

THE DROMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

“The best soldier is not so much the one who fights as the one who marches.” (Napoleon Bonaparte, *Napoleon in His Own Words*, p. 123)

“The first characteristic of modern machine civilization is its temporal regularity. From the moment of waking, the rhythm of the day is punctuated by the clock.” (Lewis Mumford, *The Future of Technics and Civilization*, p. 18-19)

“Ubiquity, instantaneity, and the populating of time supplant the populating of space .. the metropolitan concentration no longer makes sense .. Today, will and identity are mashed and blurred into the fusion/confusion of speed-space .. the City has disappeared into the heterogeneity of that regime comprised of the temporarility of advanced technologies. The urban figure is no longer designated by a dividing line that separates here from there. Instead, it has become a computerised timetable.” (Paul Virilio, *The Lost Dimension*, p. 119, p. 135, p. 14)

“Bring the weapon forward. In three stages. Raise the rifle with the right hand, bring it close to the body so as to hold it perpendicular with the right knee, the end of the barrel at eye level, grasping it by striking it with the right hand, the arm held close to the body at waist height .. ” (Ordinance du 1cr janvier, 1766 .., titre XI, article 2, quoted in Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 153)

“The intoxication of great speeds in cars is nothing but the joy of feeling oneself fused with the only *divinity*. Sportsmen are the first catechumens of this religion. Forthcoming destruction of houses and cities, to make way for great meeting places for cars and planes.” (Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, quoted in R.W. Flint, *Marinetti, Selected Writings*, p. 96)

“Time is a great deadener. People forget, get bored, grow old, go away.” (Jeanette Winterton, *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit*, p. 91)

Introduction/statement of problem

- *Toward a political economy of motion ..*
- *The move from rural existence to the city*
- *The necessities of civility, cleanliness, spaces of movement*
- *From disciplinary society to biokinetic society*
- *Acceleration as power*
- *Toward a cartography/chronology of the integral (global) city*

“Living is motion” as Faulkner would often say. This session aims to address this observation.

Over the course of the unit so far what I have tried to introduce you to are the glacial movements of the Classical and Modern epochs. We have been following the *trace*, the practices of power as developed over the period 1600-1900. We stretched as far back as Botero (1589), and the end of the High Renaissance, and as far forward as Freud and modern psychiatry. From the training of armies to the disciplining of civilians, these historical epochs have been dominated by two impulses: production and destruction. This is easy to see. But what is not so easy to see - at least at first glance - is that these impulses are related to something fundamentally deeper; a certain materiality of political life. “Life in motion” .. the relation to movement that underpins madness, the gaze, the body, the state, finance, commerce, defense, revolution. All are *kinetic* phenomenon. If living is motion, and the state facilitates life, what we’re interested in today is a form of state (a state model) that would emerge and take motion and kineticism as its foremost objective; the unidirectional channelling of the populace (the binding of the mass) - the *take-off* of the West. This question of the “take-off” entails a genealogy of urbanism, a genealogy of power, a genealogy of political technology, a genealogy of communication, a genealogy of political theoretics, a genealogy of transit, a genealogy of cartography, a genealogy of geometry .. all of which is ending (a project beginning in the 16thC) with the critical transition of the information age.¹ And today ..

“Today we’re in chrono-politics .. geography has been transformed .. Already now when you come back to Paris from Los Angeles or New York at certain times of the year, you can see, through the window, passing over the pole, the setting sun and the rising sun .. the airport today has become the new city. At Dallas-Fort Worth they serve thirty million passengers a year. At the end of this century there will be one hundred million. People are no longer citizens, they’re passengers in transit. They’re in circum navigation. When we know that every day there are over one hundred thousand people in the air, we can consider it a foreshadowing of future society: no longer a society of sedentarization, but one of passage; no longer a nomad society, in the sense of the great nomadic drifts, but one concentrated in the vector of transportation .. the city of the future is not the inertia of immobility, but the dictatorship of movement .. ” (Paul Virilio, *Pure War*, p. 6, pp. 64-5)

¹ with which we will deal next week ..

PREPARATIONS: THE ANNIHILATION OF SPACE IN & THROUGH TIME

Justus Lipsius (1547-1606)	Dutch <i>statitican</i> , philologist <i>Politicorum libri sex</i> (1589) manual of military/moral reform <i>De militia romana</i> (1595-6)
Giovanni Botero (1544-1617)	Italian counsellor, author of <i>The Reason of State</i> (1589) and <i>The Greatness of Cities</i> (1588)
Maurice of Orange (1567-1625) Gustavus II Adolfus (1594-1632)	Student of Lipsius King of Sweden (1611-1632) considered himself a student of Maurice of Orange
Frederick William I (1688-1740) Frederick II (the Great) (1712-1786) Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821)	King of Prussia (1713-1740) King of Prussia (1740-1786) soldier-king/philosopher-king The 'Newton of Detail'

FLASHPOINTS IN THE INVESTMENT IN SPEED (THE DROMOCRATIC REVOLUTION)

The French Revolutionary Wars (1792-1795/9) - the motor of society set loose (especially the Terror, 1793-4)
The Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815) - *levee en masse* (Napoleon)
The American Civil War (1861-1865) - first use of railroads in warfare
The Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) - Moltke²/Bismarck
Taylorism .. scientific management
Italian Futurism (Marinetti .. the *aesthetics* of speed)

² Helmuth von Moltke (1800-1891), chief of the Prussian and German general staff, revolutionised the command structure to take advantage of speed.

From rural to urban existence

- *We must begin in history.*
- *Think again about the practices of the Classical age. What was the “Great Confinement”? Charles I was the first to enact an act of ‘enclosure’ - what was its function? For a detailed historical treatment of the city, and the constitution of modern civil space more generally see: Lewis Mumford³, Karl Polanyi⁴, Richard Sennett and Max Weber⁵*
- *Mass society: resultant of massive demographic shifts from the country to the city in the 19th and 20th centuries .. in the 19th century the population of Europe doubled .. in th US it leapt from 4 million in 1790 to 75 million by 1900!⁶*
- *Along with the demographic explosion emerged new forms of co-operation (corporations, giving way themselves to monopolies ... employing ever greater numbers)*

“The crowding of people into small spaces bears with it a tremendous increase in specialised demands. People need streets, public water supplies, public sewage systems, garbage disposal, police protection, fire protection, parks, playgrounds, civic centers, schools, libraries, transportation systems. A more complicated system of *administration* is necessary to handle the complex problems of engineering, law, finance and social welfare. The unprecedented speed of civic growth accompanying the industrial revolutions carried unprecedented problems in all these respects.” (Don Martindale, ‘Preface’ to Max Weber, *The City*, p. 13, emphasis added)

political parties	bosses	machines	chambers of commerce	credit associations
labour unions	factories	newspapers	philanthropic societies	churches
schools	parks	playgrounds	humane societies	art galleries
slums	zoos	lodges	welfare agencies	museums
riversides	jungles	main streets	red-light districts	auditoriums
sanitation plants	cinemas	cafés	taxi-cab companies	public houses
police stations	WCs	malls	street corners	speed-limits
signposts	pavements	flowers	street lights	the state
the state	the state	the state	the state	the state

- *The mass (the crowd) became more and more a concern of social analysis⁷ - as well as a category of social effort and planning ..*

³ *The City in History (1961), Technics and Civilization (1934), and The Pentagon of Power (1971), among many others.*

⁴ *The Great Transformation (1957).*

⁵ *The City (1958).*

⁶ *for discussions of demography, see: Fernand Braudel’s multi-volume, Civilization and Capitalism.*

⁷ *See: Richard Park and Ernest Burgess, Introduction to the Science of Sociology (1922).*

“As civilization grows more complex the individual becomes segmental and dependent and performance failures on the part of the individual become more socially disastrous.” (Don Martindale, ‘Preface’ to Max Weber, *The City*, p. 18)

Constructing modernity/urban space

- *Three quotations from Michel Foucault’s ‘What is Enlightenment?’ .. The first concerns how we conceptualise ‘modernity’:*

“I wonder whether we may not envisage modernity rather as an attitude than as a period of history .. by attitude I mean a mode of relating to contemporary reality; a voluntary choice made by certain people; in the end, a way of thinking and feeling; a way, too, of acting and behaving that at one and the same time marks a relation of belonging and presents itself as a task.” (Michel Foucault, ‘What is Enlightenment?’, in: *The Foucault Reader*, p. 39)

- *The second is drawn in reference to Baudelaire, and his conceptualisation of modernity:*

“ .. for [Baudelaire], being modern does not lie in recognising and accepting this perpetual movement; on the contrary, it lies in adopting a certain attitude with respect to this movement; and this deliberate, difficult attitude consists in recapturing something eternal that is not beyond the present instant, nor behind it, but within it .. Modernity is not a phenomenon of sensitivity to the fleeting present; it is the will to ‘heroize’ the present.” (Michel Foucault, ‘What is Enlightenment?’, in: *The Foucault Reader*, pp. 39-40)

- *The final image - again in reference to Baudelaire - pulls in to our consciousness of time and history a sense of personal identity in the ‘fleeting’ moment of modern life:*

“Modern man, for Baudelaire, is not the man who goes off to discover himself, his secrets and his hidden truth; he is the man who tries to invent himself. This modernity does not ‘liberate man in his own being’; it compels him to face the task of producing himself.” (Michel Foucault, ‘What is Enlightenment?’, in: *The Foucault Reader*, pp. 39-40)

- *This task of ‘producing oneself’ - it seems to me at least - is the central leitmotif of modernity. It is upon ‘modernity’, and what that means for individuals, societies, the operation of truth and power that the rest of course aims to highlight. It seems to me that the function of the city can rightfully demarkate a threshold here. Something unique seems to happen in the ‘modern world’, alongside the reformulations of health, of rational-thought, of punitive justice and the war machine, in the critical transitional period that we have focussed on thus far (from the Classical to the*

modern age)

- *Above all, it seems to me that cities take on a new significance as in the 19thC as a whole we witness a second transition in the political economy of power - coterminous with that of the shift from sovereign to biopower. Cities truly emerge at that point in time where time becomes the index and final reserve of power itself ..*
- *Having constituted civil space, power would invest wholly in productivity . Hence the importance of Baudelaire's thesis: we pass into the age of the accelerator at the same time as we pass into a new age of man more generally. Productivity becomes the guard of a new form of power, invested in travel, movement, the regulation and regularisation of the time horizon of the whole populace.*

“As a system of life, the city penetrates the structure of biological evolution itself, creating new urban-insect and urban-animal forms.”
(Don Martindale, ‘Preface’ to Max Weber, *The City*, p. 10)

- *In addition to Polanyi, Mumford, Sennett and Weber - on the construction of urban space see the essays by Osborne and Barry in Foucault and Political Reason.*

From disciplinary society to ‘biokinetic’ society

“How can one capitalize the time of individuals, accumulate it in each of them, in their bodies, in their forces or in their abilities, in a way that is susceptible of use and control? How can one organise profitable durations?” (Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 157)

- *Though in *Discipline and Punish* Michel Foucault seems aware of the use of time as a form of disciplinary power (indeed, much of the book is concerned - as you will remember - with the use of the timetable in the development of military discipline, and military reform), Foucault seems on balance to be more concerned with the constitution, throughout the classical/modern threshold, of **civil space**, within which movements would be regulated ..*
- *Though many of the insights of a thinker like Paul Virilio seem to be foreshadowed in the works of Foucault (e.g.:*

“Disciplinary control does not consist simply in teaching or imposing a series of particular gestures; it imposes the best relation between a gesture and the overall position of the body, which is its condition of efficiency and speed.” (Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 152)

- *what I would like to suggest is that at some point during modernity proper - indeed, one might go so far as to suggest that this is constitutive of modern political technology itself - we can begin to notice a shift away from simply the control of*

space, or the regularisation of civil movements ... As Foucault would himself perhaps suggest, 'new requirements were being generated' ...

- *What I would like to suggest - open for research, and discussion - is that somewhere in the 19thC we see the outlines emerge of a society based on something coterminous with disciplinary society, but not quite equivalent. What I would like to suggest is that in the 19thC we begin to see the outlines of a society based upon 'speed' rather than simply 'circulation'. What I would also like to suggest is that 'political reason' created this new world (the world of speed), and that this very creation is the most important - and yet under-examined - transformation of the parameters of our historical imagination, as well as the practicalities of our material lives ..*

“Until recently, the city separated its ‘intramural’ population from those outside the walls. Today, people are divided according to aspects of time ..” (Paul Virilio, *The Lost Dimension*, p. 15)

Acceleration as power

- *The power over distance (the technical gaze):*

“Once the telegraph was invented, followed by the telephone and radio, limitations on effecting long-distance control were abolished. Theoretically, any spot on earth can now be in instant oral communication with every other spot, and instant visual transactions anywhere are only a short distance behind. An almost equal acceleration in speed has taken place in transporting the human body: the winged messengers that once carried commands from heaven to earth are in effect now available at any airport; and in a short while transportation at a speed of Mach II should enable our up-to-date angels to appear at any point on the planet in less than half a day. Power, speed, and control have been the chief marks of absolute monarchs in all ages: the doing away with previous limitations in these areas is the common theme that unites the ancient and the modern megamachine.” (Lewis Mumford, *The Pentagon of Power*, p. 259)

- *For Mumford then, there is a continuity between the ages - between modalities, and personalities of power - a continuity that is based upon the techniques of power employed (the control of distance, of the power to escape the gaze of authority) ..*
- *While in someways this view is maintained by Foucault and Virilio, they - more so than Mumford - were keen to show that at the birth of the modern age (circa, 1799), a revolution in speed, and the power to see (to gaze) had occurred.*
- *This revolution is summed up nowhere better than by Virilio, in his analysis of the*

French Revolution:

“The events of 1789 claimed to be a revolt against *subjection*, that is, against the *constraint to immobility* symbolised by the ancient feudal serfdom .. the arbitrary confinement and obligation to reside in one place. But no one yet suspected that the ‘conquest of the freedom to come and go’ so dear to Montaigne could, by a sleight of hand, become an *obligation to mobility*. The ‘mass uprising’ of 1793 was the institution of the first *dictatorship of movement*, subtly replacing the *freedom of movement* of the early days of the revolution. The reality of power in this first modern State appears beyond the accumulation of violence as an accumulation of movement.” (Paul Virilio, *Speed and Politics*, p. 30)

- *This pivotal transition was also identified by Mumford - speed became a form of progress in and of itself:*

“Progress, as our machine-orientated culture defined it, was simply a forward movement through time, and the ‘going’, as one pragmatist philosopher defined it, ‘becomes the goal’ - the early version of the even shallower notion that ‘the medium is the message’.” (Lewis Mumford, *The Pentagon of Power*, p. 205)

- *This is quite a leap from the conceptions of progress and perfectibility that gave the initial impetus to the ‘Enlightenment’. Foremost in the minds of the Enlightened thinkers⁸ was the meeting of European and pre-modern (savage) man in the jungles of the Carribean (Columbus) .. now, progress had internalised: become something integral to European man himself - and to an extent, freed from the relation to its other (uncivilized man)⁹ ..*
- *It potentially also involves something of a reformulation of ‘telic’ theories of progress (the idea that man creates the world within which he is situated through planned and purposive change¹⁰ .. though perhaps not - if one believes that power (though ‘productive’, as outlined at length in the works of Foucault) has nonetheless pursued its own logic in the body of modern man: its ultimate affirmation - its very disappearance (habit, acquiescence)*

⁸ like J.G. von Herder, and A.R.J. Turgot (contra Rousseau, of course, *Discourse upon the Origin and Foundation of Inequality Among Mankind*, 1761, and Vicomte de Chateaubriand).

⁹ this shift in emphasis is also coterminous with the shift from disciplinary to biokinetic society ..

¹⁰ it is interesting to note that Albion Small - the only sociologist to bring together in any volume the writings of the ‘police scientists’, *The Cameralists*, was an adherent to such a ‘telic’ philosophy of progress. It would be interesting to ask him - if he weren’t dead - what he thought of Mumford’s statement. In Virilio it is relatively clear that if man has lost autonomy in the face ‘dromocratic society’ (in all its manifestations) it is because certain *dromomaniacs* (Virilio’s neologism essentially for ‘the state’) have pursued the ‘disappearance’ of man

Toward a cartography/chronology of the integral (global) city

- *It is almost as though a whole new form of motion is invested in cities:*

“Unlike Rome, New York has never learned the art of growing old by playing on all its pasts. Its present invests itself from hour to hour, in the act of throwing away its previous accomplishments and challenging the future. A city composed of paroxysmal places in monumental reliefs. The spectator can read in it a universe that is constantly exploding.” (Michel de Certeau, ‘Walking in the City’, in: *The Cultural Studies Reader*, p. 152)
- *In addition, the city gains a new form of motion in its relation to itself .. we pass into a century of urban regeneration .. halting, destroying and rebuilding .. the use of more materials and energy than any other century in history (per capita)*

“Further, the new technological time has no relation to any calendar of events nor to any collective memory. It is a pure computer time, and as such helps to construct a permanent present, an unbounded, timeless intensity that is destroying the tempo of a progressively degraded society.” (Paul Virilio, *The Lost Dimension*, p. 15)
- *Polis .. Metro-polis .. Mega-polis .. (Necro-polis?) .. how to deal with complexity, how to deal with massive populaces .. The rise of urban centres has had a major impact upon the politics of all advanced industrial/service societies. The city has become the centre of biopolitical attention, from air and water pollution to mass transport systems, urban renewal, social segregation/integration, urban crime, delinquency, disorganization of the family, unemployment and ghettos ..*
- *little surprise that the city also develops its own sense of rhythm ..*

“The city .. is something more than a congeries of individual men and of social conveniences - streets, buildings, electric lights, tramways, and telephones, etc.; something more than a mere constellation of institutions and administrative devices - courts, hospitals, schools, police, and civil functionaries of various sorts. The city is rather, *a state of mind*, a body of customs and traditions, and of organised *attitudes* and *sentiments* .. ” (Richard Park, Ernest Burgess and Roderick McKensie, *The City*, p. 1, emphasis added)
- *the carceral .. the organization of networks .. the strategic distribution of elements ..*

“As the *fin-de-K* countdown cranked into the nineties, I became increasingly curious about the technicians I saw poking about in manholes. they were not sewer or gas workers; evidently they were up to something quite different. So I began to ask them what they were doing. ‘Pulling glass’, was the usual reply.

They were stringing together some local, fiber-optic fragments of what was fast becoming a worldwide, broadband, digital telecommunications network. Just as Baron Haussmann had imposed a bold spider's web of broad, straight boulevards on the ancient tangle of Paris, and as nineteenth-century railroad workers had laid sleepers and steel to shrink the windy distances of the North American frontier, these post-whatever construction crews were putting in place an infobahn - and this reconfiguring space and time relationships in ways that promise to change our lives forever. Yet their revolutionary intervention was swift, silent, and (to most eyes) invisible." (William Mitchell, *City of Bits: Space, Place and the Infobahn*, p. 3)

- *the technics of biokinetic society ..*

"Where once one necessarily entered the city by means of a physical gateway, now one passes through an audio-visual protocol .. the gateway is turned into a conveyance of vehicles and vectors whose disruption creates less a space than a countdown .. a clearing away of activities in which each person is exiled to a life of privacy and deprivation." (Paul Virilio, *The Lost Dimension*, p. 15, p. 16)

The dromological revolution

"Up until the nineteenth century society was founded on the brake. Means of furthering speed were very scant. You had ships, but sailing ships evolved very little between Antiquity and Napoleon's time; the horse even less; and of course there were carrier pigeons. The only machine to use speed with any sophistication was the optical telegraph, then the electric telegraph. In general, up until the nineteenth century, there was no production of speed. They could produce brakes by means of ramparts, the law, rules, interdictions, etc. They could brake using all kinds of obstacles .. Then, suddenly, there's the great revolution that others have called the Industrial Revolution or the Transportation Revolution. I call it a dromocratic revolution because what was invented was not only, as has been said, the possibility of multiplying similar objects (which to my mind is a completely limited vision), but especially a means of fabricating speed with the steam engine, then the combustion engine. And so they can pass from the age of the brakes to the age of the accelerator. In other words, power will be invested in acceleration itself." (Paul Virilio, *Pure War*, p. 50)

- *is modern/dromological society anything other than an army in motion? .. in the words of Paul Virilio ..*

“ .. each vehicular advance erases a distinction between the army and civilization.” (Paul Virilio, *Speed and Politics*, p. 106)

“The force of any army, like momentum in mechanics, is represented by the mass multiplied by the rate of movement.” (Napoleon Bonaparte, *Napoleon in His Own Words*, p. 118-9)

The implosion of modernity

- *Implosion as the zenith of speed ..*

“The point of the matter of speed-up by wheel, road, and paper is the extension of power in an ever more homogeneous and uniform space. Thus, the real potential of the Roman technology of was not realised until printing had given road and wheel a much greater speed than that of Roman vortex. Yet the speed-up of electronic age is as disrupting for literate, lineal, and Western man as the Roman paper routes were for tribal villagers. Our speed-up today is not a slow explosion outward from the centre to margins but an instant implosion and an interfusion of space and functions. Our specialist and fragmented civilization of centre-margin structure is suddenly experiencing an instantaneous reassembling of all its mechanized bits into an organic whole. This is the world of the global village.” (Marshall McLuhan, *Reflections on and by Marshall McLuhan: Forward through the rearview mirror*, p. 62)

- *as we'll see next week, the very idea of the global village opens frightful consequences, and adds a new twist to our genealogy of the defeat of urban populations by political technology .. a final type of servitude; the last stage in civil dislocation ..*

