behind it)' (Turim 1999, pp. 21-22). In the terms that this chapter has developed, this is not a symptomatic case study of anorexia, depression, or bisexuality, but rather a symptomatology that works through these psychosocial formations and apparently fixed positions, opening them to an outside.

In this respect, it is significant that, when the protagonist Julie leaves her apartment, she leaves the door ajar, and that the 'mirror' also seen in the first section turns out to be a transparent glass door. It is the film-work itself, down to the details of its intimate *mise-en-scène*, frontal-camera positioning, and use of duration, that works through these symptoms, and opens up these apparently fixed positions to movement. The often quoted opening line of the film 'and then I left' refers to three departures: first from the apartment (*tu*), then from the truck driver (*il*), and finally from the lover

(elle). These departures only take place via a working through of the desires invoked and performed by particular bodies in particular spaces that are, in a different sense to the Pasolini example, 'the essence of cinema'. As such, *Je, tu, il, elle* prefigures less *Jeanne Dielman*, which is rather the sympathetic presentation of an 'other' woman of another generation, considerably more trapped within the confines and gendered roles of domestic space, than *Les rendezvous d'Anna* (*The Meetings of Anna*, 1978), in which the 'Je' of the earlier film has become the successful and nomadic filmmaker Anna, whose encounters perform a symptomatological role by eliciting a range of stories from those she meets. In this sense, cinema becomes a way for a gendered female body to leave the confines of a cramped physical space – which is also social and psychic – successfully, and open up to a series of spaces of encounter even if at the price of a rootless and restless nomadism that was, in a sense, there from the beginning of Akerman's work.

The third example of minor cinema comes from the work of Fassbinder, whose television work will also be considered in the next chapter. While it is arguable that Fassbinder's work in its entirety could be seen as a guerrilla enterprise, from his pre-cinematic anti-theatre, to his early uncompromisingly Brechtian films, to his later subversive melodramas, of particular relevance for this project are those films where practices of armed violence are confronted directly in the films *Mutter Küsters' Fahrt zum Himmel* (*Mother Küsters Goes to Heaven*, 1975), *Die dritte Generation* (*The Third Generation*, 1979), and the collective film *Deutschland im Herbst* (*Germany in Autumn*, 1978). Of special interest, however, is his much less well-known early film *The Niklashausen Journey* (1970), which both expresses his attitudes towards groups like the Red Army Faction, and the dangers and potentials of radical artistic practices, and therefore constitutes a form of self-critique. On the issue of the RAF, Fassbinder expressed sympathetic views on several occasions, as in the following interview with Christian Thomsen:

They possess an intellectual potency and are all too sensitive in their despair [...] They thought the revolution was coming tomorrow, but because the revolution was taking too long for them, something snapped [...] they ended up desperately isolated, only able to go to extremes. But honestly, I don't know what else they could have done. (Cited in Thomsen 1991, p. 90)

In these and similar statements, there is a considerable sympathy for the aims of the RAF combined with a rejection of their 'impatience', which is, moreover, seen in tragic rather than moralistic terms. One could compare

this to the fatalistic gangster characters in Fassbinder's early films who, aware of their self-destructive trajectories, can all the same only play them out fatalistically. While direct connections between Fassbinder and RAF Members, and certainly the idea that he was ever tempted to join their pre-RAF activities, may be apocryphal, he certainly knew Horst Söhnlein, who was the leading figure in the Munich action-theatre when Fassbinder joined and had both personal and artistic differences with Fassbinder. Andreas Baader was also a frequent presence in the theatre although more interested in 'making up revolutionary slogans' (Thomsen 1991, p. 15) in the back room with Söhnlein than in theatrical activities. According to one account, the:

split occurred between those aligned with the original company leader, Söhnlein, who felt that political theatre should translate directly into political action, and those led by Fassbinder, who believed that the plane of ideas and artistic expression was an ample arena to challenge norms, question custom, and effect change (Wienert 2008, n.p.).

Söhnlein was one of the participants, along with Baader, Ensslin, and Thorwald Proll, in the shopping centre attack in Frankfurt that was the key pre-RAF action that led to their contact with Ulrike Meinhof. Söhnlein also deliberately wrecked the action-theatre, mostly due to anger at Fassbinder's threat to his leadership and especially the 'defection' of his wife Ursula Strätz, the theatre's manager, to Fassbinder's faction as well as her sexual attraction to the latter. According to Thomsen, 'not a single beer glass, chair or plank of the stage was left in one piece' (1991, p. 15), and this generated the momentum toward the Frankfurt action that took place the following night. These connections are glossed over in many accounts of Fassbinder's early career, with Thomas Elsaesser stating cryptically of the action-theatre that 'its theatre was wrecked by one of its founders' (Elsaesser 1996, p. 301). Fassbinder himself was less guarded, stating around the period of *Germany in Autumn*, that his phone had been tapped for years since he used to know Söhnlein, Baader, Meins, and 'a few other people' (Fassbinder 1992, p. 136). Nevertheless, however much these scenes themselves sound like they come from an early Fassbinder film, they give some evidence to the idea that the action-theatre was 'one of the breeding grounds of West German terrorism' (Thomsen 1991, p. 15). This is certainly one of the clearest examples of the bifurcations discussed previously between militant guerrilla action and radical aesthetic practices explored in this book.

The Niklashausen Journey itself, up until its inclusion in the Fassbinder Commemorative DVD Collection (2007), was '[o]ne of Fassbinder's least known films' (Elsaesser 1996, p. 272), and yet it is one of the most interesting of his early films, and certainly the first of his films to reflect directly on the aftermath of the student movements of 1968. Ostensibly the story of the fifteenth-century Bavarian peasant uprising around the visionary shepherd Hans Böhm, the film is deliberately anachronistic and contains references to a range of modern struggles, from the Russian Revolution, to Cuba, to May 1968, and the Red Army Faction. Fassbinder appears in the film as Böhm's adviser, the 'black monk', in a leather jacket, and, at one point, there is a concert by the 'Krautrock' group Amon Düül II, who also had connections with RAF members. Interestingly enough, similar but later histories of rebellion were later used by the Italian post-autonomist group Luther Blissett in the collective novel *Q* (1999), as the basis for a disguised history of the experiences of the post-1968 Italian left. Fassbinder's film, in which he appropriately plays the role of Böhm's revolutionary dramaturg, can also be seen as a collective biography of the post-1968 left, and the danger inherent in any revolutionary undertaking, as the antitheatre had previously explored in *Anarchy in Bavaria* (1969), 'via a satire concerning students successfully seizing power and the consequential disastrous results' (Halligan 2016, p. 208).

From the opening of the film, realist conventions are flouted as the camera tracks away from the back of Fassbinder's leather jacket and proceeds to track from left to right as the characters, aside from the black monk, Joanna (Hanna Schygulla) and Antonio (Michael Gordon), plot the revolution via a question-and-answer session: 'who makes the revolution?: the people [...] who is the revolution for?: the people [...] if there is no party but only a cell of three or four people, can they still make the revolution?' This clearly references the situation and justification of contemporary guerrilla groups like the RAF. Crucially, the 'black monk', who, in this and other scenes, acts precisely as a theatre director or filmmaker, coaching the participants in the revolution on their lines, asks 'may they, for example, use theatrical effects to make their agitation more forceful', to which Joanna answers 'of course'. This revolutionary think tank sets the scene for the 'drummer of Niklashausen', Hans Böhm's pathway to fomenting the revolution among the people, echoing both the tragic fate of urban guerrilla groups and the passion of Christ, especially when he is abandoned to the fate of crucifixion in an automobile junkyard.

The film operates via a series of tableaux, often repeating the artificial movements of camera and characters from the opening sequence, showing

both the progress of the revolution and the reactions of the powerful, in the form of the Bishop played in a Caligula-like manner by Kurt Raab. Of course, historically, this was a religious peasant uprising, but, in the film, the band of revolutionaries have dry Marxist discussions on matters ranging from laws of surplus value to state planning. In fact, the film switches constantly between Christian and Marxist discourses, suggesting a profound affinity between them, and that both are based on theatrical effects, as when the black monk coaches Joanna to give a revolutionary speech as the Virgin Mary. In a way, the whole film is a parody of earnest leftist discourses, whose provenance is reinforced once more after Böhm's arrest by both German police and American GIs, who also casually machine-gun his growing band of supporters, who are gathered in what looks like a youth hostel camp site. Behind one of the tents, Fassbinder regular Günter Kaufman recites lines that are a pastiche of the RAF's Urban Guerrilla Manual: 'everywhere freedom fighters have begun to organise resistance'. Later on, Black Panther discourse is read out from a glossy magazine, as Molotov cocktails are being prepared for the entirely contemporary guerrilla warfare that is about to break out at the end of the film.

The deliberate anachronism makes it clear that this film is only historical in a very loose sense, and instead concerns much more recent revolutionary dynamics, from the Russian revolution to contemporary guerrilla movements in both Latin America and Europe. This is emphasized by dressing up Hans Böhm as a hippie figure in psychedelic clothes, as well as the presence of Antonio, who literally seems to have wandered into the frame from a Glauber Rocha film. Perhaps the most 'documentary' film scene in this respect is the completely unmotivated scene of the concert by Amon Düül; in this scene, the camera is considerably more active and mobile, with unusual close-up framings of the snare drum and crotch of the group's drummer. The audience are lying on the floor, almost merging with the band, lying on one another's semi-naked bodies and smoking cigarettes, while also seeming to be on drugs. In these scenes that parallel the perverse orgiastic scenes of the Bishop's entourage, the film seems to suggest that the counterculture was more interested in polymorphous pleasures, than the hard work of radical social change; in Joanna's words, 'they can be induced to pray but [...] to open their eyes'? In other words, while the people can be activated to perform revolutionary gestures, these will remain superficial if not accompanied by profound changes. As Thomsen argues, 'the film both criticizes and maintains a solidarity with the revolutionary impatience of the Baader-Meinhof group or similar armed organizations' (Thomsen 1997, p. 89). This sympathetic attitude would be considerably modified in

Fassbinder's later films dealing with terrorism, but, in *The Niklashausen Journey*, the countercultural bifurcations and indiscernibility between armed revolution and revolutionary aesthetics are presented in all their ambiguity.

The Counter-Public Sphere, Anarchival Film, and Documentary Symptomatology

All three of these examples in the last section can be seen as epitomizing minor cinema, by presenting self-portraits of their creators, but in a context that is immediately social and political and traceable to the aftermath of the movements of 1968. Moreover, they each, in their own way, provide symptomatology of this present, the working through of the hopes and disappointments generated by these events, via the inscription of their own bodies within the frames of these films: from Pasolini reflected in an African shop window, to Akerman trapped in the confines of her room, or Fassbinder as the black monk caught up in a failed revolution, these self-portraits are social symptomatology that negotiate blockages of processes of desire that are at once personal and political. They do so via radical reconfigurations of the power and potential of cinema to constitute a notebook, an intimate letter, or a compendium of revolutionary discourse, respectively. The singularity of their directors, however, can obscure the way that these films are also contributions to what critical theorists Alexander Kluge and Oskar Negt describe as the 'counter public sphere', in their key work *Public Sphere and Experience* (2016 [1972]). Updating Habermas's concept of the public sphere in the context of 1968 student and worker movements, they argue that contemporary societies are constituted and maintained through a bourgeois public sphere of production that separates producers from their own experience by creating an 'illusory synthesis of the whole of society' (Kluge and Negt 2016, p. 73). Following from this, effective resistance cannot be constituted by mere cultural critique of the falseness of this public sphere, but only by creating a 'proletarian' counterpart:

The only antidotes to the production of the illusory public sphere are the counter-products of a proletarian public sphere: idea against idea, product against product, production sector against production sector. It is impossible to grasp in any other way the permanently changing forms that social power takes on in its fluctuations between capitalist production, illusory public sphere, and public power monopoly. (Kluge and Negt 2016, p. 80)

Of course this counter-public sphere cannot just be generated via a progressive will and no isolated cultural product would be able to escape the bourgeois conditions of its production fully. Nevertheless, echoing Dutschke's idea of the 'long march through the institutions', it is only by attempting to produce and accumulate alternatives within and against the existing public sphere that a full counter-public sphere can possibly emerge. Significantly, Kluge was not only a critical theorist but a filmmaker, and one who was instrumental in the emergence of New German Cinema as a signatory of the 1962 Oberhausen Manifesto. His own cinema, especially in the 1970s, was very much conceived as a contribution to such an alternative public sphere, which he also attempted via a series of interventions in television; it is significant that *Public Sphere and Experience* devotes a significant chapter to the analysis of the dynamics and limitations of public service broadcasting (2016, p. 126ff.), making some rather pointed critiques of Enzensberger's ideas around decentralization that were discussed previously. The rather classically Brechtian nature of his cinema, which combines heterogeneous audiovisual material with a guiding narrative voice-over, may seem far removed from the project of a counter-public sphere, and rather to maintain existing power relations and some aspects of conventional cinematic forms; certainly, *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin*, (*Part-time Work of a Domestic Slave*, 1973) was critiqued in these terms by feminist critics for its maintenance of an authoritative or even condescending male voice-over at the expense of its female protagonist (see Rich 1993, pp. 144-151).

The collective film *Germany in Autumn* (1978), however, was very much conceived of as a response not only to the series of RAF 'terrorist' actions and the response of the West German state, but specifically to contest and provide an alternative to the role of the media in the 'German Autumn'. As such, it is both an exemplar of symptomatology in Guattari's sense and also a collective endeavour to construct a counter-public sphere. Interestingly enough, its closest precursor was *Loin de Vietnam* (*Far From Vietnam*, Marker et al. 1967), a French collection of cinematic responses to the war in Vietnam, that similarly involved a range of heterogeneous sections including reportage, fiction, and documentary for which the individual filmmakers were not explicitly identified. In Godard's section, however, a highly autobiographical approach was adopted, involving Godard posing with a 35mm camera explaining why, despite opportunities, he had never been to Vietnam, and why this distance was fundamental to what he could contribute to the film. In a sense, this marked a distance to the rest of the film, expressive of the uneasy alliance between Godard and Marker who, at the time, was a good deal more comfortable with directly 'activist' collective



Fig. 16: Fassbinder and Armin Meier in *Germany in Autumn* (1978).

projects. Similarly, Fassbinder's section of the German film stands out as, by far, the most personal and is also far from anonymous as it foregrounds Fassbinder and his relationships with his lover and his mother, as the filter through which the events of the German Autumn are experienced, directly as intense emotion and attitudes of the body in pain.

In this uncharacteristically documentary or rather 'ethno-fictional' sequence, to use Jean Rouch's term, justly acknowledged as the strongest in the entire film, Fassbinder appears to depart from the safety of fiction to stage a series of raw and conflictual intimate encounters, with his mother, his lover Armin Meier, and himself; the sequence is perhaps fully encapsulated in the scene in which Fassbinder slams down the phone and starts banging his head against the wall. This sequence shifts the events of the German Autumn, including both the increasingly desperate actions of the RAF and of the security state, culminating in the questionable 'suicides' in Stammheim of Baader, Ensslin, and Raspe, from the object of political judgement to an incorporation in intensive affective and, above all, intimate relations. After all, Fassbinder was himself the subject of police scrutiny in 1977, but this is merely background to what is really at play in this sequence, as Fassbinder stated in an interview: '[h]arassment's something that takes place inside of you, because you're constantly aware that they know you

exist. So you become more cautious, more fearful' (Fassbinder 1992, p. 136). This fear, while on one level extremely personal, was also a political affect gripping the entire country, and it is this that gives the sequence its urgency and resonance; if Fassbinder introjects the state of paranoia then gripping the FRG, at the same time, this paranoid affective condition is then, in his uniquely exhibitionist style, re-projected with both an emotional and temporal immediacy absent from the other sequences of the film. Nevertheless this was still very much a collective project combining documentary footage of both the funerals of Enslinn and Hans Martin Schleyer, the businessman kidnapped and then killed by the RAF in an effort to free its leaders, and a prison interview with Horst Mahler, with fictional vignettes, including Kluge's one about Gabi Tiegert the eccentrically naïve West German school teacher setting out with a shovel to dig up German history, since she finds available history text books inadequate to her purposes, a figure and quest that would be central to Kluge's subsequent film *Die Patriotin* (*The Patriot*, 1979). Kluge complements this literal archaeology of German history with the presentation of archival audiovisual material that in its own way is no less a personal response to the German Autumn than Fassbinder's sequence. As Fassbinder put it 'Kluge's the only one besides me who got started right away, and he talks an awful lot about himself too. Of course, he's very different from me, and a very different kind of filmmaker, but his associative use of documentary material – that's very personal, incredibly personal and says a lot about his mind' (Fassbinder 1992, p.197). This raises the idea of the mobilizing of the archive as a mode of minor cinema that will be engaged with further in this section, and certainly characterizes a key aspect of Kluge's project as the attempt to intervene in the public sphere by generating a form of counter-history.

Guattari's interesting response to the film as a symptomatology of its historical moment is worth looking at in more detail. Guattari's essay on the film is entitled 'Like the Echo of a Collective Melancholia' (1996a, pp. 181-187). This title already indicates that this is not at all, for him, a question of even multiple authorship, but of a collectively produced work that furthermore expresses wider collective affects and subjective responses to the surrounding terrorist and counterterrorist events, the intensification of violence and counterviolence surrounding the Red Army Faction's actions, and the response of the West German security state. Guattari points out that this collaborative film goes beyond being the work of multiple directors; instead, it is the result of common elaborations, and was made in the heat of the moment under the impact of the 'terrorist events' themselves. What Guattari especially admires in the film is the attempt



Fig. 17: Archival footage in *Germany in Autumn* (1978).

on the part of its makers to resist the media intoxication surrounding the events to which the terrorists themselves also contributed, as well as what he calls the media's 'infernally machine of guilt-inducement' (1996a, p. 182). For Guattari, rather than dealing with the sphere of ideology in which positions and opinions have already become hardened, the film 'questions the collective emotional context in which these opinions take shape' (1996a, p. 183). In relation to what he sees as the abhorrent media spectacles engineered by the RAF, including the replication of bourgeois justice in the form of people's courts, skyjackings staged as media events, and the (mis)treatment of fellow travellers, the film *Germany in Autumn* gives a symptomatological response, critical of all sides of this situation (the RAF, the state, and the media) even if for Guattari, the film is still too timid in its critique of the actions of the former. This kind of collective symptomatology is presented by Guattari as a powerful weapon and an essential one if any really profound political change is going to occur, since it is a singular expression of desire that acts directly on subjective mutations, rather than relegating subjectivity to a mere epiphenomenon of conflicting ideological positions.

From a different perspective, this film comes much closer than any of Kluge's individual projects to the idea of a collective counter-public sphere,

one that produces alternative versions of different media genres – reportage, fiction, and documentary – and assembles them, not only as counter-information, but also as a different structure of feeling to the reigning one of increasing fear and paranoia. The remainder of this section will focus on two examples that similarly follow the procedure employed by Kluge of intervening in the archive to generate alternatives to official history, but in a more exclusive and concentrated way. The first is the work of Emile de Antonio, focusing on *Millhouse* (1971) and *Underground* (1976), while the second is Chris Marker's epic *Le fond de l'air est rouge (Grin Without a Cat)*, (1977). Following the importance of the archive for media archaeology, these films will be considered as 'anarchive' films, as parallels in practice to the concept of anarchoeology, in that they cut into existing archives and reconfigure them as alternatives to dominant histories and narratives, in correspondence with the Foucauldian ideas of counter-memory and popular knowledges presented in the first chapter.

In the previously mentioned discussion between Wolfgang Ernst and Harun Farocki 'Towards an Archive of Visual Concepts' (in Elsaesser ed. 2004, pp. 261-286), a range of projects are referred to that attempt to archive images free from the hierarchies of knowledge of the traditional archive. The Warburgian idea of an associative archive of images not subordinated to a textual hierarchy is something that Ernst identifies in Farocki's work (2004, p. 267), but also more generally in what he calls compilation film: 'the genre of compilation film already operates on similarity-based image retrieval (by association) [...] There is always a director who feels tempted to create, out of thousands of metres of film material new combinations and interpretations. [...] A veritable *memory of waste*' (2004, p. 268). These procedures are present in a range of filmmakers' work, from Farocki and Kluge, to US experimental ones like Bruce Conner, but, in the field of radical film, nowhere are they more prevalent than in the work of the greatly neglected US filmmaker Emile de Antonio, whose practice was massively influential on many less radical but better-known subsequent documentary makers. However, when de Antonio began using these methods in his first film, *Point of Order!* (1964), they were completely at odds with current documentary practice that favoured a direct cinema approach, and not based on any models of which de Antonio was aware; even if there were precursors in film history, especially the pioneering work of Esfir Shub in the Soviet Union in the 1920s. In this context, de Antonio's first film was the pragmatic and intuitive solution of a first-time filmmaker who, nevertheless, invented an entirely new approach to documentary form and practice.

When *Point of Order!* was made, de Antonio had experience, not as a director, but only as a distributor and producer, and the latter was his original role on this film alongside Daniel Talbot of New Yorker Films; however, despite high hopes for the direction of the film, including offering it to Orson Welles, the director actually employed produced a rough cut so cliché and conventional that the producers were obliged to go back to the drawing board with most of the small budget already spent, which meant de Antonio became the director (Lewis 2000, p.31). What they had was the expensively and difficultly procured footage of the 1954 Army-McCarthy hearings during which the reputation of the witch-hunting senator Joseph McCarthy began to unravel in front of a television audience. The process of obtaining difficult-to-access footage became key to de Antonio's way of working across the rest of his career, and can be seen as an essential part of the process of transforming official history into a counter-narrative. However, rather than the TV documentary images of American flags, starving African children, and Soviet tanks, coupled with an explanatory voice-over of the first version, de Antonio had only the television footage to work with and put together the first documentary based exclusively on video footage, an exceedingly bold strategy, especially since he decided to rely on the footage alone with 'no commentary, no music, no extraneous shots' (Lewis 2000, p. 32). In a sense, this is parallel to the minimalism of *cinéma vérité*, which had also dispensed with commentary in favour of a highly fetishized direct access to filmed reality. Here, the original footage was of low quality and from stationary cameras, meaning that the entire film was created by editing, an unconscious return to and reinvention of Soviet materialist film aesthetics.

As Lewis points out, this had a lot to do with de Antonio's immersion in the New York art scene, in which principles of collage were commonplace aesthetic procedures in both painting and music. Thomas Waugh, one of the most perceptive critics of de Antonio's work, states that a principle of the collage of people, voices, and ideas 'compresses and analyses an event, assembling and juxtaposing fragments of it' (1985, p. 241). This approach also had modernist literary antecedents, such as the work of Dos Passos, as well as paralleling the non-teleological genealogy deployed by Foucault, as Lewis also suggests: 'Exposing the inner workings of power was a critical part of de Antonio's work, as it was for Foucault, who articulated in greater detail the same themes as de Antonio's films' (2000, p. 68). This might seem like a glib comparison, but, when the methods Foucault deployed in *Discipline and Punish* (1975) and in, more specifically, the collective research project *I Pierre Rivière* (1975),¹⁰ involving both the meticulous research of documents

and their dynamic assembly as a counter-discourse to established teleological history are considered, this method seems especially applicable to de Antonio's work in *Point of Order!* and even more so to *Rush to Judgement* (1967), which is organised following the book of Mark Lane as a 'case for the defence' of Lee Harvey Oswald in the Kennedy assassination, without endorsing any specific conspiracy theory but merely assembling all the inconsistencies in the Warren Commission investigation.

In later films, this technique was mixed with more conventional elements such as interviews, but never with commentary by the filmmaker except in his final semiautobiographical film *Mr Hoover and I* (1989). Of course, in however paradoxical a fashion, de Antonio, unlike Foucault, was a Marxist, and his techniques resonate even more with the ideas of Brecht and especially Walter Benjamin's idea of a work composed entirely of quotations. *Point of Order!* was in fact just such a work, boiling down 188 hours of television coverage into under 100 minutes, arranged to pinpoint McCarthy's disintegration under the gaze of the television cameras. As Waugh points out, in this film, televised history becomes not only 'a genuine instrument of historiography, a medium for diachronic social analysis with its own validity and authority' (1985, p. 243), but also 'an incisive critique of the video medium itself' (1985, p. 242). Updating these terms, this film can be seen as expressing a new understanding of the televisual-audiovisual archive as raw creative material, a disordered 'anarchive' in Ernst's terms, capable of being reworked not in a 'true', 'objective', or 'disciplinary' sense, but in a counterhistorical, critical, and creative way that preserves its anarchival qualities. *Point of Order!* does not present any new information or theories, but rather presents an existing, but now inaccessible archive dynamically, calling attention to the gestures, discourses, and behaviours in the US political apparatus in relation to McCarthy's anticommunist witch-hunt. Rather than talking down to the viewer via a patronizing commentary, the film allows the viewer to engage directly with the documentary evidence. However, as in the work of Soviet montage directors, these documents are highly organized to shed a critical spotlight on operations of power. As de Antonio said, if there is a hero in this film, it is the two television cameras that furnish this spotlight; all de Antonio had to do was focus and intensify it via insightful selection and combination.

By the late 1960s, de Antonio's method had become more complex, incorporating interviews and other material, as well as a much more heterogeneous audiovisual archive. This was especially the case with arguably his most artistically and politically successful film *In the Year of the Pig* (1968), which countered the official narrative of the Vietnam War by incorporating

a diverse array of audiovisual material, including US film and Television footage, especially unused TV outtakes; films from European archives, including Eastern European ones; as well as material from North Vietnam itself, in a process de Antonio described as 'radical scavenging' (in Lewis 2000, pp. 84-88). As with *Point of Order!*, an important part of de Antonio's process was using money, charm, or anything else to 'liberate' otherwise invisible footage, or at least footage a US audience was unlikely ever to see, and then to incorporate it into a dramatic structure. In the case of *In the Year of the Pig*, this structure was a case against the war in Vietnam, both as a critique of the savagery and indiscriminate violence of the American war machine, and the presentation of the other side of the story of the Vietnamese people, outside of the propagandistic clichés that were the only media narrative then available to US viewers. As Bill Nichols puts it, 'De Antonio's voice (unspoken but controlling) makes witnesses contend with one another to yield a point of view more distinctive to the film than any of its witnesses' (Nichols 1985, p. 267). But it is two of the films de Antonio made in the 1970s which are of most interest in terms of the idea of anarchival guerrilla filmmaking that is developed here: *Millhouse: A White Comedy* (1971) and *Underground*, which was already discussed in chapter two.

If *Point of Order!* was predicated on obtaining expensive and hard-to-come-by televisual footage, and *In the Year of the Pig* was based on more global radical scavenging, the footage for *Millhouse* was obtained on the basis of the more or less illegal acquisition of the entire NBC archive on Nixon, received in the manner of receiving stolen goods (see Lewis 2000, p. 113). Reportedly, De Antonio also delivered the material that he could not use to the Cuban embassy, so Cuban filmmakers could use it in their own cinema. For de Antonio, this Nixon material was a goldmine, not least because it contained the full version of the infamous 'Checkers' speech Nixon had given in 1952 as a vice presidential candidate, and clearly did not want to be in circulation in the present, almost as much as de Antonio was keen to circulate it as widely as possible; this speech, which he had been searching for a copy of since 1968, became the centrepiece of de Antonio's film. *Millhouse*, a deliberate misspelling of the president's middle name, was once again a new and influential subgenre of documentary, documentary satire, a mode of documentary that would be highly influential on later documentary filmmakers like Michael Moore. As the subtitle suggests, it is perhaps more influenced by the Marx brothers than Karl Marx, even if it was not taken as a joke by Nixon or the FBI. Nevertheless, the film was essentially another anarchival film, but this time, the footage was wielded much more pointedly than ever before, as a weapon against the incumbent

president who, like McCarthy and Edgar J. Hoover, represented for de Antonio everything that was wrong with US politics.

The tone of the film is set up from the opening scene: what looks like the face of Nixon is revealed to be a disembodied head being prepared for exhibition at Madame Tussaud's wax museum, announcing the film's intentions to deconstruct the media image of Nixon across his political career. The film then proceeds to do just this, interspersing key interviews with archive material from the early 1950s to the 1970s, in a far from strict chronological order, to demonstrate Nixon's embrace of a two-pronged strategy of media manipulation and behind-the-scenes dirty tricks, from the Alger Hiss trial in 1950 to his presidential campaign in 1968. While such an approach has since become fairly standard in documentary biopics, and the film does not reveal any new information about Nixon's political career (indeed it was, if anything, behind the times, as the Watergate scandal was about to break at the time of the film's release), the way the material is combined and organized via telling juxtapositions gives the film both its black humour and political charge. Examples of this include cross-editing between the sound of Nixon's 1968 presidential acceptance speech at the Republican convention and Martin Luther King's earlier 'I Have a Dream' speech, showing precisely how Nixon mimicked King's cadences and sincerity, but in the interests of his privileged white constituency, who are emphasized in the footage. To hammer the point home, de Antonio cuts in footage of rioting African-Americans in Florida being hounded by the police,



Fig. 18: Richard Nixon in *Millhouse* (1971).

not far from the Republican convention. As Lewis points out, the film is denied a 'deus ex media in the form of Watergate' (2000, p. 134), an ending in which hypocrisy and venality are suitably punished, but it nevertheless relentlessly traces Nixon's encounter with the media and especially television, which is really the subject of the film. From the opening remarks in which Nixon chides the press on its coverage of his campaign for governor in 1962, via the Checkers speech, to his manipulations of TV audiences in his specially designed and choreographed television appearances in 1968, Nixon is shown as an increasingly experienced manipulator of public perceptions, even as his highly crafted sincerity is revealed time and again to be dishonest and hypocritical as well as costly. The Checkers speech is certainly the centrepiece of this portrait, de Antonio's Sistine chapel, which is reproduced almost in its entirety (the speech itself was sometimes shown as a short before left-wing films as a stand-alone piece, so damning did it appear to a radical 1970s audience). Already a maudlin media performance, as the vice-presidential candidate goes exhaustively through his supposedly meagre finances in a calculated display of sincerity, the real bathos occurs when Nixon claims that the one personal gift he ever received was the dog Checkers, who is then promptly shown being played with by his daughters, who are described as 'sad that they did not have a dog'. As Lewis puts it, the inclusion of this speech 24 minutes into the film inverted 'Nixon's pleas for sympathy into a soliloquy of self-damnation [and] the appearance of Checkers himself was an occasion for high-camp vaudeville, inducing fits of laughter in the audiences' (2000, p. 135).

As the film progresses, there are more stark juxtapositions as Nixon urges the death penalty for drug dealers, calls Hubert Humphrey a dangerous radical, celebrates the destruction of orange groves in his local California, and ogles go-go dancers. Especially cutting and prescient is the intercutting of Nixon's speech in the 1968 campaign in which he urges his supporters to 'win this one for Ike' – and the campaign was not above importuning a very ill Eisenhower in his hospital bed for support – with excerpts from *Knute Rockme – All-American* (1940), in which the football team is urged to 'win this one for the Gipper', played from his hospital bed by none other than Ronald Reagan. This all culminates in Nixon's postelection escalation of the Vietnam War, which the film presents in the form of agit prop. As Nixon makes a hypocritical speech about the altruism of US interest in the region, a map showing the spillage of the war into the entire Indo-Chinese peninsula is shown, then figures of South Vietnamese casualties, and coverage of a massive antiwar demonstration are shown, and finally a list of all the US companies that are benefitting economically from the war,

in stark contradiction to the president's words. The protestors that Nixon earlier claimed he would not be swayed by are thereby given the last word. The film ends with an eerie use of the outtakes that, throughout the film have been incorporated to underline Nixon's on-camera performances. In Thomas Waugh's words, 'the humor derived from the art of the out-take [...] The changes the Nixonian face undergoes as it confronts the video cameras constitute a sublime image of the duplicity fostered by the system of media politics' (1985, p. 254). This picture of right-wing politics as a finely honed media performance via the judicious use of the outtake has become a staple of political documentary, for example, in the opening of Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*, which exactly mimics the ending of *Millhouse* to similar effect. De Anotonio's film, however, is a much more rigorous and less subjective genealogy of Nixon's political performances than the one Moore presents of George W. Bush, as Waugh also states a 'scrutiny of the political personality [...] as thorough as it is irreverent' (1985, p. 254).

If *Millhouse* presents an exemplary appropriation of a televisual archive and its refiguration as a genealogical anarchival in order to critique establishment political power, *Underground* (1976) aims to portray resistance affirmatively – in the form of the Weather Underground Organization, which was still leading an underground existence in the mid 1970s. The dynamics of how this was able to take place was already laid out in chapter two in terms of the role of this film in the Weather Underground's evolution, specifically as part of the passage of some members from underground activities and radical bombings to surfacing into aboveground everyday lives. The collective nature with which the film was made, as a coproduction with the Weather Underground themselves on their insistence, was a departure for de Antonio, who had had a scathing reaction to new-left film collectives like Newsreel, who he saw as interfering in his plans to incorporate North Vietnamese footage in his film *In the Year of the Pig*; he referred to the collective as 'incompetent, pot befuddled filmmakers of the new left' (de Antonio cited in Lewis 2000, p. 97). This raises the question of why de Antonio wanted to make this film and whether he was genuinely interested in these self-declared underground revolutionaries, especially given the apolitical nature of his previous film, *Painters Painting* (de Antonio 1973). According to Thomas Waugh, in one of the few affirmative responses to the film, 'It was uncertain whether the veteran documentarist's fascination with the Weatherpeople stemmed from a legitimate political interest or from either radical chic or encroaching senility' (1976, p. 11). Not only did the film need to be made collectively, but it also necessitated imaginative mise-en-scène solutions so as not to compromise the underground lives of the Weather



Fig. 19: 'This Barrier is a metaphor for the war in Vietnam': The Weather Underground in *Underground* (1976).

Underground members, ranging from shooting through a special gauze-like scrim, to shooting into a mirror so as only to see the filmmakers frontally and the WUO members from behind. These very constraints, however, give the film a unique quality and are, at times, integrated into the film itself as when Jeff Jones states that 'you could say that this screen that is between us is a result of the war in Vietnam [...] it's an important act to overcome this barrier' (Jones in *Underground*). The filmmakers were dissatisfied with the hazy images produced through this barrier, which both prevented making a real connection and, when the footage came back, did an inadequate job of screening their identities. In fact, Lampson and de Antonio had to hand-paint some of the frames with black paint in postproduction, further distorting the image in order to disguise their faces properly. The film therefore consists of a majority of shots of the Weather members from behind, often via a mirror so the filmmakers' faces are revealed.

These very obstacles, however, could also be seen as strengths, at least in Thomas Waugh's assessment of the film, which sees it in proximity to the best of Brechtian radical filmmaking: 'The filmmakers seem to have discovered, like Godard and Straub in their distinct ways, how to employ visual bareness as a means of underlying the auditory component of a scene' (1976, p. 12). But the film also had to deal with difficulties other than visually impoverished means. While the filmmakers wanted to capture something spontaneous, revealing the personalities, characters, and biographies of the activists, the WUO preferred to speak in Marxist-inflected political

monologues, and had agreed in advance not to interrupt one another as a gesture of equality; according to Lewis, these monologues often outlasted Wexler's ten-minute rolls of colour film (2000, p. 192).

Nevertheless, the tension between the differing desires of the filmmakers and the activists at times generated interesting results, especially when de Antonio accompanied their words with his trademark archival footage, this time featuring the footage of Ho Chi Minh that he had been unable to include in *In the Year of the Pig*. This strategy was necessary for de Antonio, since the material actually filmed was not compelling enough in itself, for the reasons already outlined, to structure the film in its entirety. This time, he turned to some of the best radical filmmaking from the 1960s and 1970s, including Chris Marker's *La sixième face du pentagone* (*The Sixth Side of the Pentagon*, 1969), and Mike Gray and Howard Alk's *The Killing of Fred Hampton* (1971) among other examples. This resulted in generating a strong intersection between the WUO and struggle, ranging from civil rights and Black Panther movements to the antiwar movement, Attica prison riots, and North Vietnamese liberation struggles. For Lewis, the result of this combination is less tightly structured around a specific adversarial target and therefore 'lacks the critical edge of de Antonio's muckraking, adversarial films' (2000, p. 203). In contrast, Waugh saw the optimism about impending revolution presented in the film in the following terms:

But this enthralling, almost innocent optimism is also a product of a hard-headed materialist analysis. It is inspired by the Vietnamese victory against all odds, and by the growing base of the movement for change in the United States, not by any deluded estimation of the impact of underground resistance. (1976, p. 13)

Of course with hindsight, this can be seen more as nostalgia for a movement that was already in the advanced phase of falling apart, a nostalgia Waugh already acknowledged and Lewis rightly emphasized. Nevertheless, in retrospect, the film can be seen in a different way, as a new turn of de Antonio's anarchival project. Rather than a deconstructive genealogy of power, the film offers an affirmative counter-memory that not only allows the highly marginalized WUO to speak, but to do so in the proximity of a range of anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggles that had also informed the activists. The FBI efforts to stop the film from being screened, as well as the near unanimous rejection of the film in the liberal press, even before its release in the case of the *Village Voice*, testify to its potential as a minor tabulation of the passage from student activism to underground

subversive resistance, and the possibilities for this resistance to be effective. As Bernadine Dohrn says in the film, in a succinct statement also cited by Waugh: 'If you understand what happened in the Vietnamese war and why the Vietnamese defeated the U.S., it makes the possibility and the inevitability of revolution in the United States very clear. The United States government is not invincible. It didn't exist for all time, and it's not going to exist for all time' (Bernadine Dohrn in *Underground*). As such, it enacts a subversion of the cinematic apparatus not only by focusing on speech acts and their relations with archival images, but also by a necessary decentring of the individual speaking subject. We have difficulty 'seeing' the activists, but we see their struggle through this very difficulty, as well as through the responses on the largely listening faces of the filmmakers, and in relation to the range of struggles depicted in the archival footage. These strategies therefore make visible an otherwise underground, necessarily invisible mode of existence and struggle that can only appear in the tension between the activists and the filmmakers. If the film failed in its avowed and, with hindsight, impossible goal of re-uniting the US left, it nevertheless provided a courageous model of filmmaking as counter-memory, which its few insightful reviewers pointed out had echoes in other contexts, such as Gettino and Solanas's *The Hour of the Furnaces*. The irony of a film advertised with the tagline 'the film the FBI doesn't want you to see' is, of course, that very few audiences actually saw it, despite de Antonio's efforts to overcome distribution problems, even having to defend his right to make and exhibit the film in court. Not only was it not shown on television as de Antonio had hoped, but even Cannes rejected it on a technicality that de Antonio saw as censorship of a film calling for communist revolution. Nevertheless, the film has made something of a return as a vital source of documentation for recent documentaries on the Weather Underground, and, whether or not it has been influential, it certainly resonates with more contemporary video productions like Johan Grimonprez's *Dial H-I-S-T-O-R-Y* (1997), which, in a manner uncannily like de Antonio's procedures, presents the anarchival of television coverage of airplane hijackings, largely from the 1970s. However, such returns also point to a fundamental difference; whereas the aesthetic strategies of *Underground* in particular, and de Antonio's films in general, had definite political objectives, to attack institutions of power and celebrate resistance, filmmakers like Grimonprez engage with similar anarchival material for purely aesthetic purposes, as highlighted through the incorporation of texts by Don DeLillo such as *White Noise* (1985) and *MAO II* (1991) particularly the idea from the latter that there is an inverse relation or 'zero sum game' between the power of writers and terrorists:

‘What terrorists gain, novelists lose. The degree to which they influence mass consciousness is the extent of our decline as shapers of sensibility and thought. The danger they represent equals our own failure to be dangerous’ (DeLillo 1991, 157). Nevertheless, such reconfigurations of the televisual archive of acts of resistance are in themselves at least a proto-political act on an epistemological and aesthetic level, as they break up the linearity of official histories, reveal forgotten and minor events, and create new affective and cognitive linkages with past histories and experiences. As such, de Antonio’s works, especially in *Millhouse* and *Underground*, are exemplary instances of a filmmaking practice that is both radical and anachaeological.

One of the key films whose footage was integrated into *Underground* was Chris Marker’s *Sixth Side of the Pentagon*, the film documenting the march on the Pentagon on 21 October 1967, which was the biggest anti-Vietnam War protest up to that point, and arguably the movement against the war’s passage from protest to direct action. This was also the event that led to the formation of the Newsreel Collective, and was the basis for Norman Mailer’s work of new journalism, *Armies of the Night* (1968). This film was itself produced by a collective, Société pour le Lancement des Ouvrages Nouvelles (SLON) that was responsible for a number of radical films, from *Loin du Vietnam* (1967) until 1974, when Marker developed the new collective, Images, Son, Kinescope, Réalisation Audiovisuelle (ISKRA), that produced most of his works from that point onwards and marked a clear shift in political and aesthetic direction. While Marker is usually referred to today in terms of the essay film, this is often on the basis of combination of his early and late work such as *Lettre de Sibérie* (*Letter from Siberia*, 1957), which Bazin famously responded to in these terms and works from *Sans Soleil* (*Sunless*, 1983) onwards, which are often seen as definitive and exemplary examples of the essay film (see Rascaroli 2009, pp. 26-28ff.). While his earlier work often takes the form of innovative modes of documentary in anticipation of the personal mode of address of the essay film, in films like *Sans Soleil*, this mode of address is given a sophisticated treatment as a series of letters from a fictional cinematographer to a female narrator, with a slight air of science-fiction, and a highly digressive structure. As with Godard, the more collective and political work made between the late 1960s and the 1980s is generally given less attention, and fits less comfortably within the essay-film format.

Perhaps the key film from this period, and the one that summed it up, partly by incorporating footage from several earlier SLON projects, was *Le fond de l’air est rouge* (*Grin without a Cat*, 1977). This film, originally made

for television and existing in several different edits of varying lengths, was a kind of summation of a decade of political resistance, and an elegy for the costs in terms of lives and hopes, stemming from the events in which this resistance clashed with different forms of power. While the film is essayistic in its treatment of multiple events from a specific and personal perspective, it eschews authorial voice-over in favour of multiple voices and sounds that proliferate in a sometimes discrepant relationship with the archival images in an effect at times approaching the chaotic audiovisual montage of Godard's *Le gai savoir*. As such, this is very much an anarchival project that re-treats existing audiovisual material, both radical and mainstream, as the basis of an assemblage in which the viewer/auditor must find her own pathway rather than being directed. Nevertheless, no less than the Soviet precursors to which it refers, there is still a thesis in this work about resistance and power in recent political history, formulated in relation to key events in this recent historical sequence: resistance to the war in Vietnam, May 1968, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the 1973 Pinochet coup that put an end to the democratic path to socialism of Allende's Chile. This is far from a case of advocating Baidouean fidelity to the revolutionary event, but a much more aleatory process of unravelling an abstract dynamics across all these events that are presented as both real and illusory, both the falling apart of revolutionary dreams and the evolution of media spectacle. As Marker would put it in his accompanying statement to the release of the film and its antecedents on DVD, 'Student protests in the US, emergence of a new kind of problematics in the working class, staggering blows in every field of the orthodoxy, right or left, all that composed, as they say, a certain mood' (Marker 2008a, p. 26). This is, of course, a retrospective summation on an already retrospective film that by this time Marker described as 'a few traces of these luminous and murky years [...] I tinkered with these films. They don't claim to be any more than that: traces' (Marker 2008a, p. 32). Despite this modesty, the anarchival assembly of these traces constitutes a uniquely rich document of this turbulent decade, and one that warrants more in-depth analysis than can be presented here. Nevertheless, it is worth examining some key aspects of the film's treatment of radical politics via its anarchival method, and as a kind of French internationalist parallel to *Germany in Autumn* that would be made slightly later.

From the beginning, *Grin without a Cat* is as much about mediation as it is about historical reality, about how things are shown as much as, if not more so, than what is shown. This is emblemized by the beginning prologue, which offers a variety of perspectives on key sequences from *Battleship Potemkin* (Eisenstein, 1925), including the execution of a sailor, and people

paying homage to his corpse, intercut with funeral images of martyrs of more contemporary, global acts of resistance and consequent repression, with voice-over testimony from actress Simone Signoret on the impact on seeing the film for the first time. As Nora Alter points out in her detailed analysis of this opening sequence (2006, pp. 54-56), the distance between what is seen and what is heard, as well as between Eisenstein's fictional *mise-en-scène* of resistance and repression and contemporary political struggles generates a 'cognitive gap' (2006, p. 55) not only between the present and the past, and the real and the fictional, but also in the ambivalent zone in which they intersect. This is underlined when the montage reaches its climax with the most dramatic shots from the Odessa steps sequence followed by the contemporary testimony of a Russian woman, Elena, who talks about the Odessa steps as a tourist destination, even though no historical event ever took place there prior to Eisenstein's film; the powerful *mise-en-scène* of history, therefore being revealed as an aesthetic construction that nevertheless has had multiple resonances in contemporary history.

The emphasis on the multiple ways events are seen and heard via mediations continues throughout the film, for example, in the Vietnam sequence in which a sadistic US pilot narrates a successful napalm bombing run in Vietnam with audible enthusiasm for the lethal impact of his actions: 'we can see people running everywhere, it is fantastic, outstanding'. This is no innocent footage, however, but a propaganda film designed to instill fear in the enemy and therefore a kind of counter-guerrilla mode of filmmaking. As Marker wrote in the notes accompanying the film's release, 'the mode of information is part of the information and enriches it' (Marker 2008b). Opposing footage is also shown, such as footage from Marker's own collective film *The Sixth Side of the Pentagon*, which, as already mentioned, is focused on one of the biggest successes of the mobilization against the war in Vietnam, the march on the Pentagon. The politicization of the demonstrators, but also of opposing forces from Wall Street to Neo Nazis is emphasized here; in short, the way that the war in Vietnam paved the way for what the film's subtitle refers to as scenes from the third world war. This is further reinforced by the shift to the protest against the Shah's visit to West Berlin, which was met with violent and brutal repression from the Shah's own security commando and the death of Benno Ohnesorg; the inclusion of speeches by Rudi Dutschke and Daniel Cohn-Bendit about the need for organized counterviolence, reminding the viewer that this was the event that both gave birth to the RAF and influenced May 1968 in Paris. This opening section makes clear that this was played out as much through images and sounds as it was on the streets or in the field of battle.

When the film shifts to May 1968, shaky and damaged footage is included, whose technical imperfections would normally either be cut, or excused as the response to immediate events that should be ignored in favour of the content. Instead, Marker emphasizes these imperfections, posing the question in intertitles, 'Why....sometimes....do the images....begin to tremble' (*Grin without a Cat*, 1977). Marker's engagement with 1968 is complex, firstly emphasizing the labour struggles that preceded the students' actions in 1967, that he was already engaged with, and then showing the ways in which the revolution passed from the 'fragile hands' of the students to the hands of the workers (to use the subtitle for the first half of the film). Yet the film also documents how this fragile alliance soon disintegrated and fractured into small groups, each deriding the others as fascists, and lacking any point of unity such as the communist party. This opens up onto a series of international scenarios from the Prague Spring and its military repression, supported torturously by Fidel Castro, to the Allende popular unity 'democratic path to socialism' and its brutal overturning via the Pinochet coup.

Certainly, out of all the events shown, the only even arguable success was the end of the war in Vietnam, but this is not what the film emphasizes; instead, it becomes, via its complex layering of anarchival materials, a eulogy for the slain heroes of the left, including such 'guerrillas' as Che Guevara, Carlos Marighella, and Ulrike Meinhof, returning to the beginning of the film. Especially poignant is the speech given in Cuba by Salvador Allende's daughter Beatriz, in which she passes on her father's message to Fidel Castro that, on 11 September 1973, he 'did his duty'. The affective difficulty in presenting an upbeat revolutionary message, against a visible melancholy and grief is palpable, underlined by titles that inform us that she committed suicide in 1977. At the conclusion of her speech, there is strange, almost atonal, synthesiser music, an element that recurs throughout the film, suggesting underlying dark forces as in a science-fiction film, a genre of which Marker was especially fond. The juxtaposition of this discordant soundtrack with these and other brave words undermine their literal meanings, and suggest an alien machinery against which all these fragile words and gestures have proven to be powerless. The original ending of the film showed scenes from the Portuguese carnation revolution, a potentially optimistic moment, but shortly followed by a scenes from a documentary about the international arms trade and scenes of wolf hunting by helicopter to cull their population, reminiscent of earlier asymmetrical scenes of institutional violence from the Vietnam War napalm bombing to the brutal suppression of protests. More than this, it serves as an emblem of

both terrible and unfair slaughter and also survival as the narrator intones 'fifteen years later, some wolves still remain'. In the updated version, scenes from an AIDS demonstration are accompanied by a voice-over that talks about all the new words and phenomena that were not known in the 1960s: AIDS, Perestroika, boat people, Thatcherism, and, especially, the end of the Soviet bloc. In this context, the narrator states that capitalism has won a major battle against communism, if not the war itself, and yet it would be a mistake to read the film simply as a chronicle of defeat as 'the trajectory from revolutionary aspirations of 1968 to one-issue matters and the early years of identity politics in the 1970s' (Halligan 2016, p. 21). It rather suggests that this war is still ongoing, even if its dynamics often tragically escape the consciousness of its participants. The combination of the multiple layers of heterogeneous archival footage, the attention to different modes of the image and of sound, and the contribution especially of the musical elements on the soundtrack, evoke Walter Benjamin's angel of history, blown by a hurricane, looking back on one catastrophe after another; yet it is only out of this retrospective survey of past defeats, or what Marker referred to as traces, that a new future might one day be constructed. Continuing his statement on the importance of the mode of information, Marker states:

It was one of the principles followed in the choice of materials when a choice was possible (television screens, lines of kinescopes, newsreel quotes, letters recorded on 'minicassettes', wobbly images, radio voices, first person commentaries on images by those who recorded them, recalls of filming conditions, clandestine cameras, ciné-tracts), bringing together the document and its concrete circumstances of elaboration, so that information would not appear as a *cosa mentale*, but as a material object with its grain, its spots of irregular surface, sometimes even its splinters. (2008b, p. 10)¹¹

This very important quotation demonstrates the important relationship between 'technology and the dissemination of information' (Alter 2006, p. 86), as Nora Alter has emphasized, which is one of the strengths of the anarchival strategies in both this film and the work of Emile de Antonio examined in this section. As the above quote indicates, this is both an anarchival project and a genealogical one, not giving a history of the decade, or even of resistance, but the presentation of an anarchival genealogy of conflicting forces and tracing their effects across this disordered and fragmented archive of images and sounds. In a sense, the war documented in *Grin without a Cat* is a war between different modes of audiovisual media

production and dissemination, as when the repeated images of burning cars from May 1968, of which there were, in reality, very few, led some television viewers to believe that the protestors had burned Paris, causing more damage than the Germans in World War II. In reality, these reports were every bit as much incendiary weapons used against the movement as the guerrilla filmmaking that attempted to support it. But it also points to something else, namely the possibilities of new technologies to enable new modes of resistance, especially as they become more accessible and their products easier to disseminate. After all, Marker had been very quick to see the possibilities of using lightweight film technologies collectively, to enable workers to tell their own stories, rather than them being mediated via even radical intermediaries. The development of video enhanced these possibilities technologically, even while television itself limited them institutionally. In some instances, however, radical forms of television were able to emerge in the 1970s. The following and final chapter will deal with these practices, beginning with what I will call radical auteur television, before moving onto ecologies of guerrilla television properly speaking.

5. Ecologies of Radical and Guerrilla Television

Introduction: Cinema/Television/Video or Cain vs. Abel Revisited

Throughout this panorama of different strategies against the dominant cinematic apparatus, it has not been so much a matter of destroying cinema as, to paraphrase Marker, making it tremble or stutter, in accordance with Gilles Deleuze's characterization of minor art as that which, more than being a stuttering within a given language, makes language itself stutter. However, in many cases, this pushed ecologies of audiovisual production, circulation, and consumption into proximity with video and television. In some cases, such as *Le gai savoir* or the work of Farocki, this was through experimentation with a counter-cinema proposed as a form of television, even if this work was done on film and was largely rejected by the television networks for which it was conducted. In other cases, video was fundamental, whether in terms of a repurposed video archive, especially in the work of de Antonio; or Marker's more heterogeneous audiovisual archive in *Grin without a Cat*; or, in the case of Grifi's *Anna*, a hybrid 'video film' based on hours of video footage. Even in the case of as cinematic a personality as Fassbinder, much of his work including *The Niklashausen Journey* analysed earlier was funded by television and intended to be screened there. In all these cases, there was a fundamental relationship either with the televisual apparatus or video technologies or both, which warrants further investigation as well as finer distinctions.

Famously, Godard characterized the film and video relationship as equivalent to that between Cain and Abel, or, at least, this appears on the blackboard behind the clearly self-referential character of Paul Godard in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (*Slow Motion*, 1980), the implication being that the younger brother, video, had jealously conspired to kill its older and more prodigious sibling, film. This is surprising, considering that Godard and his partner Anne-Marie Miéville had spent most of the 1970s working both with video and television, and, despite many earlier indications, Godard only really fully returned to engagement with cinema in the 1980s, without ceasing to produce numerous video works. Ultimately, this culminated in what is perhaps the pinnacle of his achievement on video, *Histoire(s) du cinema* (*Histories of cinema*, 1988/1998), which was more the culmination of his television and video work with Miéville than a work of cinema, and

certainly was a work unthinkable except with video-editing technologies. These Cain and Abel dynamics were addressed playfully in Thomas Elsaesser and Kay Hoffman's collection *Cinema Futures: Cain, Abel or Cable?* (1998), through a variety of perspectives. This famous blackboard inscription was something of a misdirection, albeit perhaps a deliberate one, since the larger relationship to which it responded was the widely perceived death of cinema at the hands of television, through multiple factors, ranging from the disintegration of both classical Hollywood and state-subsidized national cinemas, to the effects of the implantation of video technologies on modes of image production, to the dominance of television in both the funding and consumption of European films in a late-1990s context in which '[o]f all film shown on commercial screens, 70-80% come from Hollywood, launched with publicity campaigns costing more than the total budget of most European films' (Elsaesser and Hoffman 1998, p. 8). All of this is complicated by the fact that, while New Hollywood rushed to embrace the latest digital technologies, 'independent film', in the absence of generous state subsidies and popular audiences, has become totally dependent on television. Nevertheless, the book is reluctant to situate all of this within a glib narrative of technological convergence and, in fact, was an early and impressive attempt to problematize this approach by looking at processes of divergence as much as convergence, as Elsaesser emphasizes: 'if there is a family resemblance, what are the bonds keeping them together as well as the feuds keeping them apart?' (1998, p. 10). There is already a highly ambivalent series of relations in the Godard reference since, in Elsaesser's terms, Godard 'was at the time reflecting on what turned out to be a crucial move in his work, namely to confront cinema (the photographic image and montage), with video (magnetic tape, synthesizer sound and electronic editing)' (1998, p. 10). This is, however, slightly temporally misleading, since Godard had adopted video technology *and* making work for television, not only film, but television series, since the mid 1970s, a crucial project to which this chapter will return. Godard's solution of working between cinema, video, and television, whether pragmatically, economically, or aesthetically motivated, can be seen as a way of circumventing these fratricidal relations by converting them into relations of conjunction: cinema, and video, and television. In terms Deleuze would use, just as cinema did not kill literature, if cinema dies, it will not be by fratricide from another medium, but by suicide, by giving up on its creative and resistant potential. Godard and Miéville's television and video work from the 1970s can, in contrast, be seen as the attempt to unlock these potentials within video and television, despite the institutional forces ranged against such a practice.

In this context, Elsaesser makes some important distinctions between these terms, noting that, 'apart from their basic technologies, [they] differ widely in their institutional histories, their legal frameworks and social practice' (1998, p. 12). If cinema begins with serial photography, combined with such industrial processes as chemical engineering advances and the perfection of the sewing machine, its aesthetic origins were a combination of the music hall, magic lanterns, and stereoscopes. Television, in contrast, developed institutionally largely from radio and was imagined aesthetically as a combination of "armchair theatre", an electric variety programme, and politically motivated consensus building' (Elsaesser 1998, p. 12). Video, conversely developed out of audio-tape recording practices and was only adopted gradually by institutional television, which is why TV programmes prior to the 1960s were only recorded on film if at all. In fact, video initially appeared as a counter-technology to television, one that unleashed such possibilities of DIY production and distribution as to render television superfluous in the kind of technologically determinist utopian argument that would soon be repeated for interactive digital technologies. Proponents of both expanded cinema and guerrilla television emphasized the emancipatory properties of video and television, in a heady mix of Buckminster Fuller, Marshall McLuhan, cybernetics, and hippie counterculture, as in this account from Gene Youngblood's *Expanded Cinema*: 'Television is the software of the earth. Television is invisible. It's not an object. It's not a piece of furniture. The television set is irrelevant to the phenomenon of television. The videosphere is the noosphere transformed into a perceivable state' (Youngblood 1970, p. 78).

As Elsaesser underlines, video rapidly progressed from an emancipatory alternative public sphere, to a standardized and thoroughly commercialized one, to becoming rapidly obsolete, much more quickly than the same process undergone by celluloid film. At the same time, video also passed through a different genealogy as video art, taking up and transforming experimental cinematic practices and swiftly finding legitimacy and an institutional home in the gallery. As many commentators have suggested, this was a double-edged victory, since:

having made its pact with the gallery, performance spaces and installation art, video stayed aloof from the mainstream, keeping a cautious truce with the art market and museum culture (which often sought to exclude them), while fighting shy of the entertainment supermarket of popular culture (Elsaesser 1998, p. 15).

In *Between-the Images*, Raymond Bellour also addresses the bifurcating ambivalence of video in relation to cinema, situating it in the following terms:

[V]ideo, a word open on its two sides: television and video art. An improbable word; and it is still not fully understood to what extent it leads the arts of mechanical reproduction that preceded it – photography and cinema – into an unprecedented situation, via the opening of a realm where the question of reproduction is overwhelmed by the as yet barely glimpsed possibilities of the computed image. (2011, p. 16).

For Bellour, video is less a distinct medium than a set of operations 'between mobile and immobile' (2011, p. 17), operating on both photography and cinema, and transforming them irreversibly, hence the subtitle of his first *Entre-Images* volume: *Photography, Cinema, Video*.¹ If video in the sense of video art enacts a profound transformation on both still and moving images, incorporating them into its own multiple assemblages, it also generates a space of passage between these apparently distinct modes of image production that has 'profoundly transformed [...] our sense of the creation as well as the apprehension of images' (2012, p. 16). In a more technical rather than poetic register (even if the two are profoundly linked), this is not merely for institutional or aesthetic reasons, but because, in many respects, electronic video images do not correspond to previously existing definitions of the image as a stable category of experience. In the form of a painting or photograph, an image is a physical object even if it refers us to another virtual scene such as a landscape or portrait; figures that were once, but are no longer present. Moving images already stretch this conception of the image, in that, while a physical image persists in the filmstrip, this is not what is perceived as a cinematic image, but rather, there are variations of projected light on a screen that, operating via optical illusions such as the persistence of vision, and indeed the entire cinematographic apparatus discussed previously, only appear to cohere as moving images due to a series of technical operations of projection. Nevertheless, in a given moment, the operation of the projector can be said to result in a stable image for the perceiver, before it is replaced by first darkness and then the next image, as if via a monotonous but accelerated slide projector. Electronic video images do not work at all in this manner as Yvonne Spielmann has emphasized in her work *Video: The Reflexive Medium*:

The video signal transmitted by the camera is kept constantly moving in its surface presence, the raster format of the screen, and it expresses

the flow of the electrons. In addition to that, two interlocked half images belong to the definition of 'image' in video and television so that all the information in an image is composed of linear images (even and odd lines) staggered in time. Both the signal transmission, and the information compiled in the image connote the fundamental instability of the audiovisual medium. (2010, p. 47)

This distinction has been emphasized by both Kittler, in *Optical Media*, who claims that 'In contrast to film, television was already no longer optics' (2009, p. 226), and, more recently, by Alexander Galloway, who applauds this distinction in *The Interface Effect* in the following terms: 'Subsequent to television, which began a retreat away from optical media and a return to the symbolic in the form of signal codification, the computer consummates the retreat from the realm of the imaginary to the purely symbolic realm of writing' (2012, p. 17). Aside from the rather glib assimilation of video technologies into the development of computing, the point about the technical video image becoming a form of writing, barely conforming to the concept of the self-present optical image and its attendant logic of representation is one that is highly applicable to analog video signal processing. Beyond or behind the same perceptual persistence of vision, there is an entirely distinct process that has numerous implications, which Spielmann discusses in more detail (2010, pp. 46-57). Key among these are the aforementioned point that video images are a form of linear visual writing operating in such a way that no image is ever completely self-present at any given moment; as soon as the second half-image has begun scanning, the first half is overwritten by the next image in such a manner that the video image is always fluid and 'no coherent "image" exists' (2010, p. 48). Secondly, video is audiovisual in a distinct manner to film in that video and audio signals are simultaneous and copresent rather than artificially joined by a distinct track on the filmstrip. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, video images are not based on minimal differences between discrete and consecutive images, but on continuous variation of an electronic signal, expressed in the continuous 'writing' of horizontal lines, meaning that there are synchronous scanning processes taking place on both a camera and a monitor, connected by an electronic cable. These characteristics of electronic video distinguish it, not only from photography and cinema, but also from subsequent digital developments of video, operating via the transduction between visual fields and numerical data. If video is a space of passage between photographic and digital images, this is not a mere progression from A to C via B, but a highly ambivalent space in which multiple potentials coexisted from the most

commercial to the most aesthetic, and even the most politically radical. All these properties of video would be explored in a range of practices of video art, but also provided opportunities for the development of experimental and radical approaches to television, which is what the subsequent sections of this chapter will focus on exploring. While some of these experiments paid more direct attention to the properties of video than others, all of them inhabited this in-between space of the electronic image, for which Spielmann argues neither a history, nor an archaeology, but a genealogy is needed (2010, p. 20). This book will not be able to attempt such a genealogy, but will rather limit itself to some key examples of radical and guerrilla television, situating them in institutional, technological, and sociopolitical contexts as dynamic media ecologies, however widespread or restricted their initial dissemination.

Sonimage, Fassbinder, and Radical Auteur Television

While the coexistence of countercultural cosmic consciousness with ‘the intermedia network of film and television, which now functions as nothing less than the nervous system of mankind’ (Youngblood, 1970, p. 41), was certainly one way of grasping the impact of video on early 1970s media ecologies, the technological development of video also met with specific institutional, economic, and legal conditions, which, in some instances, favoured its more radical forms. The US development of public-access television based on the requirement of cable TV companies to allow for local programming was one instance of these conditions, which will be addressed in the next section. Meanwhile, in Europe, some institutional initiatives allowed for a limited yet fascinating development of radical ‘auteur’ television. This section will examine the unexpected forms of television this facilitated in both France and West Germany, focusing on the *Institut national de l’audiovisuelle* (INA) in France and the *West Deutsche Rundfunk* (WDR) in Germany. While not the only televisual institutions to do so, they are the clearest examples of developing an experimental television environment, hospitable to formally and politically radical directors like Godard, Fassbinder, and many others.

The INA was an unusual initiative in the world of television institutions, charged with ‘having *both* responsibility for the French audiovisual archives, *and* a specific brief to produce creative and experimental productions for the national networks’ (Boyd-Bowman 1987, p. 104; emphasis in original). Once set up in 1975, the French public television channels ‘had to broadcast thirty hours of INA programming made with INA’s resources and thirty

hours of INA Programming commissioned by the TV channels' (Ostrowska 2007, p. 30). According to Susan Boyd-Bowman, its existence may have even been an accident, born of a minor amendment of the reform of the 1974 French Television Act, which had agendas of better management and financial accountability in the context of the break-up of the Gaullist consensus. Certainly, by the early 1980s, the INA's role as an experimental producer would be over and it would revert to being only an archive. Before this, however, the INA's brief was to 'use fresh talent, to invent new modes of television expression, and to apply new techniques (e.g., computer animation)' (Boyd-Bowman 1987, p. 105). In reality audiovisual experimentation was largely in decline in France, and, rather than appealing to fresh talent, this provided an opportunity for already established cinema auteurs to shift their activities to a televisual context. According to Ostrowska, 'the INA project could be seen as an effort to legitimize TV in the French cultural context by offering filmmaking opportunities for established and elite filmmakers often associated with the *Nouvelle Vague*' (2007, p. 30). In France, there was a strong discourse of television as a social technology, rather than an aesthetic medium, evident, for example, in the work of Serge Daney in the 1980s, and commented on by Gilles Deleuze in his introduction to Daney's *Ciné Journal: 1981-1982*, 'TV's social functions [...] stifle its potential aesthetic function. TV is, in its present form, the ultimate consensus: it's direct social engineering leaving no gap between itself and the social sphere' (1995, p. 74). In a sense, the INA experiments attempted precisely to give expression to this stifled aesthetic function of television, leading to a problematic relationship with both state television channels and audiences. Nowhere was this more apparent, or confronted more directly than in Godard and Miéville's television series *Six fois deux: sur et sous communication* (*Six times Two: Above and Below Communication*, 1976), which will be examined shortly. Considered initially as one of the INA's success stories, by the 1980s, public television channels were highly reluctant to air this kind of content, which they saw as overly intellectual and hermetic. Nevertheless, prior to this, the INA promoted the idea that 'there was no necessary contradiction between creativity and public taste' (Boyd-Bowman 1987, p. 106) and, to this end, an impressive array of radical filmmakers were commissioned, including Jacques Rivette, Philippe Garrel, Godard and Miéville, Marker, Duras, Joris Ivens, Philippe Garrel, Maurice Pialat, René Allio, Straub and Huillet, Theo Angelopoulos, and others (Boyd-Bowman 1987, p. 106). According to Ostrowska, most of these filmmakers had little interest in television as a medium or much desire to develop it, but rather sought different conditions in which to continue to make cinema

with less anxiety about box-office returns, critical responses, and more ability to reach audiences. In some cases, however, new-wave filmmakers saw television as a way to save and continue art cinema, and, arguably, projects like Rivette's thirteen-hour *Out 1* (1971), were conceived as much as a new kind of TV serial as an exceptionally long film, or at least with a potential parallel distribution, a model also adopted by Raúl Ruiz on several occasions.² This sense of television as merely an alternative venue for, or even the salvation of, art cinema, renders Godard and Miéville's project all the more distinctive in its attempt to construct a radically other mode of television and explore its unique properties and potentials.

Six times Two needs to be understood as part of a bloc of productions undertaken between 1974 and 1978 by Godard and Miéville, comprising of two television series and three 'films', albeit films composed of a heterogeneity of images including video images. *Ici et Ailleurs* was originally shot in 1970 as a Godard and Gorin film about the Palestinian revolution, which was supposed to be entitled *Jusqu'à la victoire (Méthodes de pensée et du travail de la révolution palistinienne/Until Victory: Methods of Thought and Labour of the Palestinian Revolution)*, but was never completed in its original didactic form. It can be assumed from the footage presented that this would have somewhat resembled other Dziga Vertov group films, or perhaps, Adachi and Wakamatsu's previously discussed Palestinian film. It is as if Godard, after overcoming the hesitancy he previously displayed in *Far from Vietnam* in unproblematically representing an 'elsewhere' without addressing how that elsewhere is mediated 'here', had done exactly that and then, several years later, set out to redress the balance. The film itself puts this in audiovisual terms, stating that 'the sound was too loud', meaning that the sound of preconceived militant ideology prevented the filmmakers from actually hearing what the Palestinian militants were saying, as Michael Witt puts it 'the content of their conversations had not only been ignored, but obscured by the filmmakers' overzealous political theorizing on the soundtrack' (2014, p. 321). In some sequences, it was literally a matter of turning down these inappropriate colonizing sounds and actually hearing the original sound, but this was only the beginning of the strategies for reconfiguring the original footage in *Ici et Ailleurs*.

These strategies are laid out almost immediately in the complex opening montage that situates the blindness of the original project in terms of these audiovisual relations. The first digital title image vertically declines the French possessive pronoun 'mon, ton', then, on the third line, a flashing 'son image', which both refers to Godard and Miéville's production company, Sonimage, and the sound-image relations that are key to the

film's reconfiguration of the original footage. As we hear both Godard and Miéville describe the shift in the title of the film between 1970 and 1974, we see excerpts of the original footage, including guerrillas with submachine guns, along with new images of a French family watching TV, separated by the single word from the title 'ET'. As we will see, this idea of the 'and', which would have a major influence on Deleuze's thought, and not only on cinema, performs something quite distinct from dialectical montage. Instead, it enables the thinking of two seemingly disparate realities together, by means of the interval of the 'and'. Thus, in less than a minute, Godard and Miéville's way of working in the film is foregrounded: according to the logic of the film, 'here' and 'elsewhere' need to be apprehended together, in relation to the interval or conjunctive synthesis that both separates and joins them.

As Jerry White emphasizes in relation to the juxtaposed still-video image of Golda Meir superimposed over the graphic image of an armed Palestinian militant, 'This is not really a dialectical strategy. The montage is too multiple, too quick' (White 2013, p. 66). As White argues, the multiple contrasts that pervade the film, not only between the elsewhere and else when of Palestine and suburban France, but between the heterogeneous modalities of the image presented in the work, are less concerned with oppositions between any thesis and antithesis, so much as a demonstration of 'the complexity of the situation, the "chunkiness" of its politics' (2013, p. 66). As such, it is more a kind of confused stuttering between these different realities, emphasized on the soundtrack by Godard's multiple repetitions of the word



Fig. 20: *Ici et Ailleurs* (1974), video mixing Golda Meir and Adolf Hitler.

and: *'révolution française et révolution arabe'* (Godard and Miéville 1974), accompanying images of French post-1968 riots with Palestinian armed struggles. Subsequent juxtapositions argue that it is 'too simple and too easy' to divide the world in two, accompanied by still-video images of Nixon and Brezhnev, while it is also too easy and too simple to say that the poor are right and the rich are wrong, statements that would certainly have been possible during the previous Dziga Vertov group period in which the film's images were originally shot. More shockingly, the solution to these problems of cinematic-dialectical montage give way to square video wipes, between figures such as Hitler and Lenin, and, more notoriously, Adolf Hitler and Golda Meir, as well as historical movements such as the French Popular Front, the Russian Revolution, and the rise of fascism, ultimately presented as a series of dates entered on an adding machine. It is as if the fluid relations between video images in these sequences annihilate the dialectical properties of cinematic montage, and propose instead the coexistence of incommensurable realities that are both separated and conjoined within the same frame; France and Palestine, action and spectatorship, fascism and socialism, here and elsewhere.

This is taken further in the so-called 'slideshow sequences' of the film in which there is first a demonstration of cinematic montage as a group of French people behind a film projector place photographs on the wall while reading out the original film's intertitles: 'political work', 'armed struggle', 'till victory' and so on. As Godard's voice-over instructs us over a black screen, 'while here it is possible to see all the images together, in film you can't. In cinema you are obliged to see the images separately one after the other, and this gives way to that' (Godard and Miéville 1974). This is then demonstrated as we see the same images, separated by black, while hearing the intertitles again. However, the deconstruction of the process of montage, coupled with the inclusion of black intervals between the images, undermines the usual dialectical effects of cinematic montage. To reinforce this, Godard then has the actors present the images one by one in front of a camera, deliberately presented as a production line, which implies that this production line applies equally to news images, television, advertising, and other series of images. This finally leads to a composite image of three slide projectors in which there are simultaneous juxtapositions of images, for example, of Nazism and war in Israel/Palestine, which are then modified as a hand replaces individual slides, so that the next triptych is Nixon and the war in Vietnam, or Palestinian militants and Golda Meir, all juxtaposed with different sound effects of war, or militant/military music. Finally, Godard's voice says 'in the end a chain consists of arranging memories',



Fig. 21: *Ici et Ailleurs* (1974), alternative modes of editing.

which the film demonstrates can follow a number of different plans from cinematic successive montage, to 'live' video mixing, to the presentation of simultaneous images. But all of these chains ultimately consist of adding images together, despite the gaps between them, and not of a direct genesis of meaning from one image to the other in a cause-and-effect relationship. This is then complicated by a more complex slide assemblage displaying up to nine images simultaneously in a three-by-three array, some of which have already become familiar, and others, such as images of advertising and consumer society, that are new. As White points out, 'Some of *Ici et Ailleurs* is film, some is kinescoped video, and some of it is still imagery, some from slides, and some from a combination of film and video [...] it uses shifting media to illustrate a dizzying array of political and cultural connections' (2013, p. 68). However, this is not just a random visual bombardment, but the effort to develop a new conception of and beyond cinematic montage, that would subsequently be developed in Godard and Miéville's televisual work; a conception that is not only about the simultaneity of heterogeneous images, but also the gaps between them, in line with Deleuze's theorization of the interstice. As Deleuze puts it, 'in Godard's method, it is not a question of association. Given one image, another has to be chosen which will induce an interstice *between* the two' (1989a, p. 178), and this interstice is precisely the 'and', the conjunctive disjunction between any two images that provokes and necessitates thought and active engagement.

Such montage or, rather, assemblage strategies, as well as productive mixes between film, video, television, and still images are evident in the

other films made at this time, namely *Numéro deux* (*Number Two*, 1975) and *Comment ça va* (*How's it Going?* 1976). Most famously, *Numéro Deux* opens with Godard himself located in a production studio between both cinematic and video technologies in the form of a film camera and a series of TV screens that project different images, including Godard in the studio. In this opening, Godard speaks quite informally, as if in the middle of a conversation with a friend about someone called 'Mac', but soon talks directly about machines, the very machines that are present in the space. Godard compares this space with several others; a library, but one without books; a printing shop, but there are no papers, only images and sounds. It is also a 'factory in a landscape', a figure used throughout the film, and reinforced by images on the television monitors. However, it is an unusual factory in that Godard is both the boss and the worker, which he demonstrates by adjusting, slowing down, and speeding up the machines in his site of production, which generates the images seen on the multiple screens. As Jerry White has emphasized, this is not an easy film to watch since 'the screen is almost always divided into two or more smaller screens with entirely different images, and some of these smaller screens have densely layered images' (2013, p. 73). This is generally seen as an alienating modernist strategy, but this is only if it is assumed that cinema, or audiovisual work, needs to be based on the consumption of seamless narratives and, beyond this, on representation. The set-up presented by Godard and Miéville in *Numéro Deux* is explicitly one of production rather than reproduction and presentation rather than representation. Rather than using technical media devices to relay a story, it presents the operations and mediations of these devices directly, as the machinery of audiovisual fabulation, always operated for certain interests, and, in a specific institutional and economic configuration (which is why the money spent on the film is discussed audibly in the place of the usual opening credits). Serge Daney is closer to the mark when he identifies these and other strategies used at this time with Guardian pedagogy: 'Godard's pedagogy consists in forever coming back to images and sounds, pointing to them, matching them, commenting on them, putting images within images and sounds within sounds, criticizing them like so many insoluble enigmas' (2000, p. 120). Furthermore, Daney grasps how this distances Godard and Miéville's work at this time from any Bazinian concerns with the essence of cinema:

Godard's advance on other manipulators of images and sounds has to do with his complete disregard for any discourse on the 'specificity' of cinema [...] whether the spontaneous discourse of the spectator [...] or

that of those professionally involved [...] or that of enlightened academics (Daney 2000, p. 120).

The figure of the site of audiovisual production and the pedagogy of sounds and images is equally present in *Comment ça va* with its denial of visibility of the protagonists and especially its rigorous focus on how news is produced via institutionally located technologies, namely photos and typewriters, that not only mediate, but determine how even left-wing news of political struggles happening elsewhere are constructed; the Odette character played by Miéville argues that relations of power are anchored neither here nor elsewhere but precisely through the typewriter that will mediate the photograph of the Portuguese Carnation Revolution.

It is in Godard and Miéville's television series *Six Times Two*, however, that this audiovisual experimentation was most fully developed, perhaps surprisingly as a reflexive mode of television rather than cinema. While several critics and biographers, such as Winston Wheeler Dixon (1997, p. 137) and Richard Brody (2009, p. 368), saw this turn to television and video as largely necessitated because of its relative cheapness, *Six Times Two* in fact shows a remarkable attempt to think through the possibilities of both video and television as means of communication, hence the subtitle of the series. The origins of the series give some indication of how television offered possibilities not available in feature-film production even of an experimental nature. Manette Bertin, an executive at the INA who had been impressed by Godard and Miéville's films at the time as fitting well with the INA's experimental television agenda, initially approached Godard and Miéville with the idea of filling a 100-minute time slot on FR3 at short notice. As reported by Brody, the filmmakers considered making one feature-length programme impossible, but were happy to fill all six available time slots (Brody 2009, p. 385) since this would give them 'time to start over, to correct oneself, not to be panicked' (Godard cited in Brody 2009, p. 385). Departing from an initial plan of simply doing a series of live interviews, rejected because all the programmes needed to be prerecorded, a revised double structure was chosen in which explorations of specific subjects, such as photojournalism, or lessons from objects, were coupled with extended interviews with a range of subjects, including Godard himself.

This first thing to be noted then about this series was its organization which, as Jill Forbes notes, allows for its reading on both horizontal and vertical axes, a figure that pervades the series itself. As she puts it, in addition to reading the two parts of each episode horizontally by putting the interview together with the broader exploration that precedes it, the series 'could be

read down the vertical axis, which might allow all the “personal” interview programmes, including an interview with Godard himself, to be juxtaposed’ (Forbes 1992, p. 120). But there is more to the organization of the series than a simple grid; as Forbes and others have pointed out, images from other films at times make an appearance in the programmes, and images, such as the magazine image of a mother and upside-down baby reappear in several programmes. Other axes in the series include the public and the private, presence and memory, and professional and amateur spheres of labour, all subtended by a theory of communication loosely adapted from Shannon and Weaver. This latter point is emphasized by Michael Witt, who points out that ‘given these overt references [to information theory] it is curious that Shannon’s significance to the entirety of the Sonimage work should have passed virtually without comment’ (2014, pp. 323-324). Information theory was attractive to Godard as a means for examining the operations of a variety of means of communication from cinema and television, to biological codes like DNA, to the codes of everyday life. Furthermore, if processes of communication were more opaque in cinema, due to both its technical processes and artistic status, they are foregrounded in video and television both in the technical fabrication of electronic images, and their functions as part of larger socio-technical systems. Godard and Miéville here propose something not unrelated to the then current -critical approaches to media, such as those of Enzensberger, except that they explore these systems via the fabrication of sounds and images for dissemination via television networks. This also implies a different and more materialist approach than the then-dominant one of semiotics, since technical images are seen not as representations of prior ideas, but as presentations, as audiovisual material, which can then be engaged with critically, analyzed, transformed, overwritten and so forth. This relates to another insight of Witt’s, namely that if information theory is the conceptual framework ‘within which to analyze contemporary communication processes, video provided them with a new tool through which to pursue their experiments’ (2014, p. 324).

This materialist approach to communication, also informed by contemporary Marxist theories like those of Althusser on ideological state apparatuses, is emphasized in the beginning of each programme through the close-up of the insertion and manipulation of a U-matic video tape into a playback machine; already, the materiality of video technology is foregrounded, along with the fact that, what is about to be watched is a prerecorded tape, rather than the transmission of anything live or spontaneous. This, as several commentators have indicated, acts against

the usual operations of televisual 'flow', making us aware of its processes of both production and reproduction. This materiality of video practice involved a number of strategies, including the production of the series in Grenoble, at a distance from the communications centre of Paris, as a kind of homemade, even deliberately amateur and regional practice, short circuiting the usual television communication channels. Producing television in an autonomous and marginal way from the regions is one way of constituting a minor televisual practice. But the series not only destabilizes hierarchies of transmission and distribution but also problematizes ideas of televisual content. This is partly through the emphasis on the ordinary and the everyday, for example, structuring the whole of the first episode as a series of interviews for people who want to work on the series, but also by an attention to characters and activities that would normally be overlooked and are consequently perceived as boring. This is especially the case with some of the interviews, which characteristically involve long takes either of the interviewees talking about their activities or engaging in them. In the place of authoritative commentary or montage to maintain the viewer's attention, the subjects are left to speak for themselves, with occasional interventions from the producers in the form of writing or drawing on the images; for example, in 1b 'Louison', the viewer is asked in titles that appear over the image to have patience, because the farmer is discussing his work in excruciating detail '*parle vrai*'; while, in 3b, 'Marcel', the exact gestures performed by a watchmaker who is also an amateur filmmaker are interrogated both visually and via Godard's questions to reveal why the same gestures of close observation and working on material in one context are seen as work and, in another, as a freely chosen leisure activity.

In the 'a' episodes, more complex procedures are followed that vary a great deal from episode to episode depending on the issues being explored. Episode 3a, for example, 'Photos et cie' is focused on the practice and ethics of photojournalism, as it confronts an image of an execution with an interview with the photographer who took the image. This interface is then commented on by a series of annotations on the image – these annotations superimpose words from the interview with the scene itself –, which takes on different resonances in a similar way to Godard and Gorin's earlier engagement with a single image in *Letter to Jane* (1973), but made a lot more flexible through the processes of video postproduction. There is also a clear ethical point in this episode on both the production of media images and their consumption as commodities, as the journalist focuses less on the ethically problematic act of witnessing an execution, and more on technical aspects of which lenses to use in such a situation in order to

get the best results. This disproportion or excess of the technical over the ethical, is extended to the mode of consumption of such images, as they are related to other magazine images, such as pornography and advertising, and specifically advertising for cameras, showing how these processes are reproduced in a communication circuit between photojournalism, magazine consumption, and amateur and professional photography. This then leads into the 'b' episode that focuses on the watchmaker and amateur nature filmmaker Marcel. However, there is a notable shift here not only between the styles of the episodes, but in the more favourable presentation of the amateur filmmaker over the professional photojournalist, suggesting an outside of mass-media communication processes based on singular enthusiasms and passionate engagement with a subject, rather than professional detachment.

Other 'a' episodes operate quite differently, such as 2a 'Lessons of Things', which features a quite surreal and counter-intuitive discussion of several objects that are shown on the screen, while 4a 'Pas d'histoire' ('No Story'), goes from an interview with a writer with writer's block to a range of image manipulations from physical images, to the overwriting of images with diagrams of forces and relations, including the image of the woman and baby already mentioned. In contrast, 5a 'Nous Trois' ('We Three') constructs the narrative of a separated couple via a continuum of video wipes between their separated images, video postproduction providing a material means for a communication between the couple, but also with the screen that



Fig. 22: Video superimposition in *Six Fois Deux* (1976).

both separates and joins them. In all these cases, there is an audiovisual modeling of communication processes following Shannon that means that messages are never simply between two positions of the transmitter and receiver, but always involve a third of the information channel or interface, in this case the television screen. As such, the series not only constitutes a theory of communication, but also a theory of the interface that anticipates new-media theories like those of Galloway. Following more recent interpretations of information theory, such as those of Michel Serres, it could be argued that, whereas mainstream television attempts to make the communication channel invisible and reduce noise to a minimum, *Six Fois Deux* is all about noise, and deploys a variety of strategies to foreground its operations. Godard says at one point in *Numéro Deux* that he is surrounded by noise, that there is too much DNA and not enough RNA, and this is, in some respects, a good characterization of *Six Fois Deux* as a whole; in this series, the noise of audiovisual communication is not filtered out or reduced, but emphasized and foregrounded.

To understand the series relationship with information theory, it is worth taking up the distinction made by Sybille Krämer between transmission and dialogue, for which Shannon and Weaver's technical communication model forms the basis for the privileged pole of transmission. She aligns this contrast to a distinction between two principles of communication, the 'postal' and 'the erotic':

The postal principle presents communication as the production of connections between spatially distant physical instances. On the other hand, the dialogical principle presents communication as the synchronization and standardization of formerly divergent conditions among individuals (Krämer 2015, p. 22).

The argument here is especially with Habermas's model of communication as dialogue, but is just as applicable to the reversible Brechtian model of Enzensberger explored earlier. Given the usual accounts of Godard as both a Brechtian and a modernist, one would expect his approach to be aligned with this dialogical, 'erotic' model of communication (see Krämer 2015, pp. 22-24). Yet, as Michael Witt points out, this is far from the case and not only because of Godard's enthusiastic embrace of Shannon and Weaver's model of communication. For example, Witt points to Godard's consistent attitude of distrust towards community projects of radical media, especially when the latter are based on foregrounding distribution networks. This was the case, both in terms of militant cinema practices, including those

of Marker after 1968, as well as new video practices. Interestingly enough, there was a nascent video network of this kind in Grenoble, based on the development of cable television around the same time that *Six Fois Deux* was produced. As Witt encapsulates Godard's position that was highly critical of this kind of alternative media project:

rather than prioritizing the creation of new distribution networks, and assuming that enough significantly interesting content would then be produced to supply them, he argued that one's point of departure should always be to communicate on a given topic, followed by a distillation of that desire into a specific form, that would then dictate how it should be distributed, and to whom (2014, p. 328).

This was to go against conventional wisdom on militant film and video in a similar way to the disagreements between de Antonio and the Newsreel collective, as well as those of Godard and Gorin's earlier practice as the Dziga Vertov Group. It also corresponds closely to Shannon and Weaver's 'postal' model of communication as transmission, as glossed by Krämer, and indeed *Six Fois Deux* contains several instances in which they illustrate communication through 'the process of conceiving, writing, sending, and receiving a letter' (Witt 2014, p. 324).

However, it would be misleading simply to see the series as merely the audiovisual embodiment of and experimentation with technical models of communication. Since the prioritization of production over distribution was also coupled with the unique properties of video, making it possible to instantly view, critique, and modify material as it was produced, the series in effect was able to multiply transmission processes, incorporating them within the production process itself, and thereby to model a different mode of active reception. This may sound something like the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies model of 'encoding/decoding' that was also developed at this time, which was also fundamentally based on Shannon and Weaver's model, albeit channeled through the linguist Roman Jakobson, and which tended to place undue emphasis on the reception rather than the production of media messages. Godard and Miéville's approach was not only more materialist, but also more complex, multiplying processes of both sending and receiving, and, especially, emphasizing the ambivalent possibilities of the process of transmission and its inherent noise, rather than focusing on the beginning and endpoints of communication processes. *Six Fois Deux* is full of feedback loops, whereby the medium itself is made to appear, and to appear strange, even if the communication largely follows a postal

rather than a dialogical model; in other words, interview subjects were shown in long takes speaking as if in a natural flow, with only occasional interventions from the interviewer, but this was then supplemented by various forms of overwriting on the image, showing that this material had already been seen and heard, and was modified by the producers.

Finally, it is important to bear in mind the subtitle of the series *Above and Below Communication*. This can, of course, be interpreted in several ways; according to Michael Witt, for example, in the sense that 'industrialized countries had been [already] colonized by the mass media', the sheer proliferation of media images constituting a 'dense fog through which it was difficult to see clearly [and serving] less to communicate and elucidate than to disorientate and manipulate' (2014, p. 326). In other words, the series is an examination and analysis of communication processes, but not in order to celebrate them, but rather to appropriate them critically. If media proliferate communication processes to which people are usually subjected, how might it be possible to communicate otherwise, to use television's processes of transmission in a different way, not as a reversible form of dialogue, but as a self-reflexive chain of transmission processes, allowing the noise of the transmission process to become directly perceptible, and modeling different relations between production, distribution, and reception? Finally, the idea was to model both a different understanding of communication, and ways that communication technologies might be used for something other than communication; another sense for 'above and below' communication. Interestingly enough, if one returns to Shannon and Weaver's model, what is below communication is precisely the noise source, the parasitic third entity that Serres emphasized was far from inimical to communication, but rather essential to its functioning. Both technical and social notions of ideal communication are, however, usually predicated on noise elimination and reduction as I have argued elsewhere (see Goddard, Hegarty, and Halligan, 2012, pp. 3-4). What happens, in contrast, if a communication process is devised to maximize the potentials for noise and entropy, even at the risk of the lack of clear communication of a recognizable original message to a receiver, but only the immanent processes surrounding communication itself?

This is, indeed, what Gilles Deleuze grasped about the series, when interviewed by *Cahiers du Cinéma* shortly after its transmission. As has already been mentioned, Deleuze rejected the idea of Godard's method being a dialectical one, and saw it as operating rather by the principle of the 'and'. He also emphasized the very concrete ways that the series raised questions of labour; the activities different subjects are prepared to undertake, the

ones they are willing or not willing to be paid for. These questions apply not only to subjects like Marcel with his paid employment as a watchmaker and unpaid employment as an amateur filmmaker, but, as Deleuze suggests, also apply to professional producers of words and images who are paid. He underlines what Godard and Miéville show in *'Photos et cie'* that, contrary to when a photographer takes the photo of a model, 'when he photographs torture or an execution, he pays neither the victim nor the executioner' (Deleuze, 1992a, p. 39). In other words, the concept of labour that we imagine, we understand suddenly becomes strange, confusing, and violent in itself, and provokes a response in the viewer, evidenced in the hatred aroused from photojournalists at their presentation in the series. Deleuze says something similar about information theory of which he clearly sees the series as highly critical. According to Deleuze, 'language is a system of instructions rather than a means of conveying information' (1992a, p. 41), and this is equally applicable to how television usually works. For Deleuze, information theory needs to be inverted, 'information theory assumes a theoretical maximum of information, with pure noise, interference, at the other extreme and inbetween there's redundancy, which reduces the information but allows it to overcome noise. But we should actually start with redundancy as the transmission or relaying of orders or instructions; next there's information, always the minimum needed for the satisfactory reception of orders; then what? Well, then there's something like silence, or stammering or screaming, something slipping through underneath the redundancies and information' (Deleuze 1997, p. 41). Deleuze echoes here what René Thom says in the series about the misuses of the word information, especially when applied to the operations of the media that communicate prior to having any information to communicate, thus annulling the meaning of the word. But it also points to the idea of what is underneath or above communication, that avoids communication in the sense of managing to 'speak without giving orders, without claiming to represent something or someone [...] making [language] stammer in sound waves' (Deleuze 1997, pp. 41, 43). This is finally the transformation of communication into creation, by beginning with the immanent creative potential of noise rather than information, and, in the middle, rather than at either of the poles of production or reception. As such, it is a way of inhabiting or parasiting the medium itself, and making it perform the inverse of its socio-technical function of transmitting orders, opening it up to unforeseen creative processes, without collapsing into notions of immediacy, dialogue, and interactivity. As such, the series is less an audiovisual theory and practice of communication than of mediation itself, an occupation of the middle, of the medium, which is also were its politics

lie; in fact, in distinction to the turning away from politics in existential despair as it was perceived by some critics at the time (see Hennebelle cited by White 2013, p. 87), the series is precisely where television is made to reveal both its creative and critical potentials as a political medium; not by opposing communication but enacting it differently and swarming around communication processes creatively.

This would be taken further in the following series *France/tour/détour/deux enfants* (*France/Tour/Detour/Two Children*, 1977) that, aside from returning to the troubling issues of child sexuality that had been equally present in *Numéro Deux*, uses the figure of the child both to examine and resist disciplinary processes, through procedures ranging from intensive questioning of the two children, to the extensive use of slow-motion of both the children's gestures and wider societal flows, for analytical purposes. Essentially, this is now a Foucauldian enterprise as commentators like Witt, White, and, before them, Constance Penley all emphasize, but also one that is close to the dynamic Deleuze identified in *Six Fois Deux*, examining, this time, how everyday life is also structured and programmed like television, and attempting to open it up to other potentials, that still insist below the level of the disciplined televisual programming that the series deliberately replicates and parodies. This is where the extensive use of slow-motion comes in, to 'slow down the machinery of the state' (Godard and Miéville, 1979) or, as Witt interprets this procedure, 'by conducting a sort of videoscopic ultrasound of the calibrated body through the use of altered motion, they sought to cast in relief the regulatory constraints, privations and obligations involved in producing human docility-utility' (2014, p. 334). Clearly, the recasting of childhood, not as a sphere of innocence, but as a site of the repetition, copying, and assimilation of controlled behaviours did not render the series typical daytime viewing, and, unlike its predecessor, it was only able to be screened almost two years after it was made, in a late-night 'cinophile' time slot about which Godard and Miéville were justifiably incensed. Nevertheless, it showed a continued critical engagement with, and subversion of, televisual communication, and the will to reconfigure the potentialities of the medium that went well beyond mere video experimentation for the sake of future film production. In fact, as Witt points out, Godard stated he was 'amazed that people didn't treat it as a serious piece of work' (Godard in Witt 2014, p. 339), especially in its examination of language in the form of everyday expressions, or the implantation of ideology, discipline, or order words, depending on the theoretical orientation adopted. However, rather than analyse this series in detail, we will now look at a radically different context and practice of

radical television, namely Fassbinder's work at the West Deutsche Rundfunk (WDR) in the early 1970s, even if, at first glance, it may appear relatively formally conventional.

The difference between Fassbinder's and Godard and Miéville's attitudes towards television is clearly evident in an interview with Norbert Sparrow in *Cineaste* magazine in 1977. When asked about Godard's work in television, Fassbinder replied in the following terms:

I haven't actually seen any of it, but from what I've read in the interviews and so forth, I get the impression that he's not interested in an audience and this I can't understand. To work with as technical an instrument as a video camera and ignore the audience is beyond my comprehension (Fassbinder 1983, pp. 186-187).

While not based on actually experiencing the work, and despite his admission that 'I think he will come back and give us something tangible one day' (Fassbinder 1983, p. 187) in response to the interviewer's statement that Godard is doing 'research on the medium's mechanism and function' (Fassbinder 1983, p. 187), Fassbinder expresses a quite different relationship to both the medium and the audience. As he states earlier in the interview: 'it's an interesting medium – and it is a medium, as opposed to film, which is an art. Aesthetically, my conception doesn't change but the point of departure, the reason for doing it, is different' (Fassbinder 1983, p. 186). To understand this different but no less radical conception of television, it is necessary to examine Fassbinder's relations with the medium in the early 1970s, and specifically his engagement with WDR, which produced many of his television works, including the ones examined here.

First of all, following the work of Jane Shattuck, it is evident that Fassbinder was as much a television director as a filmmaker, especially in the first half of the 1970s:

the majority of his films were done for West German television. [...] The made-for-TV movies were marketed for and shown to a broad prime time German audience who had limited knowledge of the conventions of the art cinema, but as taxpayers had a vested interest in public television productions (Shattuc 1995, p. 76).

Of course, Fassbinder was hardly unique in this since, as Shattuc also claims, as has Thomas Elsaesser, New German cinema was effectively underwritten by television and, by the mid 1970s, expressions such as the

'amphibious' television film were evidence that 'the formal and content differences between the two kinds of film [feature films and television films] were rapidly breaking down' (Shattuc 1995, p. 56). In Fassbinder's case, this process started very early, and, after a first rash of low-budget privately financed film production, including such highlights as *Katzelmacher* (1969) and the self-reflexive *Warnung vor einer heiligen Nutte* (*Beware of a Holy Whore*, 1972), Fassbinder's work increasingly took place in the form of *Fernsehspielen* or television adaptations, of which there were no less than eighteen, via an aesthetic that, in Shattuc's terms, combined 'three narrational forms: the original literary author, classical Hollywood narrative, and Fassbinder's style' (1995, p. 109). Shattuc emphasizes that Fassbinder on television 'respected the original work's integrity' (1995, p. 109) much more than in the *antiteater*, where the original work was often merely a point of departure for a collective experiment, sometimes barely related to the original. Nevertheless, there are marked differences among Fassbinder's works for television, for example, *Das Kaffeehaus* (1970), while a clear example of an adaptation, was very much an anti-realist televised *antiteater* production, with an obvious stage set and artificial backdrop of projected waves, in contrast to the relative realism of subsequent productions. More importantly, Fassbinder not only made films for or financed by television, but serial productions, most notably *Acht Stunden sind kein Tag* (*Eight Hours are Not a Day*, 1972-1973) and, as I will argue, *Welt am Draht* (*World on a Wire*, 1973), which was made in two parts, before the much more famous *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1980). I will argue that the first two of these productions are crucial not only in Fassbinder's artistic development, but also for explorations of the radical potentials of television as a medium, as much as more obviously experimental television works such as those by Godard and Miéville.

To fully grasp *Eight Hours are not a Day*, it is necessary first to discuss the *Arbeiterfilm*, a unique genre of West German Television that had been under development since the beginning of the 1970s, exclusively on WDR. WDR was part of the association of German public television stations that also included ZDF but was considered its 'richest and most radical station' (Shattuc 1995, p. 48), and, according to Richard Collins and Vincent Porter, 'stood for a different conception and practice of public service broadcasting' (1981, p. 1). This was, in part, due to the origins of postwar German television as part of a process of enforced democratization, but also specific to the management of the WDR from the 1960s and especially its film and television drama department. Rather than integrating film critics into the network and commissioning ideas, WDR regarded directors as

Autoren and, according to Shattuc, 'encouraged them to develop their own ideas' (1995, p. 49). Nevertheless, there was a clear social-democratic agenda that, at the end of the 1960s, led to unique developments in 'proletarian programming'. The *Arbeiterfilm* was therefore based on the dual premises of addressing proletarian audiences, and combined documentary and fictional techniques in order to do so. A key example of this is Theo Gallehr and Rolf Schübel's *Rote Fahnen sieht man besser* (*Red Flags Can Be Seen Better*, 1971), which, as Collins and Porter describe it, 'recounts the long and bitter story of the redundancies and layoffs at the Phrix works in Krefeld [...] as seen from the point of view of the workers made redundant' (1981, p. 2). Even as the *Arbeiterfilm* departed from its documentary origins, the ideas of leftist social realism, mirroring the work of television directors like Ken Loach in the UK, continued to characterize the aesthetic of these productions. The common features of these productions are summed up by Collins and Porter as consisting of: 'their aesthetic of naturalism and/or realism, their representations of experiences and relations at the workplace as decisive and their espousal of the point of view of the major subordinated class of the post-war social market economy of West Germany' (1981, p. 2). This aesthetic is in marked contrast to ideas of avant-garde and counter-cinema, that still informed Godard and Miéville's television work, in favour of 'a conscious, thoughtful and deliberate practice of an aesthetic of realism in the service of a critical representation of the contemporary social order' (Collins and Porter 1981, p. 3). Fassbinder's series, however, only partly corresponded to these generic tendencies, as we shall see.

Crucially, from a media-ecological point of view, these productions embodied a quite different concept of public-service broadcasting to that operative in the UK and other European countries. While the West German public-service broadcasting system had been thoroughly critiqued by Negt and Kluge, despite the latter's later involvement with ZDF, in a sense the drama department at WDR embodies at least steps towards the development of a proletarian public sphere, albeit one that was operated by the state, rather than autonomously or from below. Nevertheless, it still responded to the call for the critique of production via productions of a radically different nature (see Kluge and Negt 2016, p. 80). Furthermore, there was also the unusual proximity between film and television, leading first to the exhibition and financing of films by the television networks, and secondly to commissioning of films directly for television, sometimes, as with Fassbinder, from key directors of the New German Cinema. This had the surprising effect of a move *away* from video in drama productions, despite the use of the new medium in the early 1970s, including some of

Fassbinder's first television productions. The department head Günther Rohrbach in fact wanted to eliminate the differences between theatrical feature films and TV films, seeing it as only technical, a question of transmission. Of course, this is, in reality, no small matter, as is evident in the differences between Fassbinder's television films and his privately financed theatrical ones. However, this shift in WDR policy had the effect of reducing the numbers of commissioned films and improving their quality, so that, rather than shooting on video as was the case for *The Coffee House* or *Nora Helmer* (1974), many productions were shot in film and this was equally the case with *Eight Hours are Not a Day*. In effect, Fassbinder's work on television benefited both from the political orientation at WDR and this blurring of boundaries between TV and film, allowing him to produce work that, in some instances, also circulated as art cinema, while also able to reach the much wider audiences of monopoly public television, and to keep up the frantic pace of production for which he became increasingly known. At the same time, Fassbinder, without abandoning his signature authorial style, significantly modified it for television, and his style was, in Shattuc's terms, 'channeled into what has been described as "melodramatizing" or popularizing two television genres: the classic adaptation and the socially critical made-for-TV play' (1995, p. 76). Not only was Fassbinder the 'difficult' *antiteater* and art-cinema director who popularized the classics, but he also popularized his own excessive style, so much so that his much-discussed shift towards Hollywood melodrama in the mid 1970s, can be effectively seen as the result of his encounter with the television medium, with many of the films discussed in this vein actually being either WDR television productions or, at least, financed in part by television. Working for television is partially what enabled Fassbinder to overcome his celebrated artistic crisis especially embodied in the self-reflexive *Beware of a Holy Whore* (see Thomsen 1991, p. 90, pp. 101-102). At any rate, *Eight Hours Are Not a Day* was an early example of Fassbinder combining Hollywood-style melodrama with a completely different social context in order to reach a wider audience than was possible via his preceding film and theatre practice. Certainly, this was the most optimistic production Fassbinder was involved with and, even if it is unfair to characterize it as a fairy tale, as the more realist producer of *Arbeiterfilm* for WDR Christian Ziewer did, it definitely departs from Fassbinder's usually pessimistic approach by being based on an optimistic hypothesis of a what if? As Thomsen puts it, 'If we did this and not what we are used to, then perhaps we *could* achieve something' (1991, pp. 121-122; emphasis in original). *Eight Hours Are Not a Day* is therefore a utopian text, but one firmly grounded in real potentials for social change.

Eight Hours Are Not a Day concerns a working-class family and its extended social networks connected via relations of work, friendship, and love, especially centred on the relationship between Jochen (Gottfried John) and Marion (Hanna Schygulla). Three generations of Jochen's family live in the same house initially, and the figure of the grandmother plays a key role, just as she would in Fassbinder's later and much less optimistic film about workplace relations, *Mother Küsters goes to Heaven* (1975). The series is not, however, limited to family and couple relations, but also shows working-class solidarity in the workplace, in the ways that Jochen and his friends try to get the better of management by various means. This was meant to, in the unmade final three episodes, link up with trade-union activity and more institutional forms of political work. In the episodes that were made, personal relations alternate with a range of initiatives showing working people attempting to better their situations in terms of work, housing, and other issues, for example, setting up an autonomous kindergarten in the building of a disused library, and devising new modes of worker cooperation and self-organization to improve both production and working conditions. The romantic and family setting therefore serves as a lure to bring these issues to a mainstream television audience, by means of using the bourgeois genre of the family series.

Eight Hours Are Not a Day stands out from the *Arbeiterfilm* that preceded and followed it, not only because it was the only series produced in this genre that otherwise only resulted in feature-length television films, but also because it does not adhere strictly to the genre's codes but, instead, combines them with the *familienseries* (family series or German Soap Opera), a particularly bourgeois and conventional television genre. Far from being accidental, this choice was a deliberate one, constituting, in the producer Peter Märtheshiemer's words, 'the occupation of a bourgeois genre' (cited in Collins and Porter 1981, p. 147). By these means, 'the forms of expression of the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois milieu are in *Eight Hours* introduced for the first time into the proletarian milieu, and with these forms, stories are told in a completely different way' (1981, p. 149). The effect of this transplantation was claimed to be both aesthetic and ideological; not only were characters dramatically individualized rather than presented as mere emanations of their sociological milieu, but they were given the wider scope of action usually reserved for 'bourgeois culture' (1981, p. 149), and were able to function as a lever for problematizing the working-class milieu and suggesting that it could be otherwise. For Shattuc, the controversies surrounding the series that ultimately led to its discontinuation after episode five, were less concerned with the personality of Fassbinder than

with 'the right of working-class culture to be exhibited by the same forms used for bourgeois culture' (Shattuc 1995, p. 79). Surprisingly, the same skills that had made Fassbinder a successful popularizer or translator of literature for popular television audiences also rendered him capable of translating a 'middle-class genre to a popular milieu' (Shattuc 1995, p. 79). While Shattuc is right to emphasize these continuities with Fassbinder's earlier television work, the series was still a departure in that it was based on a much more collective process of research into working-class lives and working conditions than Fassbinder had ever undertaken before, and an explicitly egalitarian relationship of solidarity with the television audience. As Thomsen puts it,

Fassbinder doesn't pretend to be any smarter or better than his audience. [He] didn't just make the series for a big audience, but also for his own pleasure and to learn more about the problems that concerned him. Out of that arose solidarity with the public. He carries out an experiment *with* the public (Thomsen 1991, p. 121; emphasis in original).

While certainly there are elements of both Fassbinder's television and film work that are continued in this series, this relationship with the audience is new and not only medium-specific, but also specific to the subversive generic strategy employed.

This departure from the norms of the *Arbeiterfilm* genre and its social realism was not without criticism from both the right and the left, including from Collins and Porter, who point to its 'suspicious origins in the mind of a middle class director educated in a traditions of irrationalism and the assent given to it by workers friendly with the director' (1981, p. 54). More interestingly, however, they suggest that the series has to be evaluated, not in terms of the realism it so clearly departs from through its mannerist *mise-en-scène* and use of the family series genre, but how successfully its occupation of this genre really is; does it subvert the genre, slyly encouraging ordinary viewers to be possibly prepared to join the German communist party along with its protagonists (see Fassbinder cited in Collins and Porter 1981, p. 52) or does it merely add authorial flourishes like close-ups of 'flowers, chair-frames, glasses etc' (p. 52) that are merely distracting and disorienting, rather than producing any Brechtian alienation effects. In effect, there is a three-way encounter between the proletarian sites of the home and workplace, the bourgeois family genre and Fassbinder as auteur that is highly ambivalent; the obvious advantages of Fassbinder's ability to complete a difficult project within budget and on time, and to both bring

an established group of performers and attract the interest of audiences, weighed against what the authors see as an inevitable 'gratuitousness [...] and unbalancing of the series' concern with the unfolding of a representation of working class experience' (1981, p. 56).

For Collins and Porter, therefore, the very absence of working-class institutions such as trades unions and political parties that was adopted to seduce a potentially resistant audience, had the potential to backfire in leading to the substitution for collective class struggle of individual and powerless gestures of rebellion. In other words, the choice to limit the series to the everyday lives and consciousness's of its protagonists, inevitably masks the real social relations involved and therefore potentially reinforces rather than calls into question dominant ideological structures. This, however, is as much a limitation of the orthodox Marxist reading of the series employed by the authors. A different reading of the removal of the mediating functions of the trade union and political parties, would be as a post-1968 critique of these traditional working-class institutions, in favour of a more autonomist version of workplace politics; certainly, the series features elements of self-organization both in the workplace and in the community, and, arguably, the emphasis on individual psychology was not merely in order to follow bourgeois family-series genre conventions, but to emphasize the role of the production of subjectivity in the development of autonomous political initiatives, a theme that was central to autonomy movements in both Italy and Germany. It also needs to be emphasized that, while utopian the series is not blindly optimistic and shows the pitfalls to which such autonomist initiatives can lead, such as self-organization actually intensifies industrial exploitation and leaves capitalist relations of production and the extraction of surplus profit from alienated labour intact. Nevertheless, Collins and Porter are generous enough to see in the series an attempt to 'crack the glass through which we see and experience reality, and [...] demonstrate the presence of the screen that constrains, directs and determines the actions of the characters and the real lives their performances represent' (1981, p. 56). This screen is less pure ideology, than the specific screen of television and its consensual genres, making the strategy behind the series evident as an intervention into the televisual production of consensual realities and dominant class relations.

This revolutionary trajectory was troubling enough that the station insisted on curtailing it in the last episodes, in which it was precisely meant to be most directly developed through the appearance of the left institutions that were so absent from the first five episodes; Fassbinder refused these changes, which led to the discontinuation of the series. While Collins and

Porter allow for the importance of the series in the *Arbeiterfilm* genre, especially in the attempt to develop a new popular form for the representation of working-class subjects, they claim it is aesthetically flawed in its treatment of working-class experience, the absence of working-class institutions, and focus on the family. This is, however, to remain within representational terms from which the series itself suggests a potential distancing. Instead, if the object of the series is seen as an attempt to make the process of producing consensual reality visible, and specifically the complicit role of even progressive television in such processes, then the real function of the series was not about fomenting communist revolution, but the more modest goal of turning a spotlight on televisual mediation itself, and suggesting how it might work otherwise. In this perspective, the 'excessive' mise-en-scène with its overloaded décor, flashy zooms and pans, and use of tracking and overhead perspectives, alongside the bourgeois quirks of the characters, and even the focus on the family, were all part of an attempt to make the operations of television as an instrument of class domination visible and contestable. This is especially evident in the ways that almost all of the characters express themselves in clichés and catchphrases, and, only with difficulty, manage to articulate insights into the oppressive and alienating nature of working-class labour under capitalist conditions, and its potential for transformation, in sporadic, awkward, and usually alcohol-fueled conversations reminiscent of Brecht's *Kuhle Wampe (To Whom does the World Belong?* Dudow, 1932). Its discontinuation just at the point when the series had the potential to become even more affirmatively revolutionary, only serves to underscore the idea of television as a screen or limit to alternative political formations and class politics. As such, the series is every bit as much a reflexive work as *Six Fois Deux*, even while it conforms, deliberately, to the norms of both a bourgeois genre and, to a lesser extent, the *Arbeiterfilm*. Furthermore, this engagement had a surprising continuation – albeit in the disguise of science-fiction – in Fassbinder's next television series *World on a Wire* that was produced immediately after production was halted on *Eight Hours*.

The two-part production *World on a Wire* is an anomalous project in terms of format, leading to its diverse characterization by different commentators. Whereas Shattuc sees it is just one of Fassbinder's many *fernsehspielen* or tele-plays (1995, pp. 108-109), Thomsen characterizes it as another television series following *Eight Hours*, although he equally refers to it as a film. Certainly, this adaptation of Daniel Galouye's *Simulacron 3* could have been done as a feature-length film as it was in the more recent Hollywood adaptation, *The Thirteenth Floor* (1999) and, while the two-part structure could

be merely to enable a longer work than a standard television-film format would allow, it also indicates the importance of the project for Fassbinder as well as its televisual seriality, even if this is limited to two parts. While *Simulacron 3* is generally considered a prescient novel about the dangers of virtual reality, *World on a Wire* connects this directly to television from the very beginning. For example, when the main protagonist, Fred Stiller (Klaus Löwitz), explains the computer simulation that he controls with its '10, 000 identity units', he immediately compares it to television: 'they're like people on TV dancing for us' (Fassbinder, 1973). The importance of this set-up, for Fassbinder, cannot be overemphasized and is returned to in some of his most important and personal films like *In a Year of Thirteen Moons* (Fassbinder, 1978). In addition to this, the science-fiction genre allowed Fassbinder to deploy an even more excessive mise-en-scène, as well as artificial performance style than the one that Collins and Porter perceived as so jarring in *Eight Hours*. As Thomsen puts it, 'his distinctive acting style never appeared as "natural" as in this series, in which the actors are supposed to present precisely that "artificiality" which the normal cinema audience so often disliked in Fassbinder's films' (Thomsen 1997, p. 136). But this is not only for generic reasons, but also because the performers, with their lapses of consciousness and vacant stares, are supposed to resemble disoriented TV presenters, due to their double roles as both real characters and explicitly televisual simulations.

In the beginning of the series, the scientist behind the simulation, Professor Vollmer (Adrian Hoven), is shown having a nervous breakdown, aggressively challenging government representatives at a meeting to look at their own reflections, and claiming that all they are is a reflection that someone else controls. Shortly after, he collapses in a corridor illuminated by flashing lights and accompanied by stabbing discordant electronic sounds that keep returning in future moments of anomaly as the story progresses. His assistant, Fred Stiller (Klaus Löwitsch), is shortly afterward given control of the computer simulation, at a party in the high-tech apartment of the manager of the laboratory, Herbert Siskins (Karl-Heinz Vosgerau). Soon, the head of security, Günther Lause (Ivan Desne), suddenly disappears, only, no one other than Fred remembers that he ever existed. The purpose of the simulation is revealed as a form of future-oriented opinion polling, to know what social trends will occur in the future, but it is equally clear that this prescience has commercial value in terms of market research, and that Siskins is quite happy to sell the computer's predictive capacities to private interests, such as the steel industry, with whom he has some shady dealings. As such, there is a displaced presentation of different conceptions

of television itself as a public good benefitting everybody, as Fred would have it, or as a corporate capitalist technology designed to maximize profits at the expense of public interests.

As anomalies pile up over the first part of the series, leading many characters to suppose that Fred is also undergoing a nervous breakdown, he also begins a romantic liaison with Vollmer's daughter, Eva (Mascha Rabben), who turns out to be an agent from the higher realm that has engineered the simulation that 'reality' is gradually revealed to be. At the end of the first part of the series, Fred is confronted by the appearance of one of the identity units from the simulation model, 'Einstein' (Gottfried John), in his own reality, who reveals what Fred had come to suspect, namely that this reality is also a simulation controlled by a higher civilization. In the second part, Fred Stiller is on the run, both from the organization and from the police, but is still being helped by Eva Vollmer. Ultimately, he plans a sacrificial action, in the context of an attempted popular uprising against the management of the lab that would not be out of place in *Eight Hours*. In allowing himself to be machine-gunned by the laboratory's security officers, he is simultaneously 'rescued' and, straining narrative credibility, joins Eva in the higher realm that created his simulation and becomes the 'real' Fred Stiller, while the latter dies in his place, a torturous narrative resolution that is only made possible through the genre of science-fiction.

Of course, there are many differences in style between this television programme and *Eight Hours*, notably, those dictated by the genre conventions of science-fiction. In many respects, however, the science-fiction genre is only a mask of the real aesthetic strategy involved. Other than the simulation computer itself, there is almost nothing in the way of special effects, even by the standards of the 1970s. The sense of a futuristic setting is only given via the use of modernist architecture and décor, featuring multiple reflective surfaces, circular forms, screens, and mirrors; moments of dysfunction are indicated by an orange flashing light, unnatural camera movements, and especially via the use of stabbing electronic sounds that are presented as much internal psychological experiences of the main protagonist, as they are of any external reality. In this sense, it is an homage to Godard's *Alphaville* (1965), which is underlined by the cameo appearance of the actor who played the hero of the latter film, Eddie Constantine, in the second part of the series. Like *Alphaville*, *World on a Wire* stages science-fiction as a kind of European film noir, with Fred Stiller corresponding in many respects to the hard-boiled but romantic and poetic Lemme Caution in *Alphaville*. Other than the electronic sound used to give a sense of technological artificiality, the programme is saturated by romantic classical

music, especially in the scenes between Fred and Eva Vollmer. In a sense, it is a remake of *Alphaville* except that, rather than being staged as the battle between a computer as totalitarian, capitalist rationality versus romantic poetry, everything, including painful affective states, is played out within a computer simulation from which there is seemingly no escape.

This romanticism necessarily distances *World on a Wire* from questions of class relations and collective action, and very much follows noir as well as new-wave conventions in remaining tightly focused on the experience of a romantic antihero. Nevertheless, and despite the bourgeois setting, class struggle is suggested, not only via the attempt of his assistant Walfang to start industrial unrest in the laboratory, in order to have Fred reinstated. This is, of course, only a parodic treatment of industrial relations, filtered through the individualizing romantic genres of film noir and science-fiction, in a world in which behaviour is anyway subject to totalitarian control, and in which individual acts of resistance are mere glitches in the electronic circuits that generate behaviour in the first place. Nevertheless, the hypothesis of an artificial and controlled world, is given maximum resonance by Fassbinder in its proximity to television, which is strongly suggested throughout the programme. When Fred first appears at Siskins' party, he passes by a Marlene Dietrich-like performance, and such performances pervade the series as a whole. Siskins, the callous director of the lab, for instance, is revealed to have a simulation as a tacky vaudeville performer in the simulated world, programmed by Fred himself, and clearly revealing his contempt of the former. More generally, all the characters – from Gloria Fromm (Barbara Valentin) the 'blonde bombshell' who is always introduced in terms of her physical measurements, to the intellectual psychotherapist Franz Hahn (Wolfgang Schenck), to the trusty colleague Walfang (Günter Lamprecht) –, all embody televisual stereotypes whose lapses in their roles, artificial speech, and vacant looks, emphasize the extent to which they are televisual simulations rather than real people.

The existential dilemma of how to act in a world that is preprogrammed, and how to live with this knowledge is explicitly related to inhabiting a media and thoroughly mediated environment, closely resembling that of television, which is constantly suggested through the multiplications of mirrors, reflecting surfaces, and video screens. The recirculation of many of the key performers from *Eight Hours* also supports such a counter-intuitive reading; Gottfried John, the romantic lead of the earlier series, becomes Einstein as the identity unit who struggles to escape his preprogrammed destiny, while Klaus Löwitsch transitions from progressive factory boss to the romantic suffering antihero at the centre of the later series. It is as if after



Fig. 23: Fassbinder's *World on a Wire* (1973).

the working-class utopia of *Eight Hours*, Fassbinder is deliberately reminding the viewer that, in a world thoroughly mediated by television, such utopias are impossible, as the programming runs too deep. This is also supported by the fact that, in contrast to Fred, almost all the other characters accept this thoroughly mediated world and the stereotypes via which they inhabit it, notably Gloria Fromm who tells Fred, after manipulating him into her bed in order to entrap him, that she cannot leave Siskins because 'I am one of his puppets, but what's even worse I love it, at least at night' (Fassbinder 1973). This is not only a consistent Fassbinder theme about the seductions of relations of power and manipulation, but is also applicable to the entire world of simulation they both inhabit, and the world of television. Even when people are aware that they should resist this world, they secretly love being manipulated, being in the power of another, and therefore are highly unlikely to resist the organization and programming of their everyday lives; at the very least, the programme is a powerful illustration of Debord's thesis of *The Society of the Spectacle*.

This theme of politics as manipulation is repeated throughout Fassbinder's films, notably in those dealing with urban guerrilla movements, such as *Mother Küsters* or *The Third Generation* (1978). The latter project in particular, that was intended to be made for television but was considered too controversial by WDR, is very much a reprise of the kinds of settings and environment of *World on a Wire* and again places computer technology at the centre. However, unlike the romanticism and ultimate escape embodied in the antihero of the latter, *The Third Generation* presents a world in

which there is literally no escape, since even gestures of rebellion have been preprogrammed and serve market forces, which was Fassbinder's reading of what German guerrilla movements had become by this time: 'in the last analysis, terrorism is an idea generated by capitalism to justify better defense mechanisms to safeguard capitalism' (Fassbinder 1992, p. 37). In this film, in order to present the situation in which formerly politically motivated urban guerrilla movements had degenerated into self-perpetuating terrorist violence, Fassbinder proposes the fiction that these groups were, in fact, working for an entrepreneur involved in the development of computers. In this regard, Kittler and other media theorists have argued that groups such as the RAF did indeed play a role in accelerating the use of computer technologies for surveillance and counter-intelligence and this may, in fact, have been their main contribution to socio-technical change (see Kittler 2012, pp. 386-388).³ Of course, this fiction is a hypothesis, and one that does not need to be literally true in order to support the idea that political violence, once separated from any functioning political movement, actually functions in the support of the state and capitalism rather than against it, a hypothesis already presented in earlier chapters. We could go so far as to say this is a fundamentally accelerationist insight, one that can be found in work as divergent as that of Baudrillard, Virilio, Kittler, and Fassbinder himself.

In *World on a Wire*, there is a different if related account of technological manipulation, with more affinities to Deleuze's presentation of societies of control, a world in which behaviour is not disciplined but programmed, and desire is modulated to reproduce existing power relations that are technocratic and non-localizable. After all, in a world that produces endless simulations, and may itself be simulated, there is no limit to how far the rabbit hole of control may go. Nevertheless, there is, at the same time, the suggestion in the series that, within the reality of being the puppets of an obscure technocratic power, there is the possibility of acting otherwise. This suggested less by the impossible romantic transcendence of the ending in which Fred literally ascends from his dead body, shown in a series of slow aerial tracking movements, upwards to the 'real world' where he can live out his love with Eva in reality or, at least, in a higher simulation model, but more in the adoption of an attitude of resistance and solidarity that Fred displays throughout the series, albeit with several lapses. The reference to this film in *In a Year of Thirteen Moons*, the most intimate and personal of Fassbinder's works, suggests a painful process of awareness that, even if it is incapable of heroic *The Matrix* (1999)-style resistance, is still able to manifest in gestures of refusal. Whether such gestures could become collective and socially effective, rather than individual and self-destructive

is, however, not given any affirmative presentation in either of these works by Fassbinder. Nevertheless, *World on a Wire* presents in its own way a whole theory of mediation and simulation that, unlike the later virtual-reality franchise *The Matrix*, is thoroughly immanent and therefore bypasses the critique of reverting to a Platonic model of simulation as Baudrillard critiqued *The Matrix* of doing (see Baudrillard 2004, n.p.). Despite the apparent transcendence of the ending in which the main character has supposedly ascended to 'reality', earlier dialogue suggests that this too may well be only a higher-level simulation. The thinness of this real world, of which we see only the interior of a nondescript room, is hardly convincing of having any more ontological solid ground than the simulation from which Fred has just escaped, and so corresponds more closely to the Baudrillardian model of simulation fully supplanting and annulling the real. As Thomsen puts it 'the effect is of such naïve pathos that one still sees the characters as puppets, no longer in a science fiction film, but in a Hollywood melodrama' (Thomsen 1991, p. 136).

Godard and Miéville's, as well as Fassbinder's work on television are only some of the projects of radical auteur television that took place in the 1970s; for example, and as I have indicated elsewhere (Goddard 2013, pp. 31-58), Raúl Ruiz's work in the 1970s constitutes another example of radical television in the 1970s, via a combination of television films, art documentaries, short commissions, and radical subversions of both history and documentary programming, somewhere between the uncompromising experimentalism of Godard and Miéville, and the more populist work of Fassbinder. The long list of 'filmmakers' making television work for the INA in France, as well as key German filmmakers like Farocki and Kluge, along with the other producers of the *arbeiterfilm* like Christian Ziewer and Helma Sanders-Brahm, are only some of the examples of a widespread experimentation with the radical potential of both the medium and its institutions. This kind of television work, however, was only possible due to specific media ecologies based on institutional conditions and policies in which, for a brief period of time, public-service television in Europe opened itself up to radical aesthetic and political experimentation, in strictly limited contexts. These ecologies rapidly came to an end by the end of the 1970s, both for the WDR and the INA as well as other initiatives, in concert with the decline of radical political movements and the implantation of more commercial models of television, which were not without their impacts on public-service television itself as it was increasingly obliged to compete with commercial enterprises for audience share. For the most part, however, radical television could not count on this kind of public support of the state and had to operate

via considerably more marginal media ecologies. This was certainly the case in the US where public television itself had a relatively minor role in the broader television ecology, and was also considerably more conservative than some of its European public-television counterparts. Nevertheless, partly due to legal anomalies surrounding the development of cable TV, and partly due to countercultural desires to take advantage of this situation, what became known as guerrilla television did indeed develop there, in a way that was more akin to pirate radio, than to public-service television. This was necessarily a markedly different conception, politics, and practice of radical television than the European *auteur* television examples that have been examined so far.

Ecologies of Guerrilla Television: Ant Farm, Raindance Corporation, TVTV, and *Radical Software*

The videotape begins with a collage of mainstream news coverage of a range of 4th of July events, from traffic build-ups to fireworks, to the award of a medal to Bob Hope, before crossing 'live' to what is introduced as a 'media event [...] or what used to be called a publicity stunt', if not 'the ultimate media event' ('Action News' cited in Boyle 1986, p. 80). We then cross live to what seems to be the preparation of a demented sporting event, the driving of a high-speed racing car into a pile of burning TVs, complete with merchandise, audience vox pops, televisual staging, and a VIP introduction from none other than a resurrected President John F. Kennedy. Technical information is given on the 'art vehicle's' makeover from an El Dorado convertible, into a video-equipped and guided 'dream car', complete with gigantic tail fin. The fake John F. Kennedy, referring critically to the Vietnam War, Watergate, and the domination by economic elites, urges the public to oppose the forces that have assumed control of the American system: 'Militarism, monopoly, and the mass media [...] television, because of its technology and the way it must be used can only produce autocratic political forms, hierarchies and hopeless alienation' (Ant Farm 1975). People are controlled by the control of information and captured in an addiction to the pervasiveness of television and its commercial interests.

This media critique is followed by comparisons between the 'patriotic' Ant Farm participants and great pioneers like Lewis and Clark, and Armstrong and Aldrin. The speech is concluded by the statement that 'the world may never understand what was created here today, but the image will never be forgotten' (Ant Farm 1975). The patriotic tone is continued as the



Fig. 24: Ant Farm's *Media Burn* (1975).

drivers place their hands on their hearts, accompanied by the US national anthem, before the coverage of the event itself, as the modified car speeds into the piled-up television sets in flames, captured from multiple angles including the video camera mounted inside the car, and also shown in slow-motion, very much in the spirit of daredevil stunts by Evel Knievel. The video concludes with bemused mainstream-television coverage, questioning whether this event constitutes art or culture: all the reporter covering the event is sure of is his own name. The presenters conclude 'now that is weird [...] it's over our heads' (Ant Farm, 1975).

While produced by the multimedia art collective, Ant Farm, who would go on the same year to restage the Zapruder footage of the Kennedy assassination in *The Eternal Frame* (1975), *Media Burn* is more an act of guerrilla television than it is a work of art. Staged entirely in accordance with televisual codes, including news coverage, political speeches, and sports events, *Media Burn* is an active critique of television by means of television, operating via several levels of feedback. Not only does it mimic televisual codes, but it does so in order to become worthy of television coverage, which is then incorporated into the work itself. However, there is a serious side to this parody, as evident in the speech of the 'artist/president', which, while perfectly capturing the cadences of political discourse in general and John F. Kennedy in particular, constitutes a radical critique of political and economic elites, and specifically the mass media, especially television's role in reinforcing their power.

While in substance no different to many critiques of the medium, its enactment both *against* television, in terms of the stack of television sets

that are to be destroyed, and *as* television, in both the staging as a televisual event and the incorporation of actual television coverage, renders it a immanent critique with considerably more resonance than the mere frustrated individual gesture of putting one's foot through the television screen. While, in one sense, this action is little more than a sophisticated collective staging of this gesture of individual refusal, doing so in such a spectacular manner motivates the resources of the spectacle against itself, in a joyful event of staged symbolic sabotage and destruction. At the very least, it suggests a concept of television different to its commercial and institutional norms, and an alternative mode of television:

MEDIA BURN brilliantly contrasts the conventions of the TV news with an alternate version of a media event. [...] The very content of the media burn event is a parody of American culture as brought to you by television. [...] Playfully entertainingly, they address a macho American fascination with destruction, domination, power, and information control (Boyle 1986, p. 82; emphasis in original).

Such alternative modes of television were already proliferating at this time, under the name of guerrilla television (to which Ant Farm was also a key contributor), even if rarely in as spectacular a fashion as in 'Media Burn'.

Guerrilla television, while produced by a similar convergence of cultural and technical factors as video art, was distinct in its avoidance of purely aesthetic experimentation and its embrace of, rather than disdain for, the possibilities of broadcast or at least narrow-cast transmission. If it shared with video art the desire to constitute an alternative to television, made possible by the commercial diffusion of Portapak in the late 1960s, this was conceived of as an alternative within television, albeit usually at its margins in the form of public-access television. In the beginning, however, these video practices did not have the clear distinctions they do now, especially since it was only over time that video art became a permanent feature of the art gallery, and, in the beginning, art and activist producers of video tended to be part of the same nascent video scenes.

Such was certainly the case for the influential exhibition *Television as a Creative Medium* held in the Howard Wise gallery on 57th Street in Manhattan in 1969. While far from the first exhibition of video art, this exhibition was unique in combining works by such pioneers of video art as Nam June Paik, with newer artists more interested in the creative potentials of video as an alternative form of television, such as Frank Gillette and Ira Schneider. The latter pair's work in the exhibition, *Wipe Cycle* (1969), remixed present

and delayed video footage of gallery visitors with material from broadcast TV and prerecorded tapes and ‘consisted of a bank of nine monitors, in a three by three configuration, with four screens displaying pre-recorded “off air” material, and the other five showing “live” and delayed video sequences of the exhibition itself’ (Meigh-Andrews 2006, p. 62). According to Chris Meigh-Andrews, ‘[w]ith this influential and innovative installation, Gillette and Schneider were concerned to present an experience that would break the conventional single screen TV perspective, by providing a complex mix of live images and multiple viewpoints in real time’ (2006, p. 62).⁴ It was described by Schneider as:

a live feedback system that enables a viewer standing in his environment to see himself not only NOW in time and space, but also 8 seconds ago and 16 seconds ago, and these are in juxtaposition and in flux. In addition, he sees standard broadcast images which come on at periods alternating with his live image, and also two programmed shows which are collage-like [...] there’s a juxtaposition between the now of the person, the individual, with other elements of information about the Universe and America (Schneider cited in Boyle 1997, p. 10).

Viewers were confronted with, on the bank of nine televisions sets, a heterogeneous array of spaces and times, beginning from the here and now ‘creating what was called at the time a “media ecology” out of the production and distribution of images and information’ (Hanhardt 1986, p. 19). This mix of the everyday with the national and the cosmic was fairly typical of the mindset of the early pioneers of guerrilla television as we shall see. Just as important as the works that were shown in the exhibition were the meetings between the disparate people that coalesced into the emergent video community; significantly, journalist Michael Shamberg was also there, and his meeting with Frank Gillette and Paul Ryan, Marshall McLuhan’s former research assistant, would lead directly to the formation of the alternative think tank Raindance Corporation and its publications *Radical Software* and *Guerrilla Television*.⁵

Employing the typical humour of this period, Raindance Corporation was founded as a parodic inversion of the Rand corporation, ‘as an umbrella foundation to promote and disseminate ideas about video as a radical alternative to centralized television broadcasting through the activities of production, publication and distribution of alternative video work’ (Meigh-Andrews 2006, p. 62). According to Shamberg, this was originally Gillette’s idea, but it was enthusiastically adopted by himself and the other

cofounders: 'R & D for research and development – Rand, Rain-Dance. I made up the explanation, he made up the name. Also Raindance is ecologically sound anticipatory design' (Shamberg in Boyle 1997, p. 11). The theoretical constellation presiding over this initiative was a strongly media-ecological one, with Marshall McLuhan, Gregory Bateson, Buckminster Fuller, and, perhaps surprisingly, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin as its leading lights.

As this was more or less the same theoretical configuration that was behind Gene Youngblood's *Expanded Cinema*, it is hardly surprising to find his writing on video included in the first volume of *Radical Software*. Certainly, the founders of Raindance shared a similarly ecological and cosmic view of the importance of technical images, albeit with a narrower focus on video, and, as Boyle puts it in *Radical Software*, they 'announced their intentions, not only for the future of video but for Planet Earth' (1997, p. 11). Teilhard de Chardon's notion of the cosmic evolution of the noosphere towards global unity based on cooperation and good was especially significant for these early video pioneers, a concept that, despite its Christian origins, was more or less an updated version of Spinoza's cultivation of joyful affects and the goal of attaining common, divine knowledge: 'the irresistible altruism of Teilhard's vision inspired video freaks out to expand consciousness as well as Christians in search of God. Some of the best motives of the video underground reflected this cosmic vision' (Boyle 1997, p. 12). Even



Fig. 25: Guerrilla Television manual.

as theoretically rigorous and cultural studies informed a writer as Sean Cubitt, writing in the early 1990s, saw the attraction of this theoretical constellation, however naïve in some respects, as a new and vibrant twist on the lineage of technological determinism that he also discerns in Walter Benjamin:

this countercultural technoanarchism is in many ways the legitimate heir of Benjamin's more desperate themes. [...] If that pre-revolutionary nihilism takes the form, in Youngblood, of the actions of cultural guerrillas, that at least indicates an intuitive grasp of the importance of cultural struggle (Cubitt 1993, p. 100).

Radical Software combined this cosmic, ecological approach to video with more pragmatic issues, as can be clearly seen in the contents of its first issue. Divided into sections on 'Hardware', 'Software', and 'Environment', contributors range from key members of Raindance such as Frank Gillette and Paul Ryan, along with Gene Youngblood and Nam June Paik, and an interview with Buckminster Fuller. Subjects range from technical ones, such as a spirited critique of Electronic Video Recording (EVR) and a discussion of cable television, to accounts of recent video work to some of the more cosmic themes already alluded to. However, beyond the individual contributions to the volume, what stands out is an ecological approach to video which is presented clearly in the volume's introduction, and also expressed in the layout of the publication itself that, while beginning in a fairly standard linear way, increasingly involves experiments with layout, diagrams, and typography to mirror the video experience and experiments it presents. Significantly, it also lists the videotapes available for distribution from both Raindance and Videofrecks, another like-minded guerrilla television outfit, as well as giving space to announce the activities of other video-makers and upcoming video events.

In the anonymous introduction, the obsession with 'hardware' in the form of 'land, labour or capital' (Raindance Corporation 1970, p. 1), is contrasted with 'software' as the 'access to information and the means to disseminate it' (p. 1), which, it is asserted, is where real power lies. Given this privileging of software over hardware, the battle needs to be fought over structures of information: **'unless we design and build alternate information structures which transcend and reconfigure the existing ones, other alternate systems and lifestyles will be no more than products of the existing process'** (Raindance Corporation 1970, p. 1; emphasis in original). For the editors of *Radical Software*, as for the equally

countercultural animators of the Whole Earth Catalogue in San Francisco, the advent of computing is not just the equipping of an old and corrupt culture, but the emergence of a new one 'because we are computerized' (Raindance Corporation 1970, p. 1). This has several consequences, not least of them being a pragmatic orientation that partially subverts the technological determinism of McLuhan: **'neither by wholly rejecting or unconditionally embracing technology – but by humanizing it; allowing people access to the informational tools they need to shape and reassert control over their lives'** (Raindance Corporation 1970, p. 1; emphasis in original).

While this may sound humanist and anthropocentric, it is really an ecological approach to technology, which is claimed, in a direct reference to McLuhan, as the only way to 'cure the split between ourselves and our extensions' (Raindance Corporation 1970, p. 1). This media-ecological viewpoint would be taken up quite differently in academic circles like Neil Postman's Media Ecology Association, but, for the animators of Raindance, the key mean advocated was independent video practice, which was one of the few arenas in which media technology could be appropriated for other uses. Unlike the control systems of broadcast networks, which have too much centralization and too little feedback, portable videotape systems can function in an opposite sense as responsive organizations of communication: 'Videotape can be to TV, what writing is to language [...] **Soon, accessible VTR Systems and videocassettes (even before CATV opens up) will make alternate networks a reality'** (Raindance Corporation 1970, p. 1). Typically, even this heady introduction soon gets down to more pragmatic concerns, such as information distribution and, indeed, reveals that the publication was originally to have had the more modest title of *The Video Newsletter*, with the fundamental idea to 'bring together people who were already making their own television, attempt to turn on others to the idea as a means of social change and exchange, and serve as an introduction to an evolving handbook of technology' (Raindance Corporation 1970, p. 1). To this end, they even went so far as to introduce their own version of anti-copyright, indicated by an x inside a circle, and that applied to all work within the publication other than that already copyrighted elsewhere.⁶

Given the ecological, cosmic, and frankly hippy aspects of this project, it may seem unclear to what the meanings of terms such as 'radical' and even 'guerrilla television' really refer; certainly, they seem to have different meanings than how they were used by the left, even the new left. This can be clarified, to some extent, by looking at the major Raindance publication

Guerrilla Television that appeared in 1971. In a sense, this was the synthesis of the evolving processual handbook of *Radical Software* into a form that could reach a wider audience beyond the immediate community of video practitioners and theorists. Designed by Ant Farm and ostensibly written by Michael Shamberg, this manual was a distillation of the collective experimentation and thought that *Radical Software* had been documenting since its emergence. *Guerrilla Television* also combines the speculative and theoretical with the pragmatic and technical, but this time via two sections, a conceptual 'Meta-Manual', followed by the more practical 'Manual' itself, which is still not averse to some of the McLuhan/Fuller/Bateson derived theorizing about information systems that can be found in the first section, while, at the same time, giving concrete advice about Portapaks, working with kids, community video, videotape as an analytic tool, and economic support systems. Before all this begins, however, the issue of how 'guerrilla' and 'radical', guerrilla television is, is confronted directly in a short section entitled 'Process Notes':

The use of the word 'guerrilla' is a sort of bridge between an old and a new consciousness. The name of our publication, **Radical Software**, performs a similar function. Most people think of something 'radical' as being political, but we do not. We do, however, believe in post-political solutions to cultural problems which are *radical* in their discontinuity with the past. (Shamberg 1971, n.p.)

This comes after a discussion of prior uses of the term, such as by Paul Ryan in the form of 'cybernetic guerrilla warfare', that was then simplified by the mainstream media into 'guerrilla television' and by prominent Yippie Abbie Hoffman in *Steal this Book* (1971), who presents it in the limited sense of disrupting official broadcasts with your own transmitter. Shamberg aligns himself more with the former idea and rejects 'clandestine physical subversion' in favour of 'open and non-physical, or process, information tools' (Shamberg n.p., 1971). This seeming rejection of the political, however, is only really of a certain conception of politics, and instead enacts a minor cybernetic-information politics, based on decreasing control and increasing feedback via a range of practical tactics and conceptual orientations. For example, one section of the 'manual' is entitled 'How to Bankrupt Broadcast Television: Getting caught, to a media-guerrilla means being labelled' (Shamberg 'Manual', 1971, p. 33). In many respects, this is just as much an exemplary minor politics as that enacted by Radio Alice, only operating via different media, and in a different socio-technical

and political environment. These politics are often borne out in small details, such as the acknowledgement in the same note that the book is published by an imprint owned by CBS, which are strongly critiqued within its pages.

Guerrilla television is therefore presented from the start as an immanent critique, 'within the belly of the beast', but with enough autonomy and distance to have the potential to make 'Media-America' function differently. As such, it is arguably more radical than the new-left examples Shamberg is fond of quoting. For example, he refers to the incident when Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman brought a bunch of hippies and freaks onto the UK David Frost programme, to critique not only the content but the form of Broadcast TV. For Shamberg, despite his sympathy for this message, as long as the TV network controlled the cameras, 'they couldn't get it across' ('Manual' 1971, p. 37). However, on the tape made by the Yippies but not seen by the viewing public, 'the point came across very well' ('Manual' 1971, p. 37).

This is purportedly the fundamental difference between the politics and practice of guerrilla TV and the liberal reformers of broadcast television such as proponents of educational TV: 'the last group in broadcast-TV to watch out for are the reformers. I've already bad-mouthed "Sesame Street" but there's a lot more where that came from' ('Manual' 1971, p. 37). Another new-left example to which Shamberg frequently refers are the Black Panthers, who are, for him, a classic case of getting caught, by surrendering their media image. For Shamberg, the Panthers:

built up an image of armed reaction to what they deemed a repressive culture. This juiced up people to respond to them before they could make their move. [...] White America very logically cut them down, both literally and figuratively because the Panthers lacked the control they needed over media to get the non-belligerent, more constructive part of their message across (1971, p. 33).

Leaving aside the politically problematic aspects of this statement, it reveals that control over media information is political in a more fundamental way than conventional conceptions of politics. Furthermore, it affirms the need for a minoritarian media politics resisting mainstream media from an alternative position, rather than attempting to get radical messages across via mainstream channels. For Shamberg, 'it is the very structure and context of Broadcast-TV which are co-opting' and guerrilla television must reject this context via its own alternative networks. Significantly, for

Shamberg, in *Guerrilla Television*, the most reliable form of distribution is via tape exchange through the mail, despite the promising horizon of the emergent cable television systems. In the situation in which the means of production have become relatively available to the public but the means of distribution are still tightly controlled, 'the only true people's network is the mails. Any medium which can be containerized, (i.e. recorded and stored), like videotape and audiotape [...] can be mailed and received individually' ('Manual' 1971, p. 67). This was, of course, before the opening up of cable television to public-access programming as would be mandated by the FCC in 1972. *Guerrilla Television* insists, in this context, on the revolutionary possibilities of videotape culture in terms of production, duplication, and alternative distribution systems outside of mass-media channels. However, Shamberg is prescient enough to insist on the necessity of public-access developments: 'we need channels of decentralized real-time transmission to feed fewer homes than a broadcast channel, but more than one home at a time. Moreover, the economic base of such a system must be able to sustain a high variety of programming. That is the potential of cable television' ('Manual' 1971, p. 68). In the meantime, however, a wariness is needed towards the existing monopolies of broadcast television: 'I predicted that [...] we would have a chance to air some of our tape but only after TV labelled it something like "Crazy Experimental Far-Out Videotape Makers" so that somehow it would set [it] apart from broadcast-TV instead of posing a real challenge to its structure' ('Manual' 1971, p. 33), which is more or less what in fact happened. This demonstrates a sophisticated awareness of communication structures and their institutionalized, one-way transmission systems that is much more insightful than a good deal of cultural-studies academic research into televisual politics, even if these insights were fairly quickly forgotten in subsequent practice.

In the 'Meta-Manual' section of the book, Shamberg presents the opposition between what he calls 'Media-America' and guerrilla television from a variety of perspectives. Starting from the proposition that 'Americans are information junkies' ('Meta-Manual' 1971, p. 1) Shamberg outlines a number of perspectives based on the thorough mediatization of contemporary life by information structures that extend into neural networks, and how, within this information ecology, 'videotape, particularly portable video systems, can enhance survival and generate power' (1971, 'Meta-Manual' p.2). One aspect of this is the overtaking of hardware by software, and product by process, which has multiple senses, but, above all, the liberation of creative potential, given an active relationship to technology and information. The debt this perspective owes to cybernetics is clear and fully acknowledged,

and many of the terms, such as information as energy, information morphology, and feedback derive directly from the cybernetic thought of Norbert Wiener, Gregory Bateson, and others. For Shamberg, the primary lesson of cybernetics, alongside the actual development of technology is that 'we can no longer differentiate between man and machine. The ecology of America is its technology' (1971, 'Meta-Manual', p. 5). Statements like these can be deceptive unless it is understood that, by technology, Shamberg means something processual and evolutionary rather than fixed or mechanical, as in the nineteenth-century concept of the machine as a purely technical externality. Shamberg is therefore much closer to the Deleuze and Guattarian sense of the machinic as a process at once mechanical and biological, natural and artificial, which is itself a cybernetic conception of the machine:

In the early part of this [twentieth] century studies were actually done to see how man could better mimic mechanical motion. Wiener reversed all that. His studies showed that machines could be understood in the context of animal or biological processes, not vice-versa (1971, 'Meta-Manual' p. 5).

This similarity is further qualified as being due to both animals and machines being responsive to feedback, which is a necessarily ecological conception, since it is a process of adjustment to preceding conditions. The depletion of natural resources and amplification of feedback from industrial technologies such as pollution, necessitate an ecological worldview for Shamberg, but so too does the lack of feedback in Media-America in which the only way of overcoming informational exclusion is via the limited satisfaction of 'mass media therapy' (1971, 'Meta-Manual' p. 12) or performing actions that generate media events, which will then be broadcast on TV. It is this toxic media environment that also makes guerrilla television a necessary form of 'survival modeling'.

One affirmatively cited example of survival modeling is the Whole Earth Catalog, which, with its innovative layout and combination of advocating alternative lifestyles and demystifying technology, is clearly a kindred spirit to guerrilla television. Remaining within the orbit of print, however, only has limited efficacy against the dominance of television. More important to Shamberg are battles over technological formats that either enhance or limit survival, such as the attempt by CBS to develop video technologies like EVR with no record mode. This, for Shamberg, is a clear example of a 'technologically reactionary piece of hardware' (1971, 'Meta-Manual' p. 15) explicitly designed against attempts to take control of the medium via the

range of means outlined in the second part of the book. For Shamberg, what is of interest in the Whole Earth Catalog, as well as in the writings of Buckminster Fuller and Marshall McLuhan, is that they are already 'electronic morphologies', the former as an experience-based information tool and the latter as an indigenous electronic morphology, the rap: 'rapping is a meandering interplay that renders nothing irrelevant and maximizes feedback options' (1971, 'Meta-Manual' p. 24). The ability to rap televisually was needed; this is one way of summing up guerrilla television's strategies against the homogeneity, competitiveness, redundancy, and centralization of network television. More specifically, it entails:

the decentralization of the means of production as well as those of distribution. Portable video systems offer decentralized production, while alternate distribution technologies like Cable-TV and videocassettes mean that small scale, non-mass market information flow can be supported directly by the end user (1971, 'Meta-Manual' p. 33).

This has the potential to short-circuit the extremely limited notion of television as a 'radio with a screen', whose worst examples such as sitcoms like *All in the Family* (1971-1979) Shamberg denounces as 'psychic genocide' (1971, 'Meta-Manual' p. 34). In contrast, guerrilla media came into existence:

to enhance our chances of survival in the information environment. A media-ecology is both prerequisite and concomitant with a natural one. And, *Guerrilla Television*, this book, is a first attempt at a guidebook, one which will hopefully expand as alternate networks allow us to access each other's experiencing (1971, 'Meta-Manual' p. 37).

Clearly, these perspectives are open to a range of critiques, and not only on the obvious grounds of political naiveté and technological determinism. In adopting wholesale and uncritically an essentially cybernetic approach to technology, it glosses over the military origins of cybernetic thought while, in a parallel technologically determinist move, turning a blind eye to both the military and commercial forces behind the development of video. Even the much praised Portapak began life as a means for soldiers in Vietnam to have instant visual feedback and confirmation of bombing raids, and, no sooner were video technologies developed, than they were deployed for purposes ranging from military and civilian surveillance to commercial exploitation. Certainly, Shamberg is aware of these issues, and

critiques many of them, down to the anachronistic design of video cameras unnecessarily resembling the point-and-shoot model of film movie cameras. And yet *Guerrilla Television* alternates between a techno-optimism that seems to expect the medium to correct itself out of necessity for human survival, and the need for tactics as well thought out as a guerrilla campaign, albeit a nonviolent one. This nonviolence is not only an ethical stance, but also an attitude towards technology that rejects ideas of seizure and the destruction of property and products, in favour of a maximization of process. In Deleuze and Guattarian terms, we could say that conventional guerrilla media strategies remain too territorialized on physical sites and hardware, whereas guerrilla television seeks to generate alternate systems that are fully open to process and are therefore more deterritorialized. In this respect, it has close affinities to Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of metallurgic practices as minor science, presented in the first chapter. Yet this also opens it up to critiques of complicity with capitalism; after all, with hindsight, one could write a similar account of *Guerrilla Television* and its pioneers, as Fred Turner did about Stewart Brand and the Whole Earth network in *From Counterculture to Cyberculture* (2006), only in the case of Raindance, the participants ended up as video artists or, in the most extreme case of Shamberg, the producer of major indie and not so indie films such as *The Big Chill* (1983) and *Erin Brokovich* (2000).

Even if we bracket out these futures, there is a slippage in *Guerrilla Television* between the radicality of the guerrilla concept, and a small business entrepreneurialism that is individualized and individualizing in a way that makes it complicit with structures of capitalist control; sometimes it reads as if the way to generate a system of making television by the people and for the people, while dependent on the break-up of corporate and state elites and their control over communication, is only the manifesto for the DIY entrepreneurialism that the term 'guerrilla' increasingly became associated with in fully post-political contexts such as 'guerrilla marketing'. Yet, at other moments, Shamberg is happy to paraphrase Mao in statements like 'ABC, CBS AND NBC do not swim like fish among the people' (1971, 'Manual' p. 9). To further investigate the operation of guerrilla television, in light of these tensions, it is necessary, however, to examine ecologies of guerrilla television in practice. This will be done via the two examples of Videofreeks and Shamberg's Top Value Television (T VTV). It is necessarily very reliant on the excellent research conducted by Deirdre Boyle in *Subject to Change: Guerrilla Television Revisited* (1997), which remains the fullest and most detailed account of guerrilla television practices in the 1970s.

The first real experience of guerrilla television emerged directly out of one of the 1960s counterculture's most famed events, Woodstock. While this had been captured professionally in *Woodstock* (Wadleigh 1970), in a style that, despite its twin-screen approach, was essentially a conventional concert film, David Cort and Perry Teasdale captured the event more informally on Portapak and, in the latter's case, a video surveillance camera. Renaming themselves shortly afterwards Videofreeks, they attempted to sell the footage to CBS by meeting Lou Brill, who worked in the CBS mailroom at the festival. According to Boyle, this connection did not get off to a very promising start, as the CBS producer Don West they finally met was initially more interested in their apparent youth than the material. However, since, by coincidence, CBS was in need of relevant youth programming, especially after the cancellation of their most radical and youth-attuned comedy show the popular *Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*, the Videofreex material seemed to fit the bill perfectly and became the basis for a new show, originally to have been entitled *The Real World*, but was later called *The Now Project* (Boyle 1997, pp. 16-17). This soon proved to be a classic example of the wrong way to go about guerrilla television, as the show was firmly in the control of the network, which soon employed, for limited remuneration, most of the underground video scene to shoot 'assignments' for the show. Paradoxically, it did initiate the sharing of resources and equipment among the New York video community, and began the formation of the network that Shamberg and others would subsequently tap into.

It also served to radicalize the Freex themselves, as when they were on assignment in Chicago, taping interviews with the Chicago 8, as well as interviews with Tom Hayden and Fred Hampton, they soon became aware of how coopted they had become and, according to Boyle, 'had begun to view West as "the enemy"' (1997, p. 19). These tensions only increased and led to embittered positions, and, despite the Videofreex being lavishly bankrolled for equipment and expenses by CBS and by West personally, the Freex produced very little material that was 'watchable' by industry standards, and also insisted on staging the live show in a countercultural, but technically unreliable downtown loft. In the end, the only material West considered of value was the now highly newsworthy interview with Hampton (since he had been killed by the FBI), which the Freex refused to show on political grounds. This led to a last-minute stand-off in which the Freex refused to play a hastily pieced together tape of the interview edited by West himself, and, instead, a kind of impromptu and chaotic happening was staged for both the assorted countercultural audience and the CBS network executives that would clearly never make it onto television. As Boyle describes it, 'the

fundamental issue was control; West had lost long ago whatever control he once had over the project' (1997, p. 24). But this was a Pyrrhic victory for the Freex and, other than amassing some top-range video equipment, it served to underline the cardinal rule of guerrilla television attributed to Paul Ryan that 'VT is not TV'. Following this high-profile encounter with the networks, most of the members of Videofreex retreated to a semi-rural commune, where they engaged in much smaller-scale experiments in live narrow-cast local television, incorporating video feedback in a variety of ways (see Boyle 1997, p. 44).

TVTV emerged out of the Raindance Corporation itself, whose members wanted to try their ideas out in practice, with the negative example of Videofreex's disastrous attempt at producing material for network television firmly in mind, reinforcing the above ethos that was also repeated like a mantra in the pages of *Radical Software* and *Guerrilla Television*, even if, over time, TVTV would go down the same road. Despite the heady rhetoric about the video-sphere, TVTV at first presented itself as an alternative model of current-affairs production, except by relying on mobile Portapaks and video teams who could merge with the scenes they were covering rather than stand apart from and above them like professional anchormen.

In many respects, guerrilla television followed in the wake of cinematic collectives like Newsreel that were set up after the march on the Pentagon to provide alternative coverage of the counterculture and the anti-Vietnam War movement, before branching out to other militant political issues. Importantly, Newsreel not only pioneered an activist, engaged model of shooting in the midst of events, as seen especially in their film of the Columbia University occupation and riot, but also a mail-order distribution network, allowing an alternative dissemination of their films, especially to political and community groups, by means of alternative screening venues. Essentially, Newsreel was more interested in the content and issues it could cover than questions of film aesthetics, or even the political analysis privileged by radical filmmakers like de Antonio and the Dziga Vertov group. Their operations consisted of immediate coverage of significant radical events, producing counter-narratives, the pooling of equipment and resources, and the development of effective alternative distribution mechanisms. Video collectives like People's Video Theater very much followed in these grassroots footsteps, only with the added interest in video as a tool for community organizing and awareness due to its possibilities for instantaneous viewing and feedback. As Boyle puts it, 'using live and taped feedback of embattled community groups as a catalyst for social change' (1997, p. 27). In a similar vein, Challenge for Change, originally begun in

Canada, was an alternative model of community video activism, early on targeting public-access cable television as a possible outlet for their work (see Boyle 1997, p. 34). Other groups like Global Village focused on creating new screening venues for a range of underground video work. However, as we have seen, the concept of guerrilla television, especially as developed by Shamberg, was at a considerable distance from the politics of the new left embraced by Newsreel and People's Video Theater, and, therefore, from notions of grassroots community media and radical politics. As Boyle points out, for practitioners of guerrilla media in Shamberg's sense, 'strikes, sit-ins, marches and the like were chiefly significant as raw material for their cameras' (1997, p. 31) and further distinguishes guerrilla television from grassroots activist media in the following terms:

Shamberg equated guerrilla television with community or grassroots video, but they were actually different species of video activity. Guerrilla television producers professed an interest in community video, but they were generally far more interested in developing the video medium and getting tapes aired, than serving a localized constituency. Grassroots video, by stressing the participation of community members in making their own electronic information, was less concerned with polished 'products' than with animating the 'process' of social change. (Boyle 1997, p. 34)

Given that *Guerrilla Television* constantly emphasizes process over products, this is an incisive criticism that cuts to the core of the contradictions within guerrilla television practices; what is supposed to be all about a people-directed process, becoming very quickly an alternative way of producing a broadcast media product, as TVTV's case demonstrates, albeit less rapidly than the case of Videofreex.

TVTV began its practical activities covering the major political party conventions in 1972, which, by this time, had already become notorious media circuses, as well as focuses for political protest, most spectacularly in 1968. Shamberg joined forces with Allen Rucker of Ant Farm who was experimenting with underground video on the West Coast in affiliation with the Whole Earth Catalog. Since Videofreex were also involved and provided state-of-the-art equipment, this was like an underground video super group bringing together technical wizardry (Videofreex), conceptual research (Raindance), and graphic inventiveness and humour (Ant Farm) (see Boyle 1997, p. 36). Significantly, the project was partially funded by cable companies for the first time, making real *Guerrilla Television's* prophetic claims about the importance of cable for the future of underground video.

Instead of trying to compete with the mainstream network's coverage, TVTV focused reflexively on its own attempt, with the best equipment it could assemble and full press credentials, to cover the event, anticipating that its ability to merge with the crowd and its informal shooting style would enable a different kind of coverage more focused on the atmosphere of the events and the social spaces that mainstream media coverage neglects. The result would be more an open video collage than a formatted piece of current affairs or documentary, and one that would be especially interested in the media's role at such events. Both the tapes of the Democratic convention *The World's Biggest TV Studio* (1972) and the Republican one the same year *Four More Years* (1972), were well-received, allowing for an intimate take on these events that the networks were unable to match. In this, TVTV anticipated the later successes of digital-media activists like Indymedia, as well as citizen journalism initiatives, taking full advantage of small-scale flexibility and access, rather than following rigid network protocols. This success was seen by some, at least, as a failure: what value was there in producing a rougher and more intimate version of mainstream political coverage? Would this benefit the people or be of more interest to the networks and cable providers who could potentially exploit this coverage? From the perspective of Teasdale, one of the Videofreex involved in the project 'Shamberg [...] was a "producer", employing "artists" to produce a conventional idea of television' (Boyle 1997, p. 44). For Teasdale, instead of experimenting with unique capacities of video, for example in live feedback, both these TVTV productions were merely an alternative away of producing content for cable, and ultimately functioned as a way of interesting the networks. Nevertheless, in many respects, these productions epitomized many aspects of the guerrilla ethos. Using small and flexible teams with operational autonomy, taking full advantage of video's ability to capture long durations of material that could be edited later, mingling with the crowd like 'fish in the sea', the TVTV crews enacted a kind of asymmetrical warfare with the networks, putting into practice cybernetic ideas about video as a communicational tool, rather than a mere device for capturing preconceived elements for a news report or current affairs package.

The TVTV coverage of the Republican convention *Four More Years* was even more successful than the first production, facilitated in part by a much less spontaneous and chaotic convention, and also by learning from previous mistakes. TVTV were able to intertwine coverage of the media circus of the convention with the range of outside dissenters, especially the Vietnam Veterans against the War (VVAW) in a deft and convincing way, again outdoing what the networks were able to produce. This time,

the tapes were not only shown on local cable, but on the Westinghouse network, who had five VHF stations and paid \$4,000 to air a reedited tape of both conventions. In a sense, what TVTV achieved was a rediscovery of the successes of the 1960s direct cinema of D. A. Pannebaker and others in which small-scale film equipment, mobility, and fly-on-the-wall intimate coverage could reveal far more than prepackaged formats and network routines. Later, TVTV followed in Pannebaker's footsteps by making a video about a Bob Dylan concert, *Hard Rain* (1976). The instantaneous quality of videotape only made this process even more intimate and direct, and allowed for the incorporation of direct feedback by showing taped participants their footage and incorporating their responses to it. But it also shared some of the same limitations, by emulating a stance of political neutrality, and merely reinvigorating conventional formats; this is part of what made this material easily assimilable and appreciated by the fringes of broadcast television. Despite all the talk of decentralization and control over information structures in *Guerrilla Television*, TVTV definitely aimed to become an alternative mode of television, within the orbit of existing television institutions, and so it was only a matter of time before both their techniques and their productions were fully co-opted. As Boyle put it, 'TVTV effectively abandoned all claims of being an alternate video group when they decided to re-edit the convention tapes for broadcast on Westinghouse television stations' (1997, p. 72) and this was only confirmed by some of its subsequent work, such as the commissioned puff piece on *Rolling Stone* magazine (*TVTV Meets Rolling Stone*, 1973) that was in stark contrast to the excoriating account of the magazine as a counterculture sellout in the pages of *Guerrilla Television* (Shamberg 1971, 'Meta-Manual', pp. 24-25).

Perhaps their last great venture was a videotape of the Guru Maharaj Ji's Millennium 73 event in the Houston Astrodome, entitled *Lord of the Universe* (1974). As this involved a cult of thousands of former flower-power hippies, the Divine Light Mission, surrounding a fifteen-year-old guru claiming to be God, this was perfect material for TVTV's approach. Unlike previous ventures, this was commissioned directly for national broadcast, a direction towards which TVTV were already heading, with proposals for entire evening primetime shows to broadcast 'alternative' video material. As always, combining state-of-the-art equipment, including, this time, a new mobile colour video camera, with extensive event planning, this was the height of TVTV's achievement leading to a moving portrait of the lost 1960s generation: 'if the convention tapes chronicled the demise of the '60s, then *Lord of the Universe* witnessed what became of that lost generation in the '70s' (Boyle 1997, p. 79).

Of course, as Boyle's account of guerrilla television also demonstrates, TVTV was more the exception than the rule in guerrilla television, and, despite its previous revolutionary rhetoric in Raindance, ended up very much more as highly organized reformers than revolutionaries in the US televisual ecology. Other guerrilla media initiatives may have had more limited, local grassroots ambitions, but this enabled them to remain truer to the guerrilla television ethos of maintaining control over information and facilitating public participation and access, for example, by supplementing cable or public-television programming with community tape exchange. Initiatives like Communitube in Minnesota and Broadside TV in the southern states were very much organized in these ways, taking advantage of openings and connections with public-television channels, as well as a temporarily favourable legal context in the development of cable TV.

In 1972, the confluence between the interests of video activists, the federal regulator FCC and cable operators led to the requirement that 'larger cable operators provide public, educational, and governmental (PEG) access channels, equipment and facilities [...] to the communities they served' (Stein 2000, p. 301). While many cable operators were resistant to public access, others saw it as in their interests as a way of currying favour with the FCC, which was ambivalent about the extension of cable TV and had halted its development between 1968 and 1972. For Boyle, this has to be seen in the context of the battle between conventional broadcasters and the emergent cable-TV operators 'early support for public access among the cable operators must be understood in the context of the bitter struggle between broadcasters and cablecasters over the future of television in the United States' (Boyle 1997, p. 195). However, this was a short-lived alliance as, once this mandate was lifted and cable companies had secured their licenses, many of them saw little value in public-access programming and swiftly shut down these channels. Cable television, in general, was interested in distribution more than production or making use of the potentials of its technology for local programming. This meant that 'Cable's extra channel space was to be filled not by local productions but by television reruns and Hollywood films, which could be easily and inexpensively distributed to individual cable systems via satellite' (Stein 2000, p. 302). As Boyle puts it,

[o]nce they were no longer dependent on social experiments like public access, or local-organization programming to buy community good will during franchise bidding wars, many cable systems vigorously struggled out of their earlier access commitments, and lobbied to rescind federal regulations that mandated public-access provisions (1997, p. 196).

Ironically, it was those very cable and satellite channels such as HBO and Showtime, known today for innovative original programming, that were instrumental in shutting down public access in many cable networks. In 1979, the Supreme Court struck down the FCC local-access rules, meaning that only those areas where there was especially strong lobbying for public-access TV, such as New York, were able to continue to get access to cable TV: 'in future, access TV would only survive in communities that lobbied their municipal governments to include public access provisions in the local cable contract' (Stein 2000, p. 302). This was more or less the death knell for public-access television, as well as for most forms of guerrilla television. However, in limited instances, public television was able to provide an outlet for some initiatives like Communitube, TVTV, and Broadside TV, particularly in the latter part of the 1970s.

Of course, there were notable exceptions to this situation such as Broadside TV in Appalachia, which was able to make use of extensive cable infrastructure to become a major provider of local community content, supplementing cable broadcast with videotape exchange (see Boyle 2000, pp. 97-99). In the 1980s, New York's Paper Tiger TV and Deep Dish television network were able to buck the trend away from public access with any political content, beginning with the production of extremely low-budget shows based on media critique, featuring the media theorist Herbert Schiller and invited friends simply reading and deconstructing reactionary media publications like *The New York Times*. Perhaps the strangest outcome of guerrilla television, and one that recaptured some of its anarchic impulse, was Glenn O'Brien's *TV Party* (1978-1982). This show, cohosted by Chris Stein from Blondie and directed by underground filmmaker Amos Poe, was literally a live on-air party featuring denizens of New York's punk and new-wave scenes, and with little in the way of scripting or planning beyond a general usually music-oriented theme. With its participants frequently on drugs and the entire show based on surreal, provocative, and, at times, nonsensical conversations, the atmosphere was somewhere between Warhol's factory and the Videofreex's original ideas about anarchic live guerrilla television. However, this was a different generation for whom the ideals of the 1960s generation were the object of derision, and their *TV Party* had little interest in any politics beyond that of subcultural style.

If guerrilla television, in the more politically radical vein of video activism would make a comeback in the 1980s and 1990s, (partly through the dissemination of much more portable camcorder technologies, as well as prolonged pressure to allow some amount of public-access television to

survive in some areas), this was, in many ways, a legacy of 1970s guerrilla TV's ingenuity, activism, and refusal to accept TV as it was, as the only potential use of video technologies. As Boyle puts it, 'guerrilla television can be found on the public access channels of cable thanks to the hard work and vigilance of community activists who fought, and continue to fight, to keep some channels of public discourse available' (1997, p. 207). Paper Tiger Television in the 1980s was an exemplary case of this guerrilla television impulse, succeeding perhaps better than many of the examples in the 1970s in 'providing an influential theoretic model for video activism, using public-access cable channels and, eventually, satellite distribution' (Boyle 1997, p. 207).

Of course, the advent of digital video technologies and the World Wide Web have completely altered the communications ecology for independent video in ways that make the situation in the 1970s even less recognizable than it was in the 1990s. The sharability of video via multiple streaming sites and social networks, the ease of manipulation of digital editing and a myriad other factors have completely transformed the ecology in which video circulates. Yet the domination of mainstream information channels continues, as does censorship and control over content on proprietary social networks. There are, therefore, still many lessons to be learned from the experience of guerrilla television in the 1970s, both in terms of its notable successes and its dramatic failures, on the importance for control over structures of information, in order to produce any media that is worthy of being considered radical or guerrilla. Paramount among these are the importance of alternative distribution networks, clear focus on key issues and specific publics, and, above all, not to give in to 'the traps posed by broadcast and cable television' (Boyle 1997, p.207), to which we could add today proprietary video sharing and social-media networks.

These experiences of guerrilla television in the United States, as well as of radical television in Western Europe, could also be complemented by examples from other contexts, although these tended to be developed later and in other ways than in the US, either involving more state funding as in Western Europe, or entirely autonomously as video activism, but this tended to develop more from the 1980s onwards, due to the initial difficulties in obtaining affordable video production and editing technologies, and especially independent distribution networks. There were also strains of video art that maintained close links with both television and activism, so much so that, in the beginning, video art and video documentary were often very much part of the same video scene. As late as 1984, for example, Deirdre Boyle's book *Video Classics* was able to

survey 80 key works of both video art and video documentary, and to give reasonably comprehensive coverage of independent video production, at least in the United States. Nevertheless, by this time, video had become pervasive enough as an object of inquiry to be considered already as video culture, as John Hanhardt's collection of the same year did, mixing theoretical debates between Brecht, Benjamin, Enzensberger, and Baudrillard with more empirical engagements, largely with video art. By the early 1990s, Sean Cubitt's work applied theoretical complexity to the field of a now fully formed and heterogeneous range of practices, from television and pop video, to video art and installation, as well as the vestiges of video activism, evident in the titles of books such as *Timeshift: On Video Culture* (1991) and *Videography: Video Media as Art and Culture* (1993). What emerges from these works is a sense of video as a complex and heterogeneous field encompassing the popular, the mainstream, and the alternative.

Of course, this was after a decade in which not only had video gone pop, in the form of the mainstreaming of certain forms of video art and independent productions as programming content, but also pop had gone wholesale into video, with the rapid rise and dissemination of the music video from the beginning of the 1980s. However, in several respects, this had already been prefigured in 1970s video practices. Here, Ant Farm is an exemplary case with its humorous and sacrilegious parody of televisual and other mass-media codes, but many video artists such as Vito Acconci and Richard Serra in the US, David Hall in the UK, and Wojciech Bruszewski and Józef Robakowski in Poland, manifested critical relationships to television and mass media in their works. Towards the end of the decade, however, with greater access to accurate video-editing technology, so-called 'scratch video' started to emerge, often used as much for activist as artistic purposes (see Chris Meigh-Andrews 2006, p. 84). An early example of this was the work of Dara Birnbaum, particularly her celebrated *Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman* (1978). Cutting together and repeating the explosive moments in which Diana Prince (Lynda Carter) transforms into Wonder Woman, mixed with the kitsch disco music that was prevalent on the show's action scenes, Birnbaum was able to 'appropriate broadcast television material as part of a critical strategy' (Meigh-Andrews 2006, p. 170). For Boyle, 'Birnbaum contrasts the supposedly liberated image of woman in this show with the hidden message of her role as a sexual object' (1986, p. 32), via her innovative and deconstructive use of frame accurate video editing. As such, this feminist example of video pop art, which Birnbaum continued in the early

1980s, anticipated both a new pop orientation in video art and the rise of music videos, both of which employed similar editing strategies, albeit usually without the sharp critique of televisual codes for representing gender evident in Birnbaum's work. However great the seeming distance between the radical television of Godard, Miéville, and Fassbinder, the guerrilla television of Videofreex and TVTV, and exponents of activist video art like Ant Farm and Dara Birnbaum, they were all practitioners, in their own contexts and using their specific tactics, of modes of guerrilla communication.

Conclusion: Terms of Cybernetic Warfare

In this book, a considerable distance has been travelled from Latin American guerrilla warfare, to guerrilla television, encompassing, along the way, Western European and North American urban guerrilla cells; Italian and German autonomist radical political movements; British punk music; European free radio stations; militant, collective, and minor modes of cinema in a range of contexts; and radical forms of television. In the process, different concepts and models of guerrilla networks have been articulated, which have necessarily varied according to the context and practices involved. The guerrilla media theory articulated by Mao Tse Tung and Che Guevara, influential as it was, is clearly different to the urban guerrilla concept developed and deployed by the RAF in Germany or the Weather Underground in the US, and this is different again to ideas, practices, and tactics of guerrilla media, whether in radio, film, video or television. Nevertheless, the prevalence of the guerrilla concept across all these fields in the 1970s is striking, and also largely ignored in most media-historical accounts of the period.

This work has also aimed to extend contemporary theoretical orientations into new domains, questioning some of their usual assumptions and foci. For example, media archaeology, in many of its most well-known articulations, stringently avoids political questions, unless these are questions strictly connected to the materiality of media systems. The insistence on technological materiality and non-teleological accounts of media development can, in the worst instances, lead to an entirely depoliticized and ahistorical account of great inventions and their inventors, paying scant attention to the socio-technical machines in which technical inventions are implanted and manifested in various ways. While such tendencies can be found in both Kittler and Zielinski's media theory, so too can resources against this process as was indicated in chapter one. Specifically, this book has taken up ideas of the misuses of technology as can be found in Kittler, and Zielinski's concept of anarchaeology, as a way of discussing heterogeneous uses of media technologies in both political and media movements, more as a form of bricolage and the invention of socio-technical machines, than pure scientific invention. This book is therefore populated more by artists and activists than scientists and inventors, but technologically savvy

ones who epitomize what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'minor science', the forms of practical knowledge these authors especially associate with metallurgists in the pages of *A Thousand Plateaus*.

This description fits very well with pirate radio operators and video pioneers, as well as the critical and minor film practices discussed in the latter parts of the book. But, in a different way, urban guerrilla cells are also involved in a more deadly form of metallurgic practice, in which not only expressive materials like print and audiovisual media, but also appropriated military equipment such as bombs and guns are part of their media ecologies. In all of these cases, guerrilla communications can be understood as 'war machines', but only some of these war machines operate via the means of overt political violence, while others are more concerned with aesthetic violence against dominant mechanisms for seeing and hearing, or, conversely, the affirmative catalyzing of unpredictable experiments in mediation and communication. Whatever concepts and tactics were deployed, all of these media ecologies developed not only media-ecological practices, but also practical media theories, ideas of how media might function otherwise than under dominant regimes of control and censorship.

From a tactical perspective, this book has preferred to deal, for the most part, with these popular knowledges from below that developed in the realm of practice, rather than subsuming these knowledges under a dominant theoretical apparatus. Nevertheless, it is also highly indebted to the thought of Deleuze, Guattari, and Foucault, whose work in the 1970s traversed many of the practices referred to in this book, and provides some of the best conceptual tools for engaging with them. Nevertheless, this relationship between thought and practice is not conceived of in a hierarchical way, but more in terms of proximities between overlapping ecologies of practice in which attuned thinkers were affected by the range of media experimentation and political movements presented in this book, while participants in political, artistic, and media movements also appropriated the best theoretical tools available and deployed them in their respective media ecologies. The explicitly media-ecological thought evident in guerrilla television is not the same as the more Deleuze and Guattarian inflected thinking in Radio Alice, and yet there were clear resonances between the two media ecologies, as well as with others such as the punk phenomenon in the UK.

This leaves the question of where these guerrilla networks can be situated in relation to contemporary media theories and practices. Are these media ecologies of mere historical curiosity, or do they have something of value to transmit to contemporary digital media practices? Do the concepts they

give rise to have anything to say in the context of post-Anthropocene media theory, where media archaeology, media ecologies, new materialisms, accelerationism, and, above all, digital and post-digital media theories circulate? As already stated, the debts to both media archaeology and media ecologies in this book are both clear and taken up in a critical manner. In fact, a post-Guattarian take on media ecologies is the primary means used to divert media archaeology in a more social and political direction, in conjunction with a range of concepts from different sources that are broadly materialist and, at different times, communist or anarchist in orientation, especially following the inspiration of creative autonomy movements. At the very least, this book should demonstrate that the guerrilla movements and guerrilla media of the 1970s cannot be neatly summed up as so many instances of 'folk politics' as Srnicek and Williams would have it, but rather, in many instances, were committed to instigating revolutionary social and political transformation beyond the horizon of capital.¹

But perhaps the most direct yet subterranean encounter of this book is with the media theory of Alexander Galloway, which, while taking a good deal from Deleuzian thought, is highly disparaging of most of its contemporary deployments, especially in relation to contemporary digital media. More specifically, Galloway has a tendency to invoke guerrilla warfare in the context of contemporary media politics. In *The Exploit*, for example, Galloway and Eugene Thacker subsume guerrilla movements, terrorism, and new social movements under the concept of the 'asymmetrical conflict' of grassroots networks against entrenched power systems (Galloway and Thacker 2007, p. 14) and go on to claim that the conditions for this kind of conflict are no longer applicable in fully networked regimes of power: '*contemporary political dynamics are decidedly different from those in previous decades: there exists today a fearful new symmetry of networks fighting networks*' (2007, p. 15, emphasis in original). The conclusion to this is that 'a wholly new topology of resistance must be invented that is as asymmetrical in relation to networks, as the network was in relation to power centres' (2007, p. 22). On the one hand, the entire project of *The Exploit* is an extension of guerrilla theory into the era of digital networks, but it is an inconsistent one that, at times, allows for the heterogeneity of the network form and, at others, seems to model it reductively on the architecture of existing digital networks, and specifically the Internet.

The key here is the concept of protocol, which, for Galloway, is how control is able to exist in the distributive condition brought about by the network decentralization of power. Essentially, here, Galloway follows a model inherited from Foucault and Deleuze, via Hardt and Negri's *Empire*

(2000) that distinguishes between centralized sovereign power, the decentralized power of modern disciplinary societies with their specific sites of institutional practices, and, finally, the fully networked, distributed power of the digital, information era. The analysis of the latter is especially inspired by Deleuze's fragmentary yet prescient 'Postscript on the Societies of Control' (Deleuze 1992b, pp. 3-7). These regimes are less a strict historical lineage than different diagrams of power, which become dominant in a given sociohistorical context. What Galloway adds to these diagrams is a good deal of technical specificity, specifically in relation to digital technologies, the development of which, of course, Deleuze in the early 1990s could only imagine. In particular, the concept of distributed control is mapped immanently onto the technical architecture of the Internet, to show how, while this architecture is radically distributed and distributive, it is still hierarchical, corresponding to the tension between the horizontal TCP/IP connectivity protocol, and the hierarchical Domain Name System (DNS). While Galloway admits that both modes of technical standardization and protocol predate digital technologies, he insists that, in digitally distributed technologies, these function in a new way, allowing for a novel form of control that is not only decentralized but distributed, meaning no longer localizable in even multiple centres. The significance of this for the current study is the one already introduced in the discussion of *The Exploit* that, if networks of resistance assume centralized or even decentralized but not distributed models of power, then they are likely to miss their target. In this, Galloway is only updating, as he acknowledges, the pioneering work of Critical Art Ensemble who, already in the 1990s, proposed that territorial conceptions of power and 'certain (leftist) oppositional techniques [are] misdirected and (*worse*) outdated' (Galloway 2004, p. 150). Clearly, some of what both CAE and Galloway had in mind were the kind of guerrilla tactics examined in this book, which either seemed to target physical sites or institutions of power, operating via strategies that, in Galloway's terms, may have been decentralized but were rarely distributed. Beyond this, are two key assumptions for Galloway: firstly that it is necessary but not sufficient for strategies of resistance to be not only networked, in an era of distributed network power, but also to be themselves distributed; and secondly that these strategies need to operate as a kind of counter protocol rather than operating against protocol, something he detects in selected practices of hacking, tactical media, cyberfeminism and Internet art.

Such a viewpoint, while both necessary in the specific tactical situation of CAE in the 1990s, and for a much needed debunking of myths about digital networks in the 2000s in terms of both dematerialization and pure

rhizomatic freedom, are risky if applied too cleanly to the kinds of guerrilla networks discussed in this book. Firstly, as Galloway admits, such diagrams or regimes are messy, and themselves unevenly distributed and implanted, so it is a mistake to see the distributive model of power as operative in all instances; disciplinary institutions continue to function into the 21st century as do centralized instances of the power of life and death of the sovereign, depending on the geopolitical and technological context. The diagram of the society of control has certainly developed from being a mere tendency to being actualized in a number of arenas, from globally networked computing to networked warfare, but this does not mean that states, leaders, and bureaucracies have ceased to exist; perhaps they have even multiplied. Secondly, this tripartite model of technologies, practices, and exercises of power is itself too clean in that there are many instances in between; electronic technologies like analog video, for example, no longer correspond to the representational, mechanical paradigm of film and photography, being more relational, and yet cannot be seen as fully networked in the ways digital networks are. Yet, as Galloway acknowledges they certainly have their own standards and protocols. Ultimately, despite all the caveats, Galloway's account ascribes a radical novelty to distributed digital networks that were already anticipated in a variety of ways by guerrilla networks in the 1970s.

The model of guerrilla warfare introduced in chapter two, was already a form of nomadic media theory, suggesting that a small guerrilla force can succeed against a much more powerful enemy by being un-localizable and decentralized. The so-called *foco* theory was one example of this, but so too were various practices of clandestinity practiced in Western European, largely urban, contexts. Whether this was in the instance of the RAF blending into the anonymous West German landscape of decentralized highways and tower blocks, or the June 2nd movement's ability to merge with the Berlin counterculture, sometimes remaining undetectable in plain sight, these were both nomadic strategies, even if both would be outperformed by developments in computer technologies instigated as a supplementary form of control to more conventional roadblocks and emergency policing. Targets were also variable from the more territorial ones of the Italian Red Brigades, first focused on northern Italian factories, then on taking the conflict 'to the heart of the state', which did, indeed, turn out to be highly misdirected, especially against an already clandestine 'second state', itself deploying terrorist methods. Other groups were more diversified in their actions, moving from disciplinary sites like army bases, or sites of mass consumption, to vectors of mobility like aeroplanes, as the stakes of the

struggle escalated. However, more anarchic movements like the June 2nd Movement also engaged in unpredictable actions of mass redistribution, while the Weather Underground engaged in a variety of actions, whose objects were increasingly symbolic and communicative, and designed to deliver a well thought-out message, including the message that a nomadic underground still existed.

Autonomy movements adopted quite different tactics, based much more on dispersal within a broad social movement that could emerge anywhere, and also focused on emergent modes of communication, from creative and direct action on the streets to pirate media, especially radio. This was a much more networked and cybernetic mode of resistance, dispensing with the fetishization of military formations and discipline, and instead opening up new spaces of communication that were explicitly nonhierarchical. However, due to the inevitable centralization of available technology, means of communication like pirate radio were all too localizable, and, as in the example of Radio Alice, provided the means for the authorities to go straight to the heart of the movement, at least in Bologna. Furthermore, being distributed within a broad movement was not effective against emergency police powers and the willingness to arrest masses of people assumed to be connected with acts of political violence, however great the distance between their respective political practices. This is abundantly clear in the arrest of Antonio Negri, for example, based on the claim that he was the mastermind behind the Red Brigades' Aldo Moro kidnapping. Nevertheless, autonomist modes of organization continued to work in some instances like squatting and other urban movements, especially in northern Europe throughout subsequent decades.

Questions of decentralization were dealt with quite differently in radical media practices themselves, from the formation of multiple small collectives, some of which immediately prioritized questions of distribution. However, there were strong difference in the ways these tactics were played out in different contexts; while groups like Newsreel and some forms of guerrilla television emphasized distribution via alternative networks, others preferred to find alternative spaces for radical content within existing media networks, as in the quite different examples of de Antonio's anarchival filmmaking, Godard and Miéville's television work, and TVTV, despite the latter's emergence out of theories of cybernetics, and advocacy of tape exchange and radical independence from 'Media-America'. Certainly, there were notable failures in all of these approaches but also some remarkable successes, even if they cannot necessarily be evaluated in terms of measurable sociopolitical results. In all of these cases, there were ecologies

of practice involving specific material technologies, and in relation to a broader socio-technical environment, which, in some instances, they were able to radically affect, even if only in an ephemeral way.

What these multiple experiments suggest is less a naiveté on the part of their participants, a non-realization of the shifting modes of power towards more decentralized forms, rather than a range of forms of collectivity to confront this situation of change. In such a context, while it is certain that some degree of networked decentralization was necessary to confront ever more elusive forms of power with limited resources, it was not necessarily clear what form this networked decentralization should take. In particular, guerrilla networks, while decentralized in some respects, such as adopting clandestinity or a decentred and collective model of production, might be more effective by retaining certain foci, even if these foci might be less a geographical place than a socio-technical practice, or a set of relationships. Not only were at least some of these networks nomadic and deterritorialized, but they also saw the advantages of choosing relative forms of deterritorialization over a mimicry, or pushing further of capitalist tendencies towards absolute deterritorialization. In other words, these were neither accelerationist nor distributive strategies, but, rather, balancing acts between decentralization and the address of specific environments or, in other terms, they were transformational media ecologies.

Certainly, they were misguided in many instances, and frequently their adopted tactics ultimately worked, not in favour of the sought-after liberation from capitalist and state power, but as research and development for the future development of neoliberal networked regimes of power and cybernetic control. Such arguments could be made, for example, about how pirate radio stations like Alice opened the way for Silvio Berlusconi's commercial media and political empire, or how guerrilla television paved the way for low-budget and outsourced commercial reality TV programming, rather than leading to any video evolution of cybernetic consciousness. However, these outcomes were not fixed in advance, and these practices served not only as fascinating precursors to digital networked technologies, but also, in some instances, as alternatives; not counter-protocols within Empire, but anti-protocols from which we still have many things to learn. At the very least, these guerrilla networks and their repression or co-option provide the contours for a genealogy of the current dynamics of digital networked power and resistance that we inhabit today. Examples as diverse as WikiLeaks, Anonymous, and contemporary tactical media, are all engaged with guerrilla information warfare with cybernetic modes of surveillance and control that were also first experimented with in the 1970s

through such programmes as CONINTELPRO or the BKA's counterterrorism measures.

Yet, as this book has explored, this information warfare was already widely enacted in the 1970s through a variety of political and media practices, as attested to by a final instance, that of the first industrial music group, Throbbing Gristle. This group pursued explicitly guerrilla modes of communication in shifting forms of DIY electronic music, from harsh noise to Martin Denny style exotica, in extreme performances and cryptic album art, in disguises ranging from the paramilitary to that of a religious cult, and with imagery extending from the holocaust and mass killings to the bucolic English countryside. Going well beyond punk in subverting expectations, they explicitly distanced their activities from merely being music, and situated themselves in proximity to William S. Burroughs' proposals for an electronic revolution against control, by means of tape recorders and video projectors, which also inspired Deleuze's reflections on control societies. As such, it is appropriate that they have the final words on 1970s guerrilla networks in this book:

The way you live, structure, conceive, and market what you do, can be as well thought out as a government coup/It's a campaign/It has nothing to do with art. (Throbbing Gristle 'After Cease to Exist', 1977)

Endnotes

Introduction

1. See, for example, Gilles Deleuze, 1997, 'Literature and Life', in: *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 6: 'this invention of a people, that is, a possibility of life. To write for this people who are missing.'

Chapter 1: Media (An)archaeology, Radical Media Ecologies and Popular Knowledges

1. For an example of this discussion, see Paolo Virno, (1996), 'Do you Remember Counter-Revolution', pp. 241-260.
2. See Herbert Marcuse, (1972), *Counter-Revolution and Revolt*, pp. 1-58.
3. A recent expression of this idea can be seen in Jonathan Beller's Situationist-inflected *The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle*. This compelling analysis, which situates cinematic modes of production as the 'Capital of the Twentieth Century', is more applicable to the period examined in this book, than contemporary, digital modes of production. See Beller 2006, pp. 193-242.
4. There is an extensive debate on the use of the term 'Immaterial Labour' in Autonomist and post-autonomous Marxism as well as in feminist critiques of these tendencies. It has also been central to debates on 'free labour' in digital culture. See Maurizio Lazzarato, 'Immaterial Labour' in Hardt and Virno eds. 1996, *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics*, pp. 133-147.
5. Deleuze uses this formula, apparently derived from Nietzsche, to account for Foucault's thinking of subjectivation: 'we will then think the past against the present, and resist the latter [...] "in favour, I hope, of a time to come" (Nietzsche)', Deleuze 1988, p. 98.
6. Zielinski introduces the term Variantology in the introduction to *Deep Time of the Media*, 2006, p. 7, in relation to media and media archaeology. His development of Variantology through a series of events and publications of the same name has, however, seen media progressively dropped as a referent.
7. For a discussion of this fascinating experiment, see Winthrop-Young 2011, pp. 82-87.
8. This is also taken up both at the end of the 'Gramophone' chapter of *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* and especially in the highly Virilio-influenced reading of the history of film as appropriated military technology from Marey's chronophotography to contemporary computer games, Kittler 1999, pp. 122-133.
9. Postman's analysis of the mass media in *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (1987) presents television as an epistemological disaster, while *Technopoly* (1993)

extends this analysis to the dominance of technology in general. As such, these works maintain McLuhan's technological determinism, blended with a type of Luddite humanism and nostalgia entirely absent in the work of the latter. This is not necessarily the case of the work of the MEA as a whole.

10. See Félix Guattari 2000, pp. 19-45.
11. The distinction between Chronos and Aion can be traced back to Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze 1990, pp.61-65, although it is unclear whether this influenced Zielinski's use of these terms. It can be understood as updated in a more media-archaeological context in Deleuze's distinction between cinematic movement-images in which time is submitted to movement (Chronos) and crystalline time-images in which nonchronological time becomes directly perceptible (Aion), while Kairos is treated extensively by Antonio Negri in 'Kairos, Alma Venus, Multitude', in *Time for Revolution*, Negri 2003, pp.147-180.
12. While the focus on the audiovisual, including the sonic ecologies of recorded music and radio, brings the use of the term media ecologies into proximity with Steve Goodman's account of sonic and affective ecologies *Sonic Warfare* (2010), it is also distinguished from this work in its transmedia dimensions, emphasis on resistant affects of anger and joy over fear, and the greater privileging of radical and resistant media ecologies over those of the military-industrial-entertainment complex.
13. Works like that of John A. Walker, show this proximity clearly, especially when it comes to the radical use of video. See Walker 2002, p. 150ff.
14. Most of this chapter comes from a 3 September 1982 discussion sponsored by the *Folha de São Paulo*, a major Brazilian newspaper. The title of the talk was 'Mass Culture and Singularity'.
15. In terms of monographs, the genealogical method is most evident in *Discipline and Punish* (1991 [1975]) and *History of Sexuality Vol.1: The Will to Knowledge* (1998 [1976]), although it was already being developed earlier in his lectures at the Collège de France such as the 1974-75 course entitled *Abnormal*. By the time of the later volumes of the *History of Sexuality*, this approach was, if not abandoned, at least transformed beyond recognition.
16. More formal expositions of this genealogical method can be found particularly in the essay 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' (Foucault 1977, pp. 139-164) and the section of *History of Sexuality Vol. 1* (Foucault 1998) simply entitled 'Method' (pp. 92-102)
17. Patricia Pisters has recently taken up his approach to media-ecological practices, especially cinematic ones as metallurgy. See Pisters, (2015), 'Deleuze's Metallurgic Machines', *LA Review of Books*, 8 November 2015, available at: <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/deleuzes-metallurgic-machines> Last accessed 7 July, 2016.
18. See especially Parikka 2015, *A Geology of Media*.

Chapter 2: Armed Guerrilla Media Ecologies from Latin America to Europe and the United States

1. See Jacques Rancière 2015, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, pp. 35-52.
2. Taber goes so far as to imagine guerrilla tactics being used in prehistorical contexts: 'it is possible to conceive of their use by Cro-Magnon man, whoever *he* was, against the last of the Neanderthals', Taber 2002, p.10).
3. The original can be found in Mao, 1961, pp. 92-93: 'Many people think it impossible for guerrillas to exist for long in the enemy's rear. Such a belief reveals lack of comprehension of the relationship that should exist between the people and the troops. The former may be likened to water the latter to the fish who inhabit it. How may it be said that these two cannot exist together?'
4. On the Tupamaros, themselves named after an indigenous Guaraní name for a noisy bird, see Gilio 1972. This group was also memorably and sympathetically featured in the film directed by Costa-Gavras *État de siège* (*State of Siege*, 1972) which, while dismissed by radical film critics as only superficially political cinema, was apparently popular viewing for nascent Western European urban guerrillas.
5. Originally published in 1978.
6. Virilio claims that, since Aldo Moro had a heart condition and would probably have died within a few years, his kidnapping can be seen as an act of state-sanctioned euthanasia rather than insurrection. See Virilio 1990, p. 81.
7. Ideas about the necessity of civil war for any revolutionary political transformation have more recently been advanced by the Tiqqun Collective. See Tiqqun, 2010, *Introduction to Civil War*, trans. Alexander Galloway and Jason E. Smith, New York: Semiotext(e). A more populist version of a similar argument can also be found in Ted Rall (2010), *The Anti-American Manifesto*, New York: Seven Stories.
8. See Deleuze and Guattari 1987, pp. 134-148.
9. The gut check was a technique used by Weatherman to counter fears of a violent or dangerous action, by reminding the white militant of the insignificance of the danger faced compared to that faced everyday in other contexts such as by the Vietcong or African-American radicals.
10. For a mainstream but accurate account of the events surrounding the Hot Autumn see Paul Ginsborg 1990, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, pp. 298-337.
11. On the P2 lodge as part of the Italian 'blocked political system', see Paul Ginsborg 2001, pp. 142-148.
12. While the various components of the strategy of tension have since been officially admitted, the idea that the left was responsible for these terrorist events still persists. See Ginsborg op. Cit., pp. 333-335.
13. This is a highly edited translation of a much longer discussion, originally published in 1979. It should be noted that Macciocchi who aligns herself

- with the 'non-institutionalized Italian left' completely disagrees with Guattari's position, referring to the BR as Stalinists (Guattari and Macciocchi 2009, pp. 104-105).
14. Straub and Huillet are perhaps the most uncompromising of militant filmmakers active in the 1970s, and not only dedicated one of their films to RAF member Holger Meins, but also described their own work as cinematic terrorism in an interview. Their work will be engaged with in chapter four.
 15. While the German name for this group is Rote Armee Fraktion, the conventional English translation is Faction, even though this distorts the original meaning of being part of a larger whole.
 16. Translated in Meinhof 2008, pp. 171-177
 17. Another key theoretical expression of this shift can be seen in writings of Hans-Jürgen Krahl, also active in the SDS and connected to the latter generation of the Frankfurt School. See Michael Boyle and Daniel Spaulding (2014) 'Hans-Jürgen Krahl: From Critical to Revolutionary Theory', *Viewpoint Magazine*, September, 2014: <https://viewpointmag.com/2014/09/29/hans-jurgen-krahl-from-critical-to-revolutionary-theory/> Last accessed 10 July, 2016. Krahl died young in a car accident in 1970 so was not able to develop his thought further, but was considered as original and important a figure on the German student left as Dutschke or Meinhof.
 18. Dutschke's attitude towards the RAF was characterized by an ambivalence approaching what was called, in Italy, 'non-rejection'. While never endorsing their tactics and famously advocating what he called the 'long march through the institutions', he nevertheless appeared publically at the funeral of RAF member Holger Meins (a personal friend) and famously declared with a raised fist, 'Holger, the struggle continues!'
 19. The extreme limit of this psychological profiling was the removal of Meinhof's brain after death for neurological study, commented on in Dominic Fox's book *Cold World* (2009) in order to shed light on what 'causes a young woman journalist from a middle-class background to renounce the privileges society has afforded her, join an armed unit of self-styled 'urban guerrillas', and commence to wage a ferocious war against the powers of the state?' (2009, p. 57).
 20. I will not go into here the various ways Meinhof has been the subject of cultural mythologies which are fully explored by Karin Bauer in her introduction to the English translation of her texts (Bauer in Meinhof 2008, pp. 13-29, 89-93).
 21. Intriguingly, one of Meins' last cinema credits was as a gaffer on Wim Wenders' first feature *Summer in the City* (1970), further indicating that a career in New German Cinema was a definite possibility for Meins, had he chosen this path.
 22. See Stefan Aust 2008, pp.106-108.
 23. According to Aust, 'Meinhof was given the job of producing a manifesto of their own, with a view to the correct self-presentation of the group' (Aust 2008, p. 107). This manifesto is reproduced in full in Moncourt and Smith ed. 2009, pp. 83-105.

24. See TAZ and Stefan Wisniewski (2009), *We Were so Terribly Consistent*, Montreal: Kersplebedeb
25. On this film about the repressive nature of the Berlin home for girls, Eichenhof, see Wolfgang-Franz Kersting 2007, p. 363. One of the subjects of this documentary, Irene Georgens, was directly involved in the action to free Baader, another instance of the crossings between marginal social subjects, media, and political violence. According to Kersten, Meinhof herself described the idea of the film as 'a crappy game' and of far less value than an actual uprising in the home itself would be (2007, p. 363).
26. In chapter four, we will see how anti-psychiatry movements also informed a key stream of minor cinema.
27. More recently Kimberly Mair has treated the links between the RAF and the SPK in her book *Guerrilla Aesthetics*. See Mair 2006, pp. 79-81.
28. See, for example, Chris Kraus 2001, p. 62: 'Meinhof herself still lived within discursive language. It was not 'til [sic] six years later, when she was incarcerated in a maximum security cell [...] that she herself became "exemplary"'
29. More recently Mair has approached the RAF in a different aesthetic perspective. See Mair, 2016
30. See Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried eds. 2006, *Between Marx and Coca-Cola*. This volume contains several important reflections on the RAF and related groups in the context of the intersection between youth countercultures and consumer society.
31. The ambiguities of the relations between radical German groups and (US) consumer culture is explored by Wilfried Mausbach, focusing especially on the Kommune 1 produced leaflet 'Burn warehouse [sic] burn', which appropriated the language of advertising in order to encourage sabotage of consumer society of the type subsequently undertaken by Baader, Enslinn, and Thorwald Proll. See Mausbach 2007, pp. 175-202.
32. Translated into English as *Terror or Love?* (1979).
33. This reference is to a substantial but excerpted version of the statement. The full version, with additional texts by Hayden and others, can be found in Hayden 1990. This statement has itself become pop cultural and iconic through references in films like *The Big Lebowski* (Coen, 1998).
34. There are several accounts by participants in the Black Panthers of their political history, of which the best is probably that of their founder Huey P. Newton 2009, *Revolutionary Suicide*. See also the more recent collection of essays, Kathleen Cleaver and George Katsiaficas ed., 2001, *Liberation, Imagination and the Black Panther Party: A New Look at the Black Panthers and their Legacy*.
35. Todd Gitlin essentially blames radical groups like Weather for ending the hopes of the 1960s, despite the fact that this ending was as much, if not more, determined by increasingly brutal policing of protest. See Todd Gitlin 1987, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*, pp. 377-408.
36. To deal with the multiple names used to describe the development of this Weather faction into Weatherman and, ultimately, the Weather Under-

- ground, they will simply be referred to as Weather from here on, unless the reference is to a specific phase of their development.
37. This impression was certainly fostered in many respects by Weather themselves at this time. See, for example, Kathy Boudin, Bernadine Dohrn and Terry Robbins, 'Bringing the War home: Less Talk, More National Action', in: Jacobs ed. *Weatherman* 1970, pp. 175-182.
 38. This was a key event in the radicalization of the struggle around the Berkeley campus, arguably the most radical campus in the US. In this action, activists 'liberated' a disused UC Berkeley owned parking lot and created a 'people's park', a free space for creative expression, gardening and alternate modes of life, imagined in a concrete space a future, utopian society. The parking lot was swiftly and violently recaptured by the police and the university authorities, who reverted it to its former use. This is captured well in the documentary *Berkeley in the 60s* (Kirchell, 1990).
 39. Some of the fraught relations between Weather and radical feminism can be seen in the negative responses of high-profile radical feminists like Robin Morgan and Shulamith Firestone, who saw Weather as conservative and sexist, despite the strong leadership roles undertaken by women in that sexual oppression and liberation was always subordinated to the overarching framework of anti-imperialism, or, in other words, a male-defined New Left agenda. See, especially, Shulamith Firestone 1979, *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution*, pp. 41-43, and for a more nuanced critique, Bread and Roses Collective, 1970, pp. 327-336. Weatherwomen, for their part, made numerous overtures towards the feminist movement, several of which can be found in the *Weatherman* collection.
 40. For a cinematic account of this Japanese experience, from a former associate of the Japanese far left, see Kôji Wakamatsu, *United Red Army*, (2007). See also Furuhata, 2013.
 41. In the report 'Stormy Weather' on the Flint 'war council' for the Liberation News Service, this was recounted as follows: 'Weatherman [...] digs Manson. Not only for his understanding of white America – the killer purportedly wrote PIG in blood on the wall after the murder – but also because he's a 'bad motherfucker' ('Stormy Weather', in Jacobs ed. 1970, p. 347).
 42. This critique is expressed most forcefully in E. Tani and Kaé Sera 1985, *False Nationalism, False Internationalism: Class Contradictions in the Armed Struggle*. Montreal: Seeds Beneath the Snow/Left Wing Books.
 43. The latter is supposed to have inspired the song of the same name by The Clash.
 44. McLellan and Avery point to some speculation that DeFreeze was unlikely to have come up with this political vision independently and may have been influenced by behind the scenes white radicals, but this has never been proven.
 45. Weather had also announced its 'declaration of war' via a tape recording delivered to a Bay Area radio station but afterwards seemed to abandon

- audio recordings in favour of detailed press releases and, later on, alternative publications of their own texts.
46. According to the SLA, the first Kennedy assassination was a disguised coup d'état and the US had been a secret dictatorship ever since, with a plan to use automation as a means to justify the creation of gigantic concentration camps and to dispose, Nazi style, of surplus populations (already begun with Afro-Americans in prisons). This political delirium, while not empirically provable, nevertheless shows that the SLA were picking up at an unconscious, radically empirical level, on the profound transformations starting to be unleashed on industrial modes of labour that would lead ultimately to postindustrial neoliberalism.
 47. The NWLF resembled Weather in its uses of bombings as armed propaganda but some of these bombings were intended to take human lives and the group was also supported by continuing bank robberies, some of which also led to fatalities and woundings of the general public that were exactly the consequences Weather sought to avoid.
 48. For an account of the SLA 'renaissance' see McLellan and Avery 1977, pp. 425-467. William Blum also gives a lively account of becoming mixed up in this adventure through sharing a house with radical bomber Willie Brandt, Wendy Yoshimura's boyfriend, and then assisting with her first disappearance underground. See Blum 2002, pp. 105-113, 193-197
 49. There is some doubt as to whether the supposed authors of this text really exist, and Kaé Sera, in particular, would seem to be a pseudonym. The political line and style would seem to indicate that it is the work of J. Sakai, who was associated with the post-SDS RYM and is the author of *Settlers: The Myth of the White Proletariat* (1989), with which *False Nationalism* (1985) shares many features.
 50. See Gordon Carr (2010), *The Angry Brigade: A History of Britain's First Urban Guerilla Group*, Oakland: PM Press. Carr seems to hesitate between the police claim that at least some of the Stoke Newington Eight suspected of being the Angry Brigade actually were this entity in reality, which the defendants always denied. At least to some extent, the Angry Brigade existed as a multiple name that could be claimed by any group wanting to carry out similar actions, thereby anticipating by two decades 'multiple name' activist groups like Luther Blissett. The formation and context of this group, while also related to radicalizing student protest, also had different components, such as a much closer influence of the Parisian May 1968 events, more reference to Situationist-inflected class war than antiimperialism and anarchist resistance to fascist Spain.

Chapter 3: Autonomy Movements, the Nexus of 1977 and Free Radio

1. For a fully developed expression of this perspective see Antonio Negri 2005, 'Domination and Sabotage', in: *Books for Burning*, pp. 231-290.

2. Translation from the Italian by the author of this book.
3. Translation from Italian by the author of this book.
4. There are many analyses of this problematic, but perhaps the most interesting is Rudolph Bahro's (1978), *The Alternative in Eastern Europe*, which is a rare instance of a kind of class-compositional analysis of 'real and existing socialism' as practiced in the GDR.
5. The concept of auto-valorization was especially developed by Negri over the course of the 1970s. See Murphy 2012, pp. 96-101.
6. Hakim Bey's concept of the temporary autonomous zone clearly derives from the political practices of this era.
7. For a detailed reading of these positions, especially regarding Negri's conception of the socialized worker as class recomposition, see Wright 2002, pp. 152-175.
8. For an account of Luigi Nono in the context of the cultural dimensions of *autonomia* see Timothy Murphy 2005, pp. 95-109.
9. Clearly, the inspiration for one of the most significant fictional films responding to punk, Derek Jarman's *Jubilee* (1978).
10. As will be discussed in chapter three, this model is derived from Shannon and Weaver's information theory.
11. Then first collection of writings on Radio Alice responded to this perspective by being called *Alice è il diavolo*, (*Alice is the Devil*). See *Collettivo A/traverso* (2002).
12. Transcripts are reproduced in various places, including excerpts in Berardi et al. 2009, pp. 83-93. The latest edition of *Collettivo A/traverso* (2002), *Alice è il diavolo*, Milan: Shake Edizioni, contains a CD based on recordings that had formerly been confiscated by the police.

Chapter 4: Militant Anti-Cinemas, Minor Cinema and the Anarchive Film

1. There is little work done on Lettrist cinema, but a recent example is Nicole Brenez, (2015), *We Support Everything since the Dawn of Time that has Struggled and Still Struggles*. An example of the more substantial engagement with Situationist film, not limited to the films of Guy Debord, see McKenzie Wark 2013, *The Spectacle of Disintegration*.
2. While Nichols devoted his 1972 Masters dissertation to Newsreel, the collective is largely left out of his more canonical texts such as 'The Voice of Documentary', Nichols 1985, pp. 258-273. They are, however mentioned in his more recent *Introduction to Documentary*, Nichols, (2010), pp. 227-229. Thomas Waugh (1985), pp.233-257, makes several references to Newsreel as part of a general movement away from Cinema Vérité, while Donal Forman, in another unpublished dissertation, makes a fascinating comparison between the work of Godard and Newsreel member Robert Kramer, which includes a thorough

- treatment of Newsreel. Further texts on Newsreel can be found at <http://newsreel.us/> and <http://www.documentaryisneverneutral.com/indextrue.html>
3. Some theoretical responses to apparatus theory attempted to do precisely that, however, to relate the technological differences in cinema evolution, to the history of a cinema-machine. See Stephen Heath 1980, p.7 and the whole edited collection De Lauretis and Heath ed. 1980 *The Cinematic Apparatus*.
 4. The replacement of the concept of the cinematic apparatus by the more fluid Deleuzian concept of the assemblage has recently been proposed by Francesco Cassetti and this is very resonant with the practices being discussed here. This as an argument that is especially applied to contemporary forms of digital cinema, but is also applicable retrospectively, implying that the cinematic apparatus was always less stable and unchanging than it appeared to be. See Cassetti 2015, pp. 67-98
 5. Hereafter *Le gai savoir* as the English translation is far from adequate.
 6. There is a large body of literature on the Brechtian turn of post-1968 cinema, or even earlier, much of it focused on the work of Godard, as well as filmmakers of the New German Cinema like Fassbinder and Kluge. See especially Martin Walsh, *Brechtian Aspects of Radical Cinema* (1981), which devotes a considerable part of the book to Straub and Huillet (pp. 37-108). See also Halligan 2016, pp. 177-181 ff.
 7. This can especially be seen in a number of films directed by Wakamatsu such as *Season of Terror* (1969), *Sex Jack* (1970), and *Ecstasy of the Angels* (1972), among other titles, in which psychosexual trauma is combined with far-left politics including of radical guerrilla cells. See Alberto Toscano and Go Hirasawa, 'Walls of Flesh: The Films of Koji Wakamatsu', *Film Quarterly*, June, 2013: pp. 41-49.
 8. The pharmacological nature of cinema as industrial subjectivation machinery is analysed in a resonant manner by Bernard Stiegler (2011) in *Technics and Time, Vol.3*. Guattari's formulations, however, are more generative in their articulation of cinema as a machinic drug.
 9. Translation from the Italian by the author of this volume.
 10. This collective research project was itself turned into a documentary by René Allio (1976), albeit one following a very different procedure to de Antonio's, mostly relying on reenactment, coupled with the aural reproduction of texts. The nineteenth-century provenance of this case made such a procedure necessary whereas the 'cases' pursued by de Antonio were all ones for which direct or secondary audiovisual material was available.
 11. Translation by the author of this book.

Chapter Five: Ecologies of Radical and Guerrilla Television

1. Bellour published two volumes in French under the title of *Entre-Images* in 1990, and 1999, and the incomplete English translation derives from both of them, albeit with an emphasis on the former.

2. *Out 1* was too early to have benefitted from the INA or it may have been able to receive this kind of parallel distribution. Ironically it would now fit very well with the idea of the high end television series as instalments of a single longer work, consumed via box sets and streaming services. Rivette's later film *Duelle* (1976) was, however, produced by the INA.
3. Kittler presents this dynamic, the prototype of computerized counter-terrorist intelligence today, in the following terms: 'every system of power has the enemies it produces. The terrorists (as they were now known) were able to navigate the waters of partisan warfare with all the alacrity of Mao Tse-tung's fish because they had adapted their lifeworld to satellite cities and highway systems. They invariably drove high-speed BMWs to make full use of passing lanes, and they rented whitewashed high-rise apartments, where nobody knows your name, in order to throw the inconspicuous leftovers of their bomb-making activities down the garbage chutes. [However, not] even repeat bank robbers, bomb throwers, and murderers were able to fully blend into a computerized world: for instance, even under an assumed name it was still dangerous to pay the rent by way of the usual electronic transfer. With this in mind, Dr. Horst Herold, the congenial spirit presiding over the BKA, conceived of the negative computerized manhunt: a countrywide electronic search for quotidian bureaucratic procedures deliberately avoided by certain tenants. The end is known, though not necessarily understood' (Kittler 2012, p. 387)
4. While the influence of this installation were multiple, they can certainly be seen in Bruce Naumann's better known video work from *Corridor* (1969-1970) onwards, as well as in several works of Peter Campus, that in different ways incorporated the viewer into the video installation. See Hanhardt 1986, p.20.
5. Recently, Ina Blom has discussed the importance of Raindance Corporation and Guerrilla Television for early video art as part of an argument that the agency of video technologies needs to be taken more fully into account in order to understand these practices. The approach of this section is in agreement with this argument even if it does not develop these ideas to the same level of detail. See Ina Blom 2016, *The Autobiography of Video*, pp. 26-27ff.
6. In this spirit, all issues of *Radical Software* are now freely available online.

Conclusion: Terms of Cybernetic Warfare

1. See Srnicek and Williams 2015, pp. 9-19 ff. A full confrontation between guerrilla networks and Srnicek and Williams cybernetic vision of left accelerationism is not possible here, but, despite the former's fully justified tendencies to be suspicious towards the implementation of computing as a control mechanism, they nevertheless often developed their own information systems which are arguably a vital part of any counter-history of left accelerationist cybernetic politics, from which they are generally excluded.

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Key Film, Television, and Video Cited

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Born in Flames (Dir. Lizzie Borden, 1983).
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Je, Tu, Il, Elle (Dir. Chantal Akerman, 1974).
Jeanne Dielman, 23 Commerce Quay, 1080 Brussels (Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles), Dir. Chantal Akerman, 1975).
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- The Lord of the Universe* (Prod. TVTV, 1974).
- The Man who Left his Will on Film* (*Tôkyô sensô sengo hiwa*, Dir. Nagisa Ôshima, 1970).
- Media Burn* (Prod. Ant Farm, 1975).
- The Meetings of Anna* (*Les rendezvous d'Anna*, Dir. Chantal Akerman, 1978)
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