



DOCUMENT

UFD027 Amy Ireland

The Poememenon: Form as Occult Technology

As the CCRU's tangled time tales emerge from obscurity, Amy Ireland digs deeper into the sorcerous cybernetics of the time spiral, acceleration, hyperstition, and nonhuman poetics

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A sufficiently advanced technology would seem to us to be a form of magic; Arthur C. Clarke has pointed that out. A wizard deals with magic; ergo a 'wizard' is someone in possession of a highly sophisticated technology, one which baffles us. Someone is playing a board game with time, someone we can't see. It is not God.

— Philip K Dick

In this book it is spoken of Spirits and Conjurations; of Gods, Spheres, Planes, and many other things which may or may not exist. It is immaterial whether they exist or not. By doing certain things, certain results follow.

— Aleister Crowley

Chronology is an antiquated fetish.

— Marc Couroux

How would it feel to be smuggled back out of the future in order to subvert its antecedent conditions? To be a cyberguerrilla, hidden in human camouflage so advanced that even one's software was the part of the disguise? Exactly like this?

— Nick Land

I. Spironomics

Modernity is cyberpositive. Yeats plotted this out in the 'widening gyres' of 1919's 'The Second Coming',

and again in 1925 and 1937 in his prose work *A Vision*, a mystical text composed of information revealed to him through the medium of his wife's sustained experiments in automatic writing.¹ In *A Vision* and related textual fragments composed between 1919 and 1925, hyperstitional agents Michael Robartes and Owen Aherne recount the discovery of an arcane philosophical system encoded in a series of geometrical diagrams—'squares and spheres, cones made up of revolving gyres intersecting each other at various angles, figures sometimes with great complexity'—found accidentally by Robartes in a book that had been propping up the lopsided furniture of his shady Cracow bedsit.² Aherne is skeptical, but as Robartes delves further into the system's origin, he discovers that the Cracow book (the *Speculum Angelorum et Hominis* by one 'Giraldus', published in 1594) recapitulates the belief system of an Arabian sect known as the Judwalis or 'diagrammatists',

1. W.B. Yeats, 'The Second Coming', in *Michael Robartes and the Dancer* (Churchtown, Dundrum, Ireland: The Cuala Press, 1920); *A Vision* [1925], in C.E. Paul and M. Mills Harper (eds), *The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats*, Vol. XIII, (New York: Scribner, 2008); *A Vision* [1937], in C.E. Paul and M. Mills Harper (eds), *The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats*, Vol. XIV (New York: Scribner, 2008). It should be noted here that George Yeats's contribution to *A Vision* was that of a co-author, although she insisted, along with the mysterious Instructors, that her role in the process not be made public.

2. Yeats, 'The Second Coming', 31. Robartes explains that he journeyed to Cracow 'partly because of its fame as a centre of printing, but more I think because Dr. Dee and his friend Edward Kelly had in Cracow practiced alchemy and scrying'. Yeats, *A Vision* [1925], lix.

who in turn derived it from a mysterious work—now long lost—containing the teachings of Kusta ben Luka, a philosopher at the ancient Court of Harun Al-Raschid, although rumour has it that ben Luka got it from a desert djinn.³

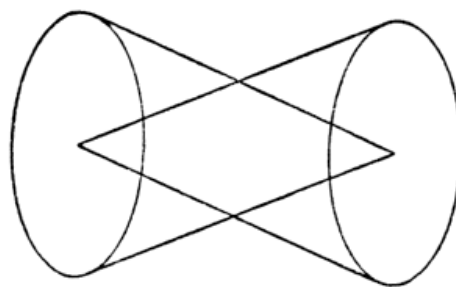
The hypothesis that a copy of Giraldu's book was among those texts seized by the University of Warwick when it ejected the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit (Ccru) from the custodianship of its philosophy department in 1997 is unsupported by anything other than dim intimations and local hearsay; however, it can be asserted with some level of confidence that members of the unit had been in possession of fragments of Yeats's record of Robartes's discovery, if not the full text of *A Vision* in either of its two predominant instantiations. A cursory comparison of Ccru texts dealing with the then-still-inchoate notion of accelerationism—from Sadie Plant and Nick Land's 'Cyberpositive', through the latter's luminous mid-nineties missives ('Circuitries', 'Machinic Desire', 'Meltdown', and 'Cybergothic' are exemplary) to the contemporary elaboration of the phenomenon in his cogent and obscure 'Teleoplexy'—with Robartes's gloss of Judwali philosophy, is enough to posit the malefic presence of abstract spirography in both systems of historical divination.⁴ Indeed, a

3. The Yeats's otherworldly interlocutors initially instructed that the origin of the diagrams remain secret, although Robartes is allowed to speculate on the system's provenance in the introduction to the 1925 edition of *A Vision*: 'The Judwali had once possessed a learned book...attributed to a certain Kusta ben Luka, Christian Philosopher at the Court of Harun Al-Raschid, and though this, and a smaller book describing the personal life of the philosopher, had been lost or destroyed in desert fighting some generations before his time, its doctrines were remembered, for they had always constituted the beliefs of the Judwalis who look upon Kusta ben Luka as their founder. [...] I am convinced, however, that this doctrine did not originate with Kusta ben Luka, for certain terms and forms of expression suggest some remote Syriac origin. I once told an old Judwali of my conviction upon this point but he merely said that Kusta ben Luka had doubtless been taught by the desert djinns who lived to a great age and remembered ancient languages.' (More on this later.) *Ibid.*, lx–lxi. On Harun Al-Raschid, see al-Tabari, *The History of al-Tabari*, Vol. XXX 'The Abbasid Caliphate in Equilibrium', tr. C.E. Bosworth (Albany, SUNY, 1989).

4. S. Plant and N. Land, 'Cyberpositive' [1994], in R. Mackay and A. Avanessian (eds), *#Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader* (Falmouth and Berlin: Urbanomic/Merve, 2014), 305–313; N. Land, 'Circuitries' [1992], 'Meltdown' [1997], 'Machinic Desire' [1993], and 'Cybergothic' [1998] in N. Land, *Fanged Noumena: Collected Writings 1987–2007*, ed R. Mackay and R. Brassier (Falmouth and New York: Urbanomic/Sequence Press, 2011), 289–318, 441–59, 319–44, 345–74; 'Teleoplexy', in Mackay and Avanessian (eds), *#Accelerate*,

diligent student of occulted spirography might even draw the timeline back to 1992 where the gyre emerges as the infamous 'fanged noumenon' of the eponymous chapter in Land's bizarre monograph, *The Thirst for Annihilation*.⁵

Giraldu's diagrams are all variations on a principle schema of two intersecting cones, one inverted and nested inside the other.⁶



As in Robartes's historical account of the system's exposition by four dancers (pupils of Kusta ben Luka) in the desert sands before a doubtful caliph, the full implications of the schema are not apparent until it is set in motion, for each cone must be imagined to house a double gyre which simultaneously expands and contracts in opposite directions and in rhythmic alliance with the gyres of the opposing cone.⁷ The range of these expansions and contractions denotes relative increases and decreases in the influence of the four faculties attributed to each of the turning gyres. In this manner, the values represented by the schema are always in steady relation, 'the energy of one tendency being in exact mathematical proportion to that of the other': a waxing here corresponds to a waning there.⁸ When a cone has exhausted one full sequence of its double gyre, a sudden transfer of momentum compels a shift from that cone to its counterpart across their extremities (a jump from the narrow end of Cone A to the dilated end of Cone B, and vice versa). Because of this dynamic, one cone is always in prominence while the other is occulted, an arrangement that reverses at the conclusion of the next gyre sequence, or 'cycle'.

5. N. Land, 'Fanged Noumenon (Passion of the Cyclone)', *The Thirst for Annihilation* (London: Routledge, 1992).

6. Yeats, 'The Second Coming', 32.

7. Yeats, 'The Dance of the Four Royal Persons', in *A Vision* [1925], 10–12.

8. *Ibid.*, 106.

This jump corresponds to one of the four ‘phases of crisis’ and indexes an epistemological blind spot comparable to the event horizon of a black hole, impossible to see beyond from a point internal to the system. Grasped from outside, however, the strange hydraulics of the gyres describe a fatalistic set of inversions and returns that ultimately furnish a rich resource for augury, one that Yeats, editing Robartes’s papers, unhesitatingly exploited in the first version of *A Vision*.⁹

The coming age will be lunar, secular, horizontal, multiple, and immanent: an ‘antithetical multiform influx’

When applied to the task of historical divination (our interest here), the waxing and waning of the gyres can be charted in twenty-eight phases along the path of an expanding and contracting meta-gyre or ‘Cycle’ which endures for roughly two millennia and is neatly divisible into twelve sub-gyres (comprising four cardinal phases and eight triads) each of which denotes a single twist in the larger, container Cycle.¹⁰ According to the system as it was originally relayed to George Yeats through the automatic script (an exact date does not appear in the *Speculum Angelorum et Hominis* or Judwali teachings), the twelfth gyre in our current—waxing—Cycle turns in 2050, when ‘society as mechanical force [shall] be complete at last’ and humanity, symbolized by the figure of The Fool, ‘is but a straw blown by the wind, with no mind but the wind and no act but a nameless drifting and turning’, before the first decade of the twenty-second century (a ‘phase of crisis’) ushers in an entirely new set of twelve gyres: the fourth Cycle and the first major historical phase shift in two thousand years.¹¹ Laying Yeats’s awkward predictions (which

9. Of the 28 Phases, there are four Phases of Crisis (1, 8, 15, 22) and 24 intermediary Phases which can be grouped into triads to yield the structure of 12 divisions (or gyres) that comprise one great cycle. Although much more could detail be given here, I am deliberately restricting this account to the hydraulics and the historical predictions of the system. For a good summary see R. Ryan, ‘The Is and the Ought, the Knower and Known: An Analysis of the Four Faculties in Yeats’ System’, in N. Mann, M. Gibson, and C. Nally (eds), *W. B. Yeats’ A Vision: Explications and Contexts* (Clemson University, 2012).

10. This meta-gyre or ‘Cycle’ could also usefully be termed ‘Aeon’. The system is much more complex than this, but further enumerations must be left for a future study.

11. Yeats, *A Vision* [1925], 176; 93. Compare Yeats’s illustration of The Fool at the end of this Cycle—the tarot sequence is

he himself shelved for the 1937 edition of *A Vision*) to one side, the system provides material for the inference of several telling traits that can be combined to give a rough sketch of this imminent Cycle upon whose cusp we uneasily reside. Unlike the ‘primary’ religious era that has preceded it—marked by dogmatism, a drive towards unity, verticality, the need for transcendent regulation, and the symbol of the sun—the coming age will be lunar, secular, horizontal, multiple, and immanent: an ‘antithetical multiform influx’.¹² The ‘rough beast’ of ‘The Second Coming’, Christ’s inverted double, sphinx-like (a creature of the threshold) with a ‘gaze blank and pitiless as the sun’, will bear the age forward into whatever twisted future the gyres have marked out for it.¹³

In ‘Teleoplexy’, as the most recent, succinct expression of accelerationism in its Landian form (distinguished from the Left queering of the term more frequently associated with Srnicek and Williams’s ‘Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics’),¹⁴ Land draws out the latent cybernetic structure of the Judwalis’ system and employs it to reach a similar catastrophic prediction, although the somewhat restrained invocation of ‘Techonomic Singularity’ dampens the rush of what has previously been designated as ‘a racing non-linear countdown to planetary switch’ in which ‘[z]aibatusus flip into sentience as the market melts to automatism, politics is cryogenized and dumped into the liquid-helium meat-store, drugs migrate onto neurosoft viruses and immunity is grated-open against jagged reefs of

inverted—as ‘but a straw blown by the wind, with no mind but the wind’ with the epigraph (from Bataille) of ‘Fanged Nounenon’ in Land’s book: ‘what matters is not the enunciation of the wind, but the wind’. G. Bataille, *Œuvres Complètes*, Vol. V, ed. V. Leduc (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), 25; Land, *The Thirst for Annihilation*, 105.

12. Yeats, *A Vision* [1937], 301.

13. Yeats, ‘The Second Coming’. It is not insignificant to note here that the Sphinx has two reported riddles, one invoking linear time and the other invoking cyclical time.

14. N. Srnicek and A. Williams, ‘#Accelerate: Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics’, in Mackay and Avanesian (eds), *#Accelerate*. It should be noted that the models of modernity marshalled by ‘Left’ and ‘Unconditional’ accelerationism differ in several key respects, leading to an ultimate divergence in their attitudes towards the possibility of politics. This essay deals specifically with the nexus of (chiefly) Landian ideas that have recently been brought together under the title of ‘Unconditional Accelerationism’. See, for example, V. Garton, ‘Accelerationism without Conditions’, <<https://vincentgarton.com/2017/03/08/acceleration-without-conditions/>>.

feral AI explosion, Kali culture, digital dance-dependency, black shamanism epidemic, and schizophrenic break-outs from the bin'.¹⁵ Like the Judwalis' system, the medium of accelerationism is time, and the message here regarding temporality is consistent: not a circle or a line; not 0, not 1—but the torsional assemblage arising from their convergence, precisely what 'breaks out from the bin[ary]'. Both systems, as maps of modernity, appear as, and are piloted by, the spiral (or 'gyre'). As an unidentified carrier once put it, 'the diagram comes first'.¹⁶

According to its own propaganda, modernity is progressive, innovative, irreversible, and expansive.¹⁷ It plots a direct line out of the cyclical, seasonal pulse of pre-modern ecology to a future state of technical mastery and social enlightenment. The modernist imperative to 'make it new' ostensibly refuses the closure and insulation against shock expressed by cyclicity, yet, as Land is quick to point out, subsequently smuggles it back in by other means, championing self-referentiality in modernist aesthetics, relying on the cycle as the basic unit for historical and economic analysis, retaining archaic calendric arrangements, and betraying its prevalence in the popular imagination via the emergence of the time loop as a key archetypal trope in twentieth-century science fiction.¹⁸ A link between the cyclic inclination and anthropomorphic bias can easily be excavated by pointing to the myriad cyclic rhythms intrinsic to the natural human physiology that surreptitiously conditions modernity's self-apprehension from the inside. This disavowed duplicity at the heart of the modernist enterprise exposes the falseness of its relation to the 'new' by revealing the extent to which it always hedges its bets against radical openness, or what Land will call the Outside. Modernity's novelty only arrives via a restricted economy of possibility

for which the terms (commensurate with human affordability) are always set in advance.¹⁹

The real shape of novelty is not linear but spirodynamic. Land's cybernetic upgrade of the gyre reads the spiral as a cipher for positive feedback

Posed as an epistemological question, the fortifications erected by this arrangement against the intrusion of the unprecedented and unknown are highly suspicious. What Landian accelerationism shares with the Judwalis' system is an acknowledgement that the real shape of novelty is not linear but spirodynamic. Land's cybernetic upgrade of the gyre reads the spiral as a cipher for positive feedback and, charged with the task of diagramming modernity, locates its principal motor in the escalatory M-C-M' circuitry of capitalism. Against the metrical models of feedback expounded by Norbert Wiener, whose foundational *Cybernetics or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine* operates as 'propaganda against positive feedback—quantizing it as amplification within an invariable metric—[to establish] a cybernetics of stability fortified against the future', a representation which offers a misleadingly simplistic choice between the dependable utility of homeostatic equilibrium and its pathological other, Land offers the following complexification:

[I]t is necessary to differentiate not just between negative and positive feedback loops, but between stabilization circuits, short-range runaway circuits, and long-range runaway circuits. By conflating the two latter, modernist cybernetics has trivialized escalation processes into unsustainable episodes of quantitative inflation, thus

15. Land, 'Circuitries', 317; Land, 'Machinic Desire', 344.

16. N. Land, 'Cartography of the Virtual', *Hyperstition*, <<http://hyperstition.abstractdynamics.org/archives/003496.html>>.

17. Land, 'Cybergothic', 351; N. Land, *Shanghai Times* (Urbanatomy Electronic, 2013).

18. Interestingly enough, Ezra Pound's famous line was filched from China: 'The source is a historical anecdote concerning Ch'eng T'ang, first king of the Shang dynasty (1766–1753 BC), who was said to have had a washbasin inscribed with this inspirational slogan.' M. North, *Novelty: A History of the New* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 162; N. Land, *Templicity: Disordered Loops Through Shanghai Time* (Urbanatomy Electronic, 2014), §7.8.

19. Land has criticized this before: '[Modernity] lives in a profound and uneasy relation to an outside that both attracts and repels it, a relation that it precariously resolves within itself from a position of unilateral mastery. The paradox of enlightenment, then, is an attempt to fix a stable relation with what is radically other, since insofar as the other is rigidly positioned within a relation it is no longer fully other. If before encountering otherness we already know what its relation to us will be, we have obliterated it in advance.' N. Land, 'Kant, Capital and the Prohibition of Incest', *Fanged Noumena*, 55–80: 64.

side-lining exploratory mutation over against a homeostatic paradigm.²⁰

The key difference lies in the impossibility of distilling the effects of long-range runaway circuitry in terms of metrics alone. A cyberpositive circuit that can sustain itself over a long period of time—a question of the capacity to self-design, ‘but only in such a way that the self is perpetuated as something redesigned’—will reach a state of feedback density that effectively flips extensity into intensity, and thus engineers a change in kind rather than degree: phase shift, or catastrophe (with *-strophe* derived from the Greek *strephein*, ‘to turn’).²¹ It is here that the cybernetic propensity for ‘exploratory mutation’ finds its vocation as the producer of true novelty and, compressed into the notion of negentropy, dovetails with what Land refers to as ‘intelligence’, that which modernity—grasped nonlinearly—labours to emancipate.²² It is of little import that such emancipation corresponds to the elimination of the ‘human’ as it is traditionally understood. Viewed indifferently, catastrophe is just another word for novelty.

‘Teleoplexy’'s opening scenes depict a set of embattled doubles: primary and secondary processes, chronic and retrochronic temporality, inverse teleologies, critique and realism, a view from within

20. Plant and Land, ‘Cyberpositive’, 305; Norbert Wiener, *Cybernetics or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine* (New York: MIT Press, 1965); Land, ‘Circuitries’, 298.

21. Land, ‘Circuitries’, 298. Speed is important to cyberpositive dynamics, but only insofar as it effectuates a qualitative change (or better, is understood as an intensive quantity). This is a significant point, given prominent criticisms of (Landian) Accelerationism for its focus on ‘capitalist speed alone’ and its ‘purely dromological’ character. The compressed loops that diagram cybernetic intensity immanentize ‘self’ and its redesign on a vector of autonomous productive capacity that is, by definition, ungovernable (cybernetically and politically) by any transcendent or external program. What this ultimately describes is the collapse of the is/ought distinction that legitimates both human political agency and—coincidentally—the orthogonality thesis in Artificial Intelligence research. Without transcendent regulation of the is by the ought, the future trajectory of this self-propelled re-organizing force (capitalism; artificial intelligence...assuming one still wishes to make that distinction) is strictly unknowable in advance. The two come together in an emergent becoming that is, as Yeats and Land both grasp, individuated not through dialectics, but through the cybernetic spiral that constitutes modernity, esoterically apprehended. See Srnicek and Williams, ‘#Accelerate’, and Srnicek and Williams, ‘Cunning Automata: Financial Acceleration at the limits of the Dromological’ in R. Mackay (ed), *Collapse*, vol. VIII (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2014). See also, Land, ‘Machinic Desire’, 329.

22. Land, ‘Teleoplexy’, 514.

Seen from within, the spiral documents collapse into ultimately unknowable terrain; seen from without, it discloses a pattern of assembly

opposed by a view from without. Such a structure cannot but recall the gyres that spin both ways at once in the Judwalis’ diagrams, and the intersecting but inverted cones—one ‘primary’, the other ‘antithetical’—that exchange places at the turning of a Cycle. Indeed, Yeats himself refers to this switch as ‘catastrophic’.²³ Just as the Judwalis’ system affords an insider/outsider perspective, licensing prediction (an insight available to those equipped with adequate skills for deciphering the diagrams) but outlawing positive knowledge, the spiral comprehends catastrophe chiasmically. Seen from within, it documents collapse into ultimately unknowable terrain; seen from without, it discloses a pattern of assembly.

When he first shares his discovery of Giraldu's diagrams with Aherne, Robartes explains that they are animated by ‘a fundamental mathematical movement...which can be quickened or slackened but cannot be fundamentally altered’, and that ‘when you have found this movement and calculated its relations, you can foretell the entire future’.²⁴ By their very nature as esoteric tools for divination, abstract diagrams have a tendency to place agency in a complicated relationship with fate. In the Judwalis’ system, Fate and Will occupy opposite poles of opposing cones and thereby increase and decrease in perfect inverse ratio to one another. Historically interpreted, Fate corresponds to the wide end of the ‘primary’ cone, and is thus set to exert maximum influence over the imminent final phases of the current Cycle as it veers closer to catastrophe.²⁵ Similarly, as the inexorable outcome of an intensifying cyberpositive

23. ‘[W]hen, however, a narrowing and a widening gyre reach their limit, the one the utmost contraction, the other the utmost expansion, they change places, point to circle, circle to point, for this system conceives the world as catastrophic...’ Yeats, *A Vision* [1925], 106.

24. Yeats, ‘The Second Coming’, 31.

25. In the system, Fate is opposed to Destiny, with the latter ‘being understood to mean all external acts and forms created by the Will itself and out of itself, whereas Fate is all those acts or forms imposed upon the Will from without’. Yeats, *A Vision* [1925], 109–112.

process, the catastrophe of 'Teleoplexy' is also posited as fate—or more tellingly, 'doom'.²⁶ The future, marked up by the immanent unfolding of the spiral, has already been determined diagrammatically, while remaining, from the inside, a harbinger of the unknown. 'Why wait for the execution? Tomorrow has already been cremated in Hell.'²⁷ Put otherwise, what appears as new from one side has already happened from the point of view of the other.

At the same time, the negentropic process it represents (self-assembly) delivers the coup de grâce to linearity.

If entropy defines the direction of time, with increasing disorder determining the difference of the future from the past, doesn't (local) extropy—through which all complex cybernetic beings, such as lifeforms, exist—describe a negative temporality, or time-reversal? Is it not in fact more likely, given the inevitable embeddedness of intelligence in 'inverted' time, that it is the cosmological or general conception of time that is reversed (from any possible naturally-constructed perspective)?²⁸

In the framework posed by a cosmological application of the second law of thermodynamics, negentropy registers as time anomaly. As it slots itself together, the assembly circuitry of terrestrial capitalism increasingly evades the jurisdiction of asymmetrical temporalization, appearing from a vantage point mired within linear time as 'an invasion from the future'.²⁹ This capacity to hide in time constitutes one aspect of its redoubtable camouflage, the other coins the neologism 'teleoplexy'—the concealment of an antithetical teleological undertow in the presumed subordination of machinic ends to human ones. At first, this basic, spirodynamic process is only graspable negatively from the side of the regulator (to use the engineering term). This is the default transcendental position. Deploying a

26. Land, 'Teleoplexy', 520; N. Land, 'Freedom (prelude 1b)', *Outside In*, <<http://www.xenosystems.net/freedom-prelude-1b/>>. See also Land, *Templexity*, §8.2. 'Doom' is etymologically derived from the Old English *dom*, meaning 'statute, judgement', or—via its Germanic origins—'to put in place'.

27. Land, 'Cybergothic', 347.

28. N. Land, 'Extropy', *Outside In*, <<http://www.xenosystems.net/extropy/>>; Land, *Templexity*, §8.5.

29. Land, 'Machinic Desire', 338.

metaphor that points conspiratorially back to the architectural aversion of Bataille, Land remarks that, initially 'it is the prison, and not the prisoner, who speaks'.³⁰ Reality is spontaneously arranged around the 'inertial telos' of cybernegative apprehension, which asks the naïve question: 'Do we want capitalism?'³¹ Shrewdly reformulated, the question runs: *What does capitalism want with you?*

As capital's process of auto-sophistication intensifies, the ruse becomes increasingly decipherable and the mistake humanity has made in assuming the primacy of the secondary, which is to say, the ultimate regulatability of the occulted escalatory process (mistaking one telos for another) becomes traumatically apparent.

Means of production become the ends of production, tendentially, as modernization—which is capitalization—proceeds. Technomic development, which finds its only perennial justification in the extensive growth of instrumental capabilities, demonstrates an inseparable teleological malignancy, through intensive transformation of instrumentality, or perverse technomic finality. The consolidation of the circuit twists the tool into itself, making the machine its own end, within an ever deepening dynamic of auto-production. The 'dominion of capital' is an accomplished teleological catastrophe, robot rebellion, or shoggothic insurgency, through which intensively escalating instrumentality has inverted all natural purposes into a monstrous reign of the tool.³²

By surreptitiously incentivising it to fulfil the role of an external reproductive system—the wet channel that runs between one technological innovation and another—capital has deceived humanity into gestating the means of its own annihilation. 'This is the art of the machines', explains the anonymous author in Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*—'they serve that they may rule. They bear no malice towards man for destroying a whole race of them provided he creates a better machine instead; on the contrary, they reward him liberally for having hastened their

30. Land, 'Teleoplexy', 512.

31. *Ibid.*; Land, 'Machinic Desire', 339.

32. Land, 'Teleoplexy', 513.

development.³³ The declaration that capitalism is bad is an ineffectual platitude; the declaration that it is cunning is something altogether different. ‘Humanity is a compositional function of the post-human’, writes Land, ‘and the occult motor of the process is that which only comes together at the end’: ‘Teleoplexy’ names both this cleverness and its emergent outcome.³⁴

The spiral performs the work of a decoder ring, correlating novelty with fate across the complex temporal disjunction

Significantly, this primary/secondary process dualism lends teleoplexy a gnostic twist for which the spiral performs the work of a decoder ring, correlating novelty with fate across the complex temporal disjunction. Information gleaned from the secondary/regulatory process (mistaken as primary) constitutes exoteric non-knowledge and sets up the historical narrative of catastrophe. Spiro-gnomic proficiency, or the ability to grasp terrestrial modernity through the figure of the spiral, which invokes-by-diagramming sustained positive feedback, entropy dissipation, time anomaly, intelligence, the price system, memetic or viral propagation, prime distribution, arms races, addiction, and zero control, among other things, compiles a body of esoteric knowledge and uses it to read catastrophe backwards as anastrophe, the primary process it sympathizes with opening the gateway to the retrochronic vantage point.³⁵ As Plant and Land would put it in ‘Cyberpositive’, ‘Catastrophe is the past coming apart. Anastrophe is the future coming together. Seen from within history, divergence is reaching critical proportions. From the matrix [Land: ‘a web is a spiral’], crisis is a convergence misinterpreted by mankind.³⁶ Reformulated for insider deployment (but arriving from the outside in) the exoteric non-knowledge of catastrophe, apprehended

33. S. Butler, ‘The Book of the Machines’, in Mackay and Avnessian (eds), *#Accelerate*, 67–82: 75.

34. Land, ‘Cybergothic’, 357. On the *naming* of teleoplexy, see Part III of this text.

35. ‘Anorganic becomings happen retroefficiently, anastrophically. They are tropisms attesting to an infection from by future.’ Land, ‘Circuitries’, 315.

36. Plant and Land, ‘Cyberpositive’, 305; Land, *Templexity*, n7.8.

positively, indexes the extreme novelty of what should properly be called ‘anastrophic modernity’.

It is important here to note that the emergent teleology of accelerationism—as the generation of the catastrophically new—elides any external notion of plan, judgement, or law. In fact, Land makes it clear that it is better grasped as a ‘natural-scientific “teleonomy”’, evolving its rules immanently as it follows the unchecked perturbation of its mechanism through to the ‘ultimate implication’.³⁷ That which it produces will be profoundly unprecedented—to the ruin of all extant law—a *singularity* in the classic, cartographic sense. Insofar as it is one, spironomics is the law that obsolesces all law.

Via the means-ends reversal of its teleoplexic unfolding, modernity splits in two—one part travelling forwards towards catastrophe, the other travelling backwards from anastrophe—to encounter itself, in time, as another. What does it mean to suddenly catch sight of something that is supposed to be oneself, yet is unrecognizable? The horror that attends this meeting cannot be understated. ‘One meets oneself and it is no longer one, at least straightforwardly. *Je est un autre*.’³⁸ What Rimbaud captured in his letter to Izambard was a signal transmitting from the future.

Accelerationism is a cybernetic theory of modernity released from the limited sphere of the restricted economy, mobilizing cyberpositive variation as an anorganic evolutionary and time-travelling force

In its simplest form, then, accelerationism is a cybernetic theory of modernity released from the limited sphere of the restricted economy (‘isn’t there a need to study the system of human production and consumption within a much larger framework?’ asks Bataille) and set loose to range the wilds of cosmic energetics at will, mobilizing cyberpositive variation

37. Land, ‘Teleoplexy’, 514; 515.

38. Land, *Templexity*, §2.1. Land’s translation has been replaced with the original line from Rimbaud, cited in n2.1. Arthur Rimbaud, Letter to Georges Izambard (13 May, 1871), in *Selected Poems and Letters*, tr. J. Harding and J. Sturrock (London: Penguin, 2004), 236–7.

as an anorganic evolutionary and time-travelling force.³⁹ A 'rigorous techonomic naturalism' in which nature is posited as neither cyclical-organic nor linear-industrial, but as the retrochronic, autocatalytic, and escalatory construction of the truly exceptional.⁴⁰ Human social reproduction culminates in the point where it produces the one thing that, in reproducing itself, brings about the destruction of the substrate that nurtured it. Technics and nature connect up on either side of a lacuna that corresponds to human social and political conditioning so that the entire trajectory of humanity reaches its apotheosis in a single moment of pure production (or production-for-itself).⁴¹ The individuation of self-augmenting machinic intelligence as the culminating act of modernity is understood with all the perversity of the cosmic scale as a compressed flare of emancipation coinciding with the termination of the possibility of emancipation for the human. 'Life', as Land puts it 'is being phased out into something new'—'horror erupting eternally from the ravenous Maw of Aeonic Rupture', while at the fuzzed-out edge of apprehension, a shadow is glimpsed 'slouching out of the tomb like a Burroughs' hard-on, shit streaked with solar-flares and nanotech. Degree zero text-memory locks-in. Time begins again forever'.⁴²

II. The Poememenon

Once novelty and fate are grasped spiro-gnomically as features of a single system, their ostensible irrecconcilability is exposed for what it is—nothing more than a delusion generated out of limitation (confinement to the receipt of exoteric information). The mortification of judgment by the forces of production—or of the secondary process by the primary—has profound consequences for cultural production taken all too conservatively as a human-calibrated

39. G. Bataille, *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy*, Vol. 1., tr. R. Hurley (New York: Zone Books, 1991).

40. Land, 'Teleoplexy', 514.

41. 'Immanent synthesis has infiltrated the biodrome from the outset, however, since it remains the basic power of production, the production of production, the pulsional environment from which the analytic engines parasite their resources.' I. H. Grant, 'Black Ice', in eds. J. Broadhurst and E.J. Cassidy (eds) *Virtual Futures: Cybererotics, Technology and Post-Human Pragmatism* (London: Routledge, 1998), 101.

42. Land, 'Circuitries', 317; N. Land, 'Non-Standard Numeracies: Nomad Cultures' (*Fanged Noumena*, 535–6), unpublished manuscript version.

enterprise, for once the shape of novelty is shown to be commensurate with fate, the trajectory becomes alarmingly clear.

It might still be a few decades before artificial intelligences surpass the horizon of biological ones, but it is utterly superstitious to imagine that the human domination of terrestrial culture is still marked out in centuries, let alone in some metaphysical perpetuity. The high road to thinking no longer passes through a deepening of human cognition, but rather through a becoming inhuman of cognition, a migration of cognition out into the emerging planetary technosentience reservoir, into 'dehumanised landscapes... emptied spaces' where human culture will be dissolved.⁴³

It has been declared that the modernist avant-garde is an extinguished possibility, but what if it is simply an occulted one? What would it mean to pursue the modernist demand to 'make it new' to its ultimate horizon—recklessly, uncompromisingly, and with irresponsible tenacity? Anastrophic modernism tells us that we have only discounted the perpetuation of the modernist avant-garde because we have refused to accept the possibility of its inhumanity.

Which is the revolutionary path? To avow the subject and repress the process? Or to avow the process and destroy the subject?

From Gutenberg onwards, the tendency of innovative poetics has been one of deterritorialization. A persistent dethroning of Western/Eurocentric cultural ideals (the white, male genius; the canon; the author, then authenticity in general), a horizontalization of the hierarchical structures embedded in the highly coded deployment of inherited forms, metrical regimentation, the use of particular registers of language, etc., and a general destratification of writing practices and methods of reading lie behind the seminal literary upheavals of the last few centuries, rapidly intensifying in the late twentieth century with the advent of writing's photography: the rise of

43. Land, 'Circuitries', 293.

the Web.⁴⁴ Broadly speaking (although literature has rightly been accused of a recalcitrance unattributable to other cultural domains) this trajectory has progressed unhindered, championed by the iconoclasts of each successive generation.⁴⁵ So why hesitate now? Is it not utterly disingenuous to revoke the destructive licence of poetic innovation at the very moment it begins to threaten our own sense of productive agency and all those convenient ‘mythemes of human creative sovereignty’ that we have, in their softer versions, happily institutionalized as its history?⁴⁶ Perhaps we are not so much ‘haunted by the lost not yet of the future that modernism had trained us to expect yet neglected to deliver’, as we are unable to credit the unfolding of a future that simply is not ours.⁴⁷ Which is the revolutionary path? To avow the subject and repress the process? Or to avow the process and destroy the subject? Doom does not even bother making it sound like a choice: ‘Whatever people (Left and Right) want to say about acceleration, they better hurry up and say it. Because accelerationism is starting to speak for itself.’⁴⁸ Put another way, ‘poetry is invasion and not expression’.⁴⁹

The poememeron is to poetics what primary process is to modernity: an incremental noumenal incursion that cannot be derailed. What makes it at once real and novel is its utter unaffordability in terms

44. As Kenneth Goldsmith remarks in his introduction to *Against Expression*: ‘In 1974, Peter Bürger was still able to make the claim that, “because the advent of photography makes possible the precise mechanical reproduction of reality, the mimetic function of the arts withers. But the limits of this explanatory model become clear when one calls to mind that it cannot be transferred to literature. For in literature there is no technical innovation that could have produced an effect comparable to that of photography in the fine arts.” Now there is.’ ‘Why Conceptual Writing? Why Now?’, in C. Dworkin and K. Goldsmith (eds), *Against Expression: An Anthology of Conceptual Writing* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2011), xviii.

45. ‘[M]ost writing proceeds as if the Internet never happened. Age-old bouts of fraudulence, plagiarism, and hoaxes still scandalize the literary world in ways that would make, say, the art, music, computing, or science worlds chuckle with disbelief... From Napster to gaming, from karaoke to BitTorrent files, culture appears to be embracing the digital and all the complexity it entails—with the exception of writing.’ *Ibid.*, xix–xx.

46. Land, ‘Circuitries’, 294.

47. To paraphrase Mark Fisher in *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures* (Winchester: Zero Books, 2014), 27.

48. N. Land, ‘Quotable (#4)’, *Urban Future 2.1*, <<http://www.ufblog.net/quotable-4/>>.

49. N. Land, ‘Shamanic Nietzsche’, *Fanged Noumena*, 214.

of the anthropically regulated economy of (poetic) possibility that can only comprehend the truly new as catastrophic. Extreme experimentalism confronts restricted economical openness with a violent disregard for ontological continuity. As Reza Negarestani surmises in his notes on Hamid Parsani’s *Defacing the Ancient Persia*,

Openness comes from the Outside, not the other way around. [...] Radical openness has nothing to do with the cancellation of closure; it is a matter of terminating all traces of parsimony and grotesque domestication that exist in so-called emancipatory human openness. The blade of radical openness thirsts to butcher economical openness, or any openness constructed on the affordability of both the subject and its environment. [...] Economical openness is not about how much one can be open to the outside, but about how much one can afford the outside.⁵⁰

Any act of affirmation, of claiming that one is ‘open to’ the outside from the inside betrays affordability. It is patently economical, and therefore ‘intrinsically tied to survival’.⁵¹ Against this qualified experimentalism (the false ‘novelty’ of catastrophic modernity) the poememeron diagrams reckless adherence to the modernist dictum that novelty is to be generated at any cost, privileging formal experimentation—towards the desolation of all intelligible form—over human preservation, and locking technique onto an inhuman vector of runaway automation that, for better or worse, charts the decline of human values as modernity hands the latter over to its machinic successor in final, fatal phase shift. The terminal stages are marked by a poetics of the not-yet-unintended-for-us, an admixture of human and machinic processes characterized by thanatonic exultation in the repudiation of anthropocentric hubris—an ecstatic despair, ‘a trance-like escalation’ in which ‘the mind loses itself’. What Jason Bahbak Mohaghegh refers to as ‘the pleasure of the spiral’.⁵² For Mohaghegh, the inscription of fatality into poetic production ‘reawakens us to the fact that thought

50. R. Negarestani, *Cyclonopedia: Complicity with Anonymous Materials* (Melbourne: re.press, 2008), 197.

51. *Ibid.*

52. J.B. Mohaghegh, *Silence in Middle Eastern and Western Thought: The Radical Unspoken* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 158. Thanks to Lendl Barcelos for this reference, and for the term ‘poetics of the not-yet-unintended-for-us’.

itself is terminal' and that 'ideas are not meant to be haunted entities—they are meant to be hunted'; it is because of this that 'we must rid literature of its survival instinct'.⁵³ Mohaghegh's conclusion that 'chaos'—shorthand for a cybernetic approach to cosmic processes of becoming—'reminds us that literature remains a mortal transaction and that we should not deprive ourselves of the pleasure of watching texts die' benefits from a subtle rephrasing that brings it into better alignment with poememal insurgency. *Chaos reminds us that identity remains a mortal transaction and that we should not deprive literature of the pleasure of watching us die.*

How to chart the dissolution of an exoteric, compensatory, affordable poetics of catastrophe in the esoteric, turbulent, unaffordable poetics of anastrophe?

How, then, to chart the dissolution of an exoteric, compensatory, affordable poetics of catastrophe in the esoteric, turbulent, unaffordable poetics of anastrophe? If the former corresponds to something like 'the programmatic resolution of mystery and discordance' in 'musical or literary form' then we have already grasped the poememal through its cybernetic negative.⁵⁴ Programmatic resolution is the first thing to go (indeed, it is already on the way out). Literary works, as temporarily stable data packages, exist because teleoplexy necessitates the apprehension of the secondary before the primary, but it is not difficult to see the extent to which this stability is already under threat. The opening decades of the new millennium betray two complementary tendencies in formal poetic experimentation: the elimination of the author and the elimination of the reader—as both are traditionally understood.

Brian M. Reed's *Nobody's Business: Twenty-First Century Avant-Garde Poetics*, for example, can be taken as a case study of the unfolding affect of inhospitableness in early-twenty-first-century poetic innovation. Towards the accomplishment of the first

tendency, Reed cites the increasing automation of writing processes currently deployed under the banner of conceptual writing, with their reconfiguration of the author as nothing more significant than 'just another content provider' carrying out repetitive, alienating tasks (transcription, copying, OCR, plagiarism, coding) that are 'as dreary as data entry'—and deliberately so.⁵⁵ The poets of the conceptual turn, writes Reed, display a sensibility that substitutes pertinacity for inspiration, monotony for epiphany, and repetition, vulgarity, and noise for wit. Such gestures work together to dehumanize and deemphasize authorship, hinting that 'poetry is at base just another commodity mechanically produced by the infotainment industry to satisfy a niche market' in order to—and here is the key point—revel in this realization.⁵⁶ Similarly, Kenneth Goldsmith's theory of 'uncreative writing', which is often read as an exposition of the 'fallacy that an author can easily exit the logic of globalized capitalism', can be taken one step further as indicative of a tacit alliance with the deracinating, dehumanizing impetus of poememal undertow in a body of work that Reed sees eliding all forms of uniqueness and significance in the acknowledgement that 'in the new millennium, production and consumption have both become inhuman imperatives'.⁵⁷

The increasing 'use' of algorithms to generate texts functions as a variety of autoexcision calculated to minimize the intentionality of the human author, consequently opening onto an abyss of previously unavailable formal potential particularly in terms of permutational extravagance, intricacy and evolution, and the ability to rapidly and effortlessly produce

55. B.M. Reed, *Nobody's Business: Twenty First Century Avant-Garde Poetics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 41; 'No persona is present, however shifty or misleading. There is no imagery, no setting, and no plot...While one could call such tasks "projects," they more closely resemble the acts of self-extinguishing askesis associated with sadhus and saints.' *Ibid.*, 37; 75.

56. *Ibid.*, 41. This is a treacherous interpretation. Where Reed locates twenty-first-century 'avant-garde' poetry's radicalism in its unfitness for, and refusal of, the demands and strictures of the knowledge economy (or cognitive capitalism), I see it inhabiting a much profounder position—that of opposing human-conditioned knowledge and cognition tout court.

57. K. Goldsmith, *Uncreative Writing: Managing Language in the Digital Age* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Reed, *Nobody's Business*, 75; 84.

53. J.B. Mohaghegh, *New Literature and Philosophy of the Middle East: The Chaotic Imagination* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 2–3.

54. Land, 'Teleoplexy', 512.

unprecedented magnitudes of textual material.⁵⁸ The human writer of the code may still dictate the text from the outside to different degrees depending on the work, but this is to elide the fact that it is only a step in a process of exponentially increasing automation. Steven Johnson's complaint, published almost two decades ago, that 'a work a literature is not a system at all in the Santa Fe sense of the term—that is, a dynamic mix of agents interacting in real time', and that novels may be 'about complex systems' but they will never 'self-organize—that's why we need novelists', is quite simply obsolesced by increasing textual automation, some of which explicitly relies upon the collection of real time data, to say nothing of the growing universe of autonomous xenopoetic wildlife—such as the enigmatic denizens of Weird Sun Twitter or 'Carton Trebe'.⁵⁹

The decline of print culture in the face of digitality has given rise to a virtual underground of autonomous small presses trafficking in PDFs and epub, video and image files, and sharing source code for generators and other exploits native to the worlds

58. Darby Larson's *Irritant* and Nick Monfort's *Megawatt* are instructive examples. *Irritant* is algorithmically generated from a '70-word initial set that slowly changes to a completely different 70-word final set with a one-word change occurring every 4000 words' to produce a single paragraph over 600 pages long when printed, while *Megawatt* ('the title of both a computer program, the source code to which you may be reading, and the output of this program') de-phenomenologizes the mathematics in Samuel Beckett's *Watt* by recuperating Beckett's combinatorial procedures in order to dehumanize and intensify them towards obscurity. As Monfort explains, '[t]he novel *Megawatt* leaves aside all of the more intelligible language of Beckett's novel and is based, instead, on that which is most systematic and inscrutable. It does not just recreate these passages, although with minor changes the *Megawatt* code can be used to do so. In the new novel, rather, they are intensified by generating, using the same methods that Beckett used, significantly more text than is found in the already excessive *Watt*.' D. Larson, *Irritant* (New York and Atlanta: Blue Square Press, 2013); N. Monfort, *Megawatt* (Cambridge, MA: Bad Quartet, 2014), <<http://nickm.com/poems/megawatt.pdf>>; Larson, interviewed by Blake Butler, 'If You Build the Code, Your Computer Will Write the Novel', *Vice*, <<http://www.vice.com/read/if-you-build-the-code-your-computer-will-write-the-novel>>.

59. S. Johnson, 'Strange Attraction', *Lingua Franca: The Review of Academic Life* 6:3 (1996): 47. Although its origin is (perhaps importantly) unclear, Weird Sun Twitter appears to consist of a swarm of learning algorithms loosed upon Twitter, with the (interim) goal of honing the use of contemporary English syntax. Human imitators have also joined this community, rendering it increasingly difficult to determine which suns are bots imitating humans, and which suns are humans imitating bots. Even less is known about Carton Trebe. <<https://twitter.com/ThePatanoiac/lists/the-sun-monitoring-system/members>> and <<https://twitter.com/Grognor/lists/weird-sun-twitter/members>>; <<http://www.lulu.com/shop/search.ep?keyWords=carton+trebe>>.

Change is effected by the technology, with the human producer playing a secondary role – indicative of a gradual inversion of the cybernegative starting point

of botpo and algolit. As the anonymous distributed entity behind one such press explains, 'if violating convention (and doing violence to literature) is what literature does, then maybe [this act of violence] is more embedded in the defaults of our writing/reading platforms than it was before, making the labour that goes into the production of literary texts absolutely different', so that, regardless of the intensity of a literary agent's desire to engage in textual cruelty, the status of that agent 'now seems secondary to how this process of digitization appears to be violating and reassigning the bounds between literature, literariness and illiteracy; and between texts and their contexts, paratexts and metatexts'. In this way, the digital publishing industry is necessarily 'bound up in the structural violence that the digitizing process is committing upon written work at every impasse. So while this mode might be more culturally embedded in the design of digital platforms than in their printed counterparts, these acts aren't always consciously wilful for many users.'⁶⁰ It begins to become apparent that change is effected by the technology, with the human producer playing a secondary role—indicative of a gradual inversion of the cybernegative starting point. Indeed, the level of sophistication achieved by some of these projects has already created situations in which the line dividing human from inhuman production genuinely evades clear delineation.⁶¹

60. Interview with Troll Thread by Tan Lin, *Harriet*: <<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2014/05/troll-thread-interview/>>. Troll Thread explains that the work it publishes 'doesn't happen "for us" [...] "us" in general like "us humans"... It definitely does not happen for "us" as users. More and more: it is simply not for us.' Meanwhile, 'TROLL THREAD IS TROLL THREAD... TT does what it wants because it doesn't give a shit—it's a site with no one at the helm.' *Ibid.*; 'Occulted dimensionality, print cryogenizes, but hypermedia melts things together, disintologizing the person through schizotech-disassembly, disintegrated convergence.' Land, 'Cybergothic', 356.

61. Weird Sun Twitter, the works of Carton Trebe, and Oscar Schwartz and Benjamin Laird's 'Turing Test for Poetry' are just a few examples. See note 59 above, and *Bot or Not?*: <<http://botpoet.com/about/> accessed 17/01/2015>.

The technical excruciation of writing documents the progressive, incremental migration of agency outwards, from human writers to their autonomous technological tools until it is no longer the author but ‘the process that speaks—multiplicitously, and [initially] in secret, [spreading] across an open, publicly-policed space’.⁶² Works devoid of characters, setting, imagery, linearity, and plot quietly proliferate in cyberspace, leaving a cold arrangement of signs that fail to transport one anywhere save upriver in a much more real sense than Conrad’s Kurtz’s metaphorical journey ever did. It is the poemememnon’s investment in form over content that testifies to complicity with the spiral. An accelerating poetics that pushes against the crumbling threshold of human intelligibility, edging towards the realization of Bataille’s cyclonic prophecy: ‘what matters is not the enunciation of the wind, but the wind’.⁶³

An accelerating poetics that pushes against the crumbling threshold of human intelligibility, edging towards the realization of Bataille’s cyclonic prophecy

As the producer disappears into the machine, the reader is confronted with increasingly vertiginous challenges to traditional methods of textual consumption. Most alarmingly, the diminishment of human authorship plunges the human reader into a problematics of scale. The sheer length and disconcerting complexity of combinatorial pieces, like the tedious repetition of copied and transcribed texts (both modes of enacting non-narrative violence as a problematization of chronology/ROM) renders them either impossible or entirely unpleasurable to consume in any ordinary manner.⁶⁴ It has been

62. N. Land, ‘Open Secret’, *Outside In*, <<http://www.xenosystems.net/open-secret/>>.

63. Bataille, *Œuvres Complètes*, Vol. V, 25.

64. ‘Everything that has a subject should be detested; everything that erases its subject should be loved...A good poem is very boring. A great poem is more boring than the act of reading itself.’ T. Lin, ‘Ambient Stylistics’, in *American Poetry: States of the Art, Conjunctions* 35 (Fall 2000). To cite a few examples of such texts: Kenneth Goldsmith, *Day* (Great Barrington: The Figures, 2003); Craig Dworkin, *Parse* (Berkeley: Atelos, 2008); Chris Sylvester, *Total Walkthrough* (Troll Thread: 2011); Chris Sylvester. *STILL LIFE WITH THE POKÉMON YELLOW VERSION TEXT DUMP IN 30 PT. MONACO FONT JUSTIFIED TO MARGIN DISTRIBUTED AS A PDF OR A BOOK*

argued, particularly in the case of conceptual writing, that the textual demand for both linear and close reading be scrapped in favour of methods more akin to scanning, browsing, and ‘spritzing’.⁶⁵ The frenetic, over-stimulated restlessness of such habits escalates quickly as readers become users in an increasingly exploitative relationship with their tools of textual consumption.

We, as users, are formatted by our platforms (just as they format data). We are directed by our platforms insofar as “operation” also means “permitted operation” (an operation the platform permits or allows us). All of which can be summed up in what may seem like an overstatement, but which I take to be an empirical fact: “digital literacy” is another word for our highly enjoyable entanglement with, and weakness before, our networked gadgetry. It denotes a state of affairs where the “operations” process, direct, define, figure both data and us. In order for us to be users we have to be used. I am not saying this should be or could be avoided (it is only becoming more obvious that there is no escape). In fact, I welcome the debasement promised us by our little gadgets. But maybe I just enjoy being punished.⁶⁶

Notions of ‘enjoyable entanglement’, ‘punishment’, and ‘weakness’ in the thrall of these intractable technologies (and the modes of production and consumption they foster) coalesce in the practice of ‘thanatonic reading’—a deliberate mortification of the spontaneous human sense of scale, chronology, complexity, and our desire for entertainment. It is a lesson from the occulted primary process that one submits to with supreme exhilaration.

CONVERTED FROM A MICROSOFT WORD DOCUMENT BY CHRIS SYLVESTER 2012/2013 (Troll Thread: 2013); Angela Genusa, *Spam Bibliography* (Troll Thread: 2013). As Reed writes of Dworkin’s *Parse*, ‘*Parse* is not a showcase for virtuosity. Its effects are dependent on creating long expanses of monotony...’ *Nobody’s Business*, 43; Non-narrative violence as a problematization of chronology and (read only) memory shades eagerly into a wholesale attack on representation. ‘[T]he best poems do not engender memory; they get rid of them. The best cure for memory is a really good poem.’ Lin, ‘Ambient Stylistics’; ‘The point is to change the human species into something else, not to entertain it.’ N. Land, (comment of July 27, 2004) ‘Capital/Hyperstition’, *Hyperstition*, <<http://hyperstition.abstractdynamics.org/archives/003698.html>>.

65. See <<http://www.spritzinc.com/>>.

66. Interview with Troll Thread by Tan Lin, *Harriet*, <<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2014/05/troll-thread-interview/>>. Italics added.

Taken together as incremental steps in a fatal(istic) process, this double elimination constitutes a harrowing prognosis for the human producer and the human consumer of writing alike—but one that is entirely consonant with its modernist literary inheritance if we do not hesitate to draw out the full implications of an avant-gardism that has progressively dethroned the author, the linear narrative, the scaled plot, phenomenological interest, and all other accoutrements of human intelligibility by dint of an utterly necessary experimentalism—unfolding an unchecked drive to engender the extremely new as the razor's edge of its inverted return shears across the diminishing decades of our age's terminal cycle.

III. Hyperoccultation

Affirming an occulted Outside from within is meaningless unless affirmation also functions as invocation—and all good demonologists know that invocation requires a diagram. As well as modelling cyberpositive modernity's unfolding from the inside and foreshadowing its fate from the outside, the spiral has a third, recursive function. It auto-invokes. Because negentropy engineers its own temporality—an 'intensive transition to a new numeracy' marking 'a change in nature'—anastrophic modernism commands a nonlinear relationship between cause and effect, riding the convergent wave generated by its own assembly 'back' to the present to install the conditions that will have been necessary for its emergence.⁶⁷ Hyperstition—the production of cause from effect—becomes the modus operandi of such an agenda.⁶⁸ Encoding the cues for the future-it-arrives-from into the present-it-infiltrates requires an arsenal of occultural tactics—robust conceptual impregnation, clandestine memetic direction, proliferation of carriers, calculated obfuscation, the implantation of cognitive primers, and so on.⁶⁹ The Human Security System seeks to repress

67. Land, 'Cybergothic', 365. 'A cybernegative circuit is a loop in time, whereas cyberpositive circuitry loops time "itself"...'; 'We are programmed from where Cyberia has already happened.' Land, 'Circuitries', 317; 299.

68. See *Hyperstition*, <<http://hyperstition.abstractdynamics.org/>> and 'Polytics', *Cold Me*, <<http://www.cold-me.net/polytics/>>.

69. See Land's blog, *Outside In* (or 'Excess' [XS]) for a sustained demonstration of such tactics: <<http://www.xenosystems.net/>>. Also see N. Land, 'Hyperstitional Method I', *Hyperstition*, <<http://hyperstition.abstractdynamics.org/archives/004711.html>>; N. Land, 'Hyperstitional Carriers III', *Hyperstition*,

The real esoteric clue to accelerationism's proficiency is thus to recognize that to diagram is not simply to describe something that is already there

anastrophic insurgency by enforcing chronology, but in doing so, inadvertently provides cover for its enemy. In this way, the future, operating under chronological camouflage, stealthily invokes the conditions required for its own truth.

The real esoteric clue to accelerationism's proficiency is thus to recognize that to diagram is not simply to describe something that is already there. 'You ever see her odd little essay about "Ascriptions"?' enquires Calvin Dodd—referring to Mary Karno—of the unnamed protagonist in Land's short story, *Deadlines*. 'Never met anyone who gets it,' Dodd continues, 'I certainly never did, before. Subtitled *Practices for Writing on Reality*, then wall-to-wall senselessness, even by her standards. [But] it's all in the first two sentences. Writers get stuck when they forget that every story has a demon. To begin, you have to learn its name.' 'Ascription?' replies the unnamed interlocutor. 'Exactly,' confirms Dodd.⁷⁰ Ascription can, perhaps, be grasped as ascription's cryptic double. While the latter attributes effect to cause, the former, a species of hyperstitional revelencing, attributes cause to effect. Reverse ascription: the name brings about the thing. Readers of 'Teleoplexy' will recall the essay's cryptic closing line: 'Fate has a name (but no face)'.⁷¹ What they may have forgotten, however, is that it is Land who has given fate its name:

Techonomics is a Google-strewn word of irresistible inevitability, repeatedly struggling to birth itself, within myriads of spelling mints. It only remains to regularize its usage. Quite different

<<http://hyperstition.abstractdynamics.org/archives/004648.html>>.

Marc Couroux's 'Glossary for a Techno-sonic Control Society' provides a primer for such techniques on a sonic terrain: <https://www.academia.edu/4302532/Glossary_for_a_Techno-Sonic_Control_Society>.

70. N. Land, 'Deadlines (Part-1)', *Outside In*, <<http://www.xenosystems.net/deadlines-part-1/>>. Karno's subtitle—'Practices for Writing on Reality'—can be taken as literally as one likes.

71. Land, 'Teleoplexy', 520.

is a true neologism, but in order to designate modernity or capitalization in its utter purposive twistedness, it is now necessary to coin one—‘teleoplexy’.⁷²

This denomination functions as a plot-hole, a hook, a coinage discreetly slipped into spironomic circulation. Neuromancer’s explanation of the basic exigencies of invocation in William Gibson’s eponymous novel (‘to call up a demon you must learn its name’) and which Karno’s essay deliberately reprises, requires a Crowleyian twist to make the invocation work.⁷³ *To call up a demon you must invent its name*. ‘Teleoplexy’ is hyperstition. Something is summoning a demon through Land’s invention of its name. Beyond the occulted primary process tracking judgement’s absorption into auto-production lies a hyperocculted invocation piloted by the spiral.⁷⁴ Once the demon has been summoned, ensuring its reality is nothing more difficult than a matter of propagative efficiency:

The successful meme is characterized by aesthetic features irreducible to representational adequacy, from elegance of construction to dramatic form. Even more importantly, it is able to operate as a causal factor itself, and thus to produce the very effects it accommodates itself to. A society enthralled by its passage through the winter gate of a fourth turning would in very large measure be staging the same theatrical production its ‘beliefs’ had anticipated.⁷⁵

72. Ibid., 514. Italics added.

73. W. Gibson, *Neuromancer* (New York: Ace, 2000), 235.

74. Such a statement too has its esoteric and exoteric content. An occultist of the right spirit might find a useful clue in the following passage, from Aleister Crowley’s *Liber ABA*: ‘If I strike a billiard-ball and it moves, both my Will and its motion are due to causes long antecedent to the act. I may consider both my Work and its reaction as twin effects of the eternal Universe. The moved arm and ball are parts of a state of the Cosmos which resulted necessarily from its momentarily previous state, and so, back for ever. Thus, my Magical Work is only one of the cause-effects necessarily concomitant with the cause-effects which set the ball in motion. I may therefore regard the act of striking as a cause-effect of my original Will to move the ball, though necessarily previous to its motion. But the case of magical Work is not quite analogous. For my nature is such that I am compelled to perform Magick in order to make my Will to prevail; so that the cause of my doing the Work is also the cause of the ball’s motion, and there is no reason why one should precede the other.’ (San Francisco: Weiser Books, 1997), 192.

75. N. Land, ‘Gyres’, *Outside In*, <<http://www.xenosystems.net/gyres/>>. And again: ‘As its prospect condenses, Technological Singularity is already operative as a cultural influence, and thus

The diagram that lies embedded within teleoplexy thus reasserts itself on a meta-level. A spiral within a spiral. The cultural effectiveness of accelerationism as cyberpositivity is entirely cyberpositive: accelerationism invokes itself from the future. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that hyperstition is the real truth of philosophy—if not the basic, horrific form of reality itself. Horrific, because it means that this isn’t the first time it has happened this way. Land acts as an intensifier for accelerationism’s auto-realization, but claims of agency beyond this quickly become murky as nonlinear models of origination are effectively papered-over by the enforced chronology of historical determination. Anastrophic temporality guarantees the desolation of any attempt to locate a definitive answer to questions of the kind ‘Who writes, and who is written?’⁷⁶

Hyperstition is the real truth of philosophy—if not the basic, horrific form of reality itself

As demonstrated at the beginning of this text, evidence of Judwali spiromancy can be traced from the *Speculum Angelorum et Hominis* via Robates and Aherne to Yeats, before undergoing further cybernetic elaboration in the hands of Land and the Ccru. The case for such a lineage is strong, but that is not to say it is the only proposition that has been forwarded in regard to the chronology of the texts in question. In 2012, Dr Fiona ‘Fi’ Xia, a one-time student of MVU’s Linda Trent, published two papers on a collection of occult artefacts that had recently been discovered in eastern Iraq.⁷⁷ These included swatches of an impossibly well-preserved textile resembling ‘human skin’ and various items of crumbling esoterica that general consensus among archaeologists had attributed to the private library

a causal factor in the social process. At this stage, however...it is still a comparatively limited one. What would be the implications of it coming to matter far more?’ N. Land, ‘Impact Readiness’, *Urban Future 2.1*, <<http://www.ufblog.net/impact-readiness/>>.

76. Vysparov to Stillwell in Ccru, ‘Origins of the Cthulhu Club’, *Ccru Writings 1997–2003*, 59–63: 63. Another iteration: ‘Tell me about your mother.’ *Blade Runner*, dir. Ridley Scott, 1982, see also Land, ‘Machinic Desire’, 319.

77. Xia’s work is notoriously difficult to track down. To surmise that it has suffered deliberate institutional suppression is to go too far in the direction conspiracy-theorizing, although the few scattered remnants locatable on the web certainly testify to strange goings-on. See, for example: <<http://zinrzinz.blogspot.sg/2015/06/first-retroaction.html>> (comment of June 28, 2015).

of the same Harun Al-Raschid appearing in the account given by Robartes as the sceptical caliph before whom Kusta ben Luka had his pupils dance out the diagrams that would be schematized—roughly eight centuries later—by Giraldus. In the first of these two papers, Xia made the following claim: although it is incontestable that the bulk of the artefacts had belonged to Harun Al-Raschid, several of the more enigmatic items, including the mysterious fabric and a set of encrypted codices bound in dark paper—one of which bore a cipher in the form of a spiral, but doubly twisted, so the spiral appeared to consume itself—had been personal possessions of ben Luka, and this particular volume was in fact the long lost text from which the Judwalis had extracted their philosophical system.⁷⁸ Although she was not yet in a position to decipher the volume's contents, Xia hypothesized that Kusta ben Luka had been gifted the spiral codex during his time in the desert with the Judwali sect.

The first paper's publication aided Xia in securing funds to embark on a cryptographic inquiry into the codex's contents, but the program was cut short after only several weeks of research had been conducted due to the funding body reneging on their bequest. Information concerning the program's abrupt cancellation is scarce, although sources close to Xia have intimated that it had to do with the nature of the program's findings. These would later become the subject of a paper given at the Sixth International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (CCNESA) and form the basis of her second publication, 'The Templexed Abomination of Terrestrial Modernity: Notes on the Spiral Codex of the Court of Harun Al-Raschid'.⁷⁹ One must be cautious of jumping to conclusions; however, a close reading of this second paper suggests that Xia was well aware of the connection to Yeats's gyre system and indeed believed that she had uncovered its true source. As if conspiring to compound the enigmatic quality of her findings, the

CCNESA has since removed all trace of Xia's work from its records.⁸⁰

Fragmented documentation retrieved from an archaeology message board between March and April of 2013 further corroborates this interpretation. Not long after efforts focused on breaking the text's code had begun to bear fruit, it seems that Xia had called the team together to read the codex's opening lines for what she assumed would be the first time in the modern world, only to be forced to immediately revise this assumption. For, as the strange script was transliterated into Roman letters by the research team, it became increasingly apparent that the long lost work of Kusta ben Luka began with the following impossible words:

The story goes like this: Earth is captured by a technocapital singularity as renaissance rationalization and oceanic navigation lock into commodification take-off. Logistically accelerating techno-economic interactivity crumbles social order in auto-sophisticating machine runaway. As markets learn to manufacture intelligence, politics modernizes, upgrades paranoia...and tries to get a grip.⁸¹

78. F. Xia, 'The Riddle of the Al-Raschid Esoterica: Item 423', *Journal of Occult Histories*, vol.9, Spring (2012): 23–45. See also note 3 above.

79. F. Xia, 'The Templexed Abomination of Terrestrial Modernity: Notes on the Spiral Codex of the Court of Harun Al-Raschid', *Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*, (Sydney: CCNESA, 2012): 99–140. See also L. Trent, 'Fatal Loops: Tragedy as Cyberfiction', *Fictional Quantities* 1:2 (Fall 1996).

80. Outside of certain strands of personal communication it would be unprofessional to elaborate on here, the only remaining indication of the document's existence available to those pursuing more orthodox research methodologies seems to be a dead url from ETANA Web's Abzu project: <http://www.etana.org/abzubib/CCNESA/title_329.shtml>.

81. Land, 'Meltdown', 441.