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Hacker Kulture for All

MANIFESTO TECHNOLOGIES: MARX, MARINETTI, HARAWAY by Steven Mentor

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The manifesto as monster

By what writing technologies are technologies represented? And what are the politics of those writing technologies? These must be important questions for technohistorians; no one genre of representation determines the reception of technologies like electricity or automobiles, and below any essay on technology lie buried assumptions of what might constitute adequate and inadequate, normative and abnormal structures of representation. I've chosen to look at the representation of technology in manifestos because this genre appears to wear its politics on its sleeve, and because it conflates a particular view of technology with a highly self-conscious choice of stylistic and formal representation. This representation is itself a kind of writing technology built to shock as much as to persuade, to sell as much as to argue. For example, consider the difference between this paragraph and the following:

All manifestos are cyborgs. That is, they fit Donna Haraway's use of this term in her own "A Manifesto for Cyborgs" - manifestos are hybrids, chimeras, boundary confusing technologies. They combine and confuse popular genres and political discourse, borrow from critical theory and advertising, serve as would be control systems for the larger social technologies their authors hope to manufacture. Most include original ideas, but their aim is rather simulation, duplication, reproduction; they long to achieve the status of a rhetorical handgun passed out to masses of readers rather than that of a judge's scales. They are monsters of discourse, their demonstrations reconstructing the audience (and their cultural landscape) in a strange and monstrous light; in Marinetti's famous phrase, they are made on the principles of violence and precision. They enact violence while pointing to the violence done by some Other/s; they use linguistic scalpels sharpened on the whetstone of newspaper headlines to disassemble and reassemble the body politic. Whether as homo faber and proletarian (Marx), Futurism's New Man (Marinetti), or cyborg (Haraway), the reader undergoes radical surgery, emerging with new prosthetics, often technological, but always discursive.

The preceding sentences give a taste of manifesto language, as well as some of the "body parts" of the manifesto as a literary genre. In the paper below I want to explore ways in which a manifesto is itself a technology as well as a discourse about the politics of technology and instrumental reason. Marxism, Futurism, and feminism have all attempted to theorize the role of technology in the modern world, and in doing so have attempted to disassemble dominant stories about technology and reassemble them in utopian and material ways. Each attempts to remake political identity, to retell history as the history of new techniques of production, and to linguistically embody and enact this remaking and retelling. In each case, language is self consciously a technique; perhaps the manifesto is simply an extreme example of the ubiquity of myth and narrative in all attempts at technohistories, and part of the politics of any theory of technology.

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The Communist Manifesto: melodrama of technology

A spectre is haunting the manifesto - the spectre of its double, literature. A manifesto is never simply a call to action, but is also a rhetorical construction of the proper scenes of action, the roles taken by diverse actors, the script of actions hoped for and believed in. Often the manifesto constructs such actions in a way quite different

from what is accepted or commonly practiced; in that sense it must argue for its premises. But at the same time it attempts to frame these premises, not as doubted or new ideas to be analyzed, but as themselves obvious, evident, "manifest". This framing allows the language of the manifesto to soar in its denunciations and assertions, to transcend careful, hedged elaboration of political or artistic "programs" for the more powerful registers of rage and incitement.

The very origins of the word provide a glimpse at some of its internal tensions and contradictions. Manifest means readily perceived by the eyes or understanding, obvious, apparent, plain; its Middle English antecedent *manifestus* is a variant of Latin *manifestus*, that is, struck with the hand. Most of the early manifestos are proffered by sovereigns and governments, agents with the material power to strike physically in order to make their meaning apparent and plain. And the root "manus" would provide a Foucauldian with a treasure trove of disciplinary and authoritarian terms: manage, manacle, manners, mandatory, mancipate (the power to sell slaves and other property), manipulate, command, demand, manuscript and manufacture. (Partridge, 378-9).

But we have come to understand manifesto in an apparently opposite way: as emancipatory, a blow at some managing, and commanding authority, a slap at bourgeois and literary manners. Manifestos have come to signify the words of those outside the power to command: avant-garde artists, small, marginalized political groups and communities, individuals. They are metaphorical, rhetorical slaps of the hand by those who do not have the social or political power to proffer these slaps literally. As such, they are also attempts to manifest something that is not obvious; even the most "materialist" of manifestos thus shares something with the manifestation of spiritualists: the bringing to light of something that is immaterial, or immanent, in the consciousness or lived reality of humans in a specific society and historical period.

Why probe such elements of the manifesto? I certainly do not want to empty out the political contents or affective power of documents like the Communist Manifesto, or pretend that they are "merely" aesthetic constructions. In fact, this way of talking about value itself reproduces the problem I want to investigate. Just as literary productions have politics, have subversive or important effects on the symbolic economy of a society, so too political rhetorical productions have linguistic politics, and reflect important assumptions (about the nature of the political order, the roles and values of those opposed to it, right action) that have everything to do with the nature of subsequent material actions, or as the French say, "*manifestations*." Further, manifestos not only make manifest certain kinds of actions and political organization; they obscure or evade internal contradictions or difficulties of the authors. I want to argue that these evasions or lacunae too play themselves out in very material ways, in subsequent actions and organizations engendered by the manifesto and its authors/signers. In the Communist Manifesto, "materialism" hides its own ghost, idealism and faith in the organic machine; the historical narrative of proletarian victory hides the attempts of nonproletarian intellectuals to shape and determine this victory and its means; the apparently bald and naked shape of the manifesto as clear argument and "realism" hides the equally powerful framing discourses of melodrama and catechism. And all these, I argue, play themselves out in the material nature of communist movements, states, attitudes toward technology and science, and in the kinds of political narratives and artistic movements they themselves are forced to exclude and even destroy. Every manifesto has its manifest, its bill of lading, which those unable to critically read it are doomed to pay and repeat.

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When the Communist League called on Marx and Engels to draw up a manifesto in 1847, both wrote drafts. Engels' draft, titled "The Principles of Communism," is a catechism of 25 questions and answers, and the catechism is one of the genres rewritten here. But a catechism is a bald assertion of authority, one often backed up by the slap of a hand, as many who have attended Catholic schools can testify. Engels' catechistic hand can most readily be seen in section two, "Proletarians and Communists", where the need to differentiate communism from other sects is most crucial. But most scholars agree that Marx is the main author of the present manifesto, and that the substance of the manifesto's narrative on history is his. The Marxian master narrative of history and technology is set against the "nursery tale" told about communism by its opponents; it is at the same time an argument for and demonstration of what seems clear, manifest, about history. Not only is this history told with simple, declarative sentences void of any hedging or qualification; the narrative itself is full of tropes of clarity, of the rending of veils and mystifications. Ironically, much of this work is done in the text by the bourgeoisie; in Marx's eyes, they perform the violent task, which he will continue, of demystification:

[The bourgeoisie] has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervor, of chivalric enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy waters of egotistical calculation...The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored...The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil... (Tucker, 475-6)

Before, exploitation was "veiled" by "illusions" - now it is "shameless, direct, brutal." And this is in fact the rhetorical aim of the manifesto: to further this work by writing a "realistic" history. In case his readers miss this, Marx takes pains to connect intellectual production to material production and economy, and to point out that both are in the interests of the ruling class. Because of the rule of exploitation, "the social consciousness of past ages, despite all the multiplicity and variety is displays, moves within certain common forms...which cannot completely vanish except with the total disappearance of class antagonisms." (Tucker, 489) By implication, the present text attempts both a representation of such disappearance, and also a linguistic act that escapes these common forms that contain within them the traces of ruling class ideas. Hence the final

assertions that Communists like the author "disdain to conceal" and "openly declare."

It is but a short step from this rhetoric to its stylistic predecessor and model: the "scientific" style adopted by the Royal Society as most appropriate for scientific inquiry and assertion. Marx was keen to claim for his socialism the title of scientific, and used this as a club with which to beat other forms of socialism as unscientific, romantic, utopian nursery tales. And yet the elements of the manifesto that go beyond mere catechism display certain common "unscientific" forms of its age, which shape its agenda and analysis. Coral Lansbury argues that the manifesto is based more on 19th century melodrama than on economic and historic discourses; I would add that melodrama is in fact a ghost that haunts many discussions of science and technology.

How is the manifesto a melodrama? The Communist Manifesto begins and ends with the signature: the Gothic ghosts that populate the works of August von Kotzebue, Francois Rene Pixecourt, and 'Monk' Lewis. In its first English translation the opening reads "A frightful hobgoblin stalks throughout Europe. We are haunted by a ghost, the ghost of Communism." (Lansbury, 6) Ghost, hobgoblin, "spectre" in the more familiar Samuel Moore translation: seen as malign by most, these spirits invoke a spiritual authority in 19th Century melodrama: "The idea of a ghost as the moral conscience and protagonist comes directly from Gothic melodrama where the occult resolved its destiny through the mundane events of a historical present...the essence of the classic melodrama [includes] its benign ghost, its violent action, and the final social revolution, when the rightful heirs are restored to their proper place in society." (Lansbury, 6-7). An important element of melodrama is its manichean nature: all villains are aristocrats, all heroes and heroines are lowly born, noble peasants who are revealed as the true aristocrats. Many of these heroes literally cast off their chains in the end, as villains are often stymied at the last moment by the reappearance of the ghost; many heroines are the object of lecherous and rapacious squires and lords; most melodramas ended with sword play and the redistribution of spoils. For each of these genre-based elements, Lansbury cites passages from the manifesto: each element works on the emotions of the audience, to justify the social violence that destroys the demonic villain, to offer a world purged and restored to justice and order.

Lansbury's analysis is important for several reasons. First, it sets the manifesto more accurately within its time, and serves to deconstruct the status and class based antecedents often offered for it. Traditionally texts are made into unified monuments by citing the important and high status texts and authors on which it apparently draws (for Marx, obviously Hegel and Schelling); this analysis serves to counter this monumentalizing, to allow for multiple readings by citing the lower status, but arguably important antecedents that make a text popular or even conceivable in its day. The text is ineluctably hybrid. Beyond this, Lansbury offers another interpretation: the manifesto follows the melodramatic "logic of the excluded middle" because Marx and Engels attempt to avoid an obvious problem of being in the middle. That is, how is it that men from bourgeois backgrounds come to identify with the proletariat and speak for it?

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Marx and Engels showed no interest in understanding how and why intellectuals become radicalized...It was from the outset a problematic situation, for if social economic conditions inevitably determined historical change and human character, how was it possible for two members of the bourgeoisie to become heralds and spokesmen for the proletariat?...the process by which the bourgeois becomes a revolutionary intellectual and a standard bearer for the Vanguard Party relies more on faith than it does on factual analysis. (Lansbury, 3)

This evasion has had enormous effects on politics of the 20th Century. Lenin addressed it by theorizing a vanguard party of professional revolutionaries whose commitment to revolutionary violence masked their bourgeois origins; these intellectuals later became key players in purges of "bourgeois" intellectuals, journalists, labor leaders, as well as internal purges. Marx's guilt and resultant tale of purity is replayed in the Soviet Union, and later within the ranks of the New Left, where the "politics of guilt" allowed so-called revolutionaries from the Progressive Labor sect to take over SDS from its "bourgeois" student members. Both Marx and Engels, in the manifesto, are concerned to discredit other forms of socialism, and especially the so called "utopian" socialism of Fourier, Owen, and others by labelling them unscientific, undeveloped, fantastic, indistinct. Marx denounces their "castles in the air" based on "their fantastical and superstitious belief in the miraculous effects of their social science." (Tucker, 499) Other sects are similarly denounced. This "excluded middle" of activism and socialist activity repeats much of the same rhetoric of religious sectarianism, and a similar appeal to purity. If melodrama is "a mode of compulsive seriousness seeing to restore a fragmented society to a new and harmonious whole" (Lansbury, 4) then Marx repeats on the revolutionary stage the same romanticism and naivete he denounces in bourgeois society. Melodrama is the signature of a powerful desire arising from material conditions, but few would argue that it provides a realistic or scientific model of action for a millennial proletarian revolution. And melodrama's obligatory violence is transferred to the discourse of actual political change, so that violence becomes a mark of purity, and its lack a sign of 'bourgeois' decadence or armchair socialism. Hence notions of revolutionary resistance that don't include revolutionary violence or terror as integral elements are banished to the "excluded middle."

One of the ghosts that haunts this rhetorical machine is technology. Technology in the hands of the bourgeoisie is violent and vengeful: it tears, drowns, and then establishes a new naked form of exploitation. Yet for Marx it is absolutely necessary that technology play this role: the violence of the Industrial Revolution, the internationalization of capital, "the constant revolutionizing of production" and "uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions," are crucial for a materialist epiphany that moves beyond religious and feudal myths. This necessity is placed next to phrases on the deskilling of craftsmen, enslavement to the machine, the devolution of humans to commodities, "appendage[s] of the machine." We are all familiar with the final lines of

proletarians having nothing to lose but their chains; however, most of the energy in Marx's prose lies with the technological forces of production, which burst chains (in the Tucker, fetters) repeatedly in section I.

By making the bourgeoisie a revolutionary class, by lending forces of production monstrous and unstoppable agency, and by constructing a melodramatic analysis of technology, Marx paves the way for the unquestioned Fordism of Lenin and Gramsci, and the precedence of industrial power and statist control over the lived relations of workers and their tools/machines. The Communist State and its vanguard leaders will unfetter first and foremost technological and industrial production; if it is true that bourgeois culture for the worker is "a mere training to act as a machine," (Tucker, 487), how will State socialist culture, with its reverence for the exact same industrial methods, be any different? All that is solid - the worker's felt alienation and anger toward his commodification and mechanization - is melted by the middle class Marxist rhetoric into air.

Yet we should also acknowledge the enabling effects of Marx's melodrama of communism. It certainly appealed to the audiences of his time, and arguably to many audiences in the 20th Century. It enacts on the rhetorical level the notion of drama, of conflicts based on recognizable present day historical roles, events and genres. And it serves as an affective gateway to a Marxian narrative that includes truly radical and powerful revisions of history, economics, technology, classes and the state. Whether consciously or not, it blurs the boundaries between history and drama, economics and the conventions of fiction, the familiar roles in art and the unfamiliar roles of Marxian political landscapes. It also serves as the Father against which later authors of manifesti, including Marinetti, Breton, and Haraway, would both rebel and measure themselves.

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Driving in the dark: Marinetti's *deus ex machina*

Marx's manifesto generated some strange and rebellious offspring. In her book *The Futurist Moment* Marjorie Perloff produces a narrative about manifestos as a literary genre, beginning with the Communist Manifesto, reaching a kind of apex in the Futurist works of Marinetti, Boccioni, Balla *et al*, and continuing into Dada and Surrealist manifestos of the period. Perloff finds in the Communist Manifesto's "curiously mixed rhetoric" (which she sees as a prose poem) a model of what the manifestos of the 20th Century will do: graft poetic onto political discourse. (Perloff, 82). Other early 20th Century artists and thinkers such as Saint-George de Bouheliier, Jules Romain, and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, anticipate themes of Futurist and later manifestos: the attack on symbolism, the urge toward energy and violence, urban mass art and the ever-present need to create a new art and literature. But these manifestos remain formally similar: they begin with generalizations about art, and generally follow a 19th Century model of oratory and persuasions, marshalling arguments, balancing emotional appeals with reasoned and extended discourse. And few deal specifically with new technologies.

By contrast, Marinetti's 1909 manifesto (*Fondation et Manifeste du Futurisme*) begins with a narrative that sings the body electric and makes new technologies the key to artistic and political rejuvenation. Marinetti and his friends have stayed up all night "arguing to the last confines of logic" and scribbling. Thus the logics of previous manifestos are exhausted within the first paragraph; instead, like Marx's unfettered technologies, "the prisoned radiance of electric hearts" is freed by the call of mechanical sirens: great ships, locomotives, huge double decker trams, and most of all, Marinetti's car (*macchina*). Just as Marx uses melodrama, Marinetti marries a late symbolist aesthetic to technology: his car is a beast, a dog biting its tail, a prodigy, a shark; and presaging so many technophilic American movies, this 1909 piece begins with a car crash and ends with the wholesale destruction of the venerable city with its dead museums and academies. The car crashes when Marinetti swerves to avoid two bicyclists "wobbling like two equally convincing but nevertheless contradictory arguments." (Fisk, 40).

Joy of the machine vs logic and paralysis; the feeling of having avoided death. The reader is herself in a rhetorical machine that uses the resources of the symbolist and prose poem to join human virtues (courage, audacity, energy) to technology: "A racing car...is more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace." Where Marx saw the worker enslaved by the machine, Marinetti puts him at the wheel of a car; the reader is accelerated through violent and extreme positions, not pausing to wonder whether or how artistic revolution goes with glorifying war, or how "art in fact can be nothing but violence, cruelty, and injustice." Even the most programmatic elements (numbered theses, for example) are swept aside in a verbal vortex that performs its message. Engels' catechism is jettisoned and parodied; not argument and principle, but "de la violence et de la precision" will be the principle of Futurist manifesti.

Of course, this is still a time when most workers are chained to their machines, figuratively if not literally (as for example many women seamstresses were); few could afford the new wheeled machines of the millionaire Marinetti. Yet in some important ways the Futurist manifesto is related to car advertisements and the language of publicity. Marinetti figuratively says to his car, "I love what you do for me", and like so much ad copy, he uses a brief and dramatic visual story (a car crash) to set the pace and tone of the pitch. Note that the pitch mingles the new consumer item (cars) with images of vital industrial society in general (railroad stations, factories, shipyards): it sings "of great crowds excited by work, by pleasure, and by riot" as if the work of industrial society was homologous with symbolic energy of "deep chested locomotives whose wheels paw the tracks."

In fact Marinetti was a tireless promoter who travelled by rail from agitation to agitation; he posed his followers for publicity stills, managed to get his manifesti printed on front pages of French and Italian journals, and

perfected the public scandal: attacking a Venetian orchestra, setting up mechanical altars to the Fatherland in squares, insulting and then cajoling crowds until fights broke out. Like the first Parisian performance of Rite of Spring, which ended in a shouting match and riot, Marinetti found a way to wed avant garde theories of art and writing with new competencies at marketing, publicizing, and distributing his message. The fact that technology and technophilia is at the heart of this message is not surprising, since it is the technology of publicity and movement that allows his small group to gain such widespread notoriety and power. And this technophilia is intimately wedded in Futurism to glorification of war (now itself dominated by technology) and masculinist nationalism: "We will glorify war - the world's only hygiene - militarism, patriotism...scorn for women." (Flint, 42)

Each element of this publicity will be used by fascist and Nazi movements to mobilize the masses and gain state power: not just attacks on the bourgeoisie and the status quo, but the invocation of a potent future based on the promises of technology and manifested through the language and techniques of modern publicity. The technology of advertising and the advertising of technologies combine to form a powerful and exciting narrative of progress. Like Marx's unfettered technology, the engines and aeroplanes of Futurism stand for an almost magical force that counteracts the routinization of modern life and labor. But where Marx saw this force as inevitably international in scope, Marinetti and futurism tend to link technology to the body of the nation-state, made strong by war's hygiene, alive by state electrification grids, pleasurable by the speed of highways, sublime by the power of gigantic industrial dynamos. The aesthetization of technology hides its political uses and the continuity of deskilled mechanized labor under fascism no less than communism.

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Gender Trouble: Keeping the Man in Manifesto

Marinetti's manifesti raise questions about the gender of political rhetorical machines. Cinzia Blum has analyzed the rhetorical strategies of Marinetti's futurist manifesto, in the process asking: to what extent does the apparent revolution in style and genre signal a parallel revolution in political action? Does the manifesto's subversion of traditional codes, genre boundaries and expressive registers mean also "the undermining of hierarchical, centralizing, ordering systems predicated upon a unitary, authoritative speaking and thinking subject"? (Blum, 197)

By looking closely at the language and binary oppositions of Marinetti (in "Fondazione e Manifesto del Futurismo") and his followers, Blum discovers a response to the anxieties of modern(ist) fragmented identities and social codes that should not surprise us: anxiety and self-doubt are erased, in futurism, by the demonizing of feminized Others and a recuperation of phallic mastery via fantasies of omnipotence and sexual aggression. The construction of this "fiction of power" is a compensation for the lack of such power in the modern world. She uses Kristeva's notion of the abject to link strong separation of the sexes with fear of that which traverses the boundary of the self; while Futurism appears to theorize the destruction of the unitary self of previous literary and political constructions, it recuperates this potent self as the "multiplied man":

In fact, the scattering ("sparpagliamento") of the self in the universe (brought about by the fast pace of modern life) is presented as a means to a more powerful unity freed from the limits of human nature...the Futurist subject disperses himself to penetrate the molecular life of matter, and with aeropoesia, rises as a super "I" propelled by mechanical wings to control immense spaces in the totalizing...perspective allowed by the airplane. (Blum, 204)

In the process of recuperating the virile and potent male subject, various and sundry "others" must be overcome, indeed penetrated and destroyed. The site of violent action is the manifesto, but also women's bodies and the things they stand for: impotence, disease, fragmentation and powerlessness, chaos and the undefined, love and the limits of human/nature, the decadent, the organic; parliamentarism, pacifism, academic culture, psychological writing. In the face of so much experimentation by futurists, one barrier remains policed: gender in language. One futurist, Francesco Canguillo, actually argues that sexual perversion may result from linguistic perversion, and that reducing ambiguous grammatical gender will simultaneously fix meaning and deviance: "Although other linguistic rules can and must be subverted in the name of artistic freedom, or rather, of the artist's power, grammatical gender is the object of reactionary, homophobic concerns, of an effort to restore the oldest conception of language - that of the intrinsic relation between signifier and signified." (Blum, 199) Blum argues that the Futurist's emphasis on masculine culture managed its undercurrent of homoerotic desire by displacing this homoeroticism onto the machine, and, I would add, onto the literary product as a machine and a site of mastery over feminized others. Ultimately, "while the manifesto's hybrid nature instantiates the disruption of codes in modern chaotic, fragmentary reality, the rhetoric and thematics of gender strive to establish more rigid gender codes which provide for the integrity of the subject and for an unwavering code of authority and subordination." (Blum, 200)

The Futurist movement generated many opposing manifesti: Mina Loy's feminist manifesto appropriated futurism for feminism and attacked Marinetti's sexism using his own terms; Dadaists like Tristan Tzara and Surrealists like Andre Breton used the manifesto form to attack his militarist and nationalist views of technology and his use of avant garde technique to defend reactionary and fascist modes of social organization. Yet it remained for feminist theorist extraordinaire Donna Haraway to bring gender, technology and politics together in the cyborg mother of all manifestos.

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A cyborg for manifestos: reading Donna Haraway

As I hope I have shown, the manifesto is already a cyborg; Donna Haraway's 1985 "A Manifesto for Cyborgs" can be read as a redundancy, a manifesto for manifestos, a guide for writing politically charged histories of technology and feminism. If the Communist Manifesto had remained Engels' catechistic discriminations and a taxonomy of 19th Century socialisms, we would not be reading it today; and if Haraway's 1985 article had limited itself to a critique of totalizing feminist and socialist narratives, or to a weave of feminist theorists and postmodern economics, it might never have left the predictable orbit of *Socialist Review* and its readership. Instead, Haraway rewrites Marx via avant garde manifesto strategies of Marinetti, Breton and Guy Debord; like Marinetti, she uses violence as well as precision to achieve a powerful analysis of technology and politics in the late 20th Century.

We have seen the rhetorical violence Marx deploys when he invokes the rending and tearing of veils accomplished by the bourgeoisie and their industrial technologies; in his manifesto, both the vital force of technological progress and the coming solidarity of the proletarians burst fetters, haunt a terrified ruling class; and a dominant metaphor is war, the war of class against class. This way of seeing social relations and technology is not hedged; though other paradigms are possible, Marx performs the notion of war by simultaneously claiming to describe and declare war. Often, commentators have noticed the contradiction between a professed state of war and a strategy that depends on building workers' parties within the political structures of bourgeois society. And we have seen the dilemma of maintaining that industrial methods that enslave workers will ultimately free them.

A similar dilemma - Marinetti's two bicyclists threatening logical paralysis - inhabits Haraway's piece. Beyond the Marinetti-like witty insults (creationism for example is described as "child abuse") Haraway describes a "border war" within "racist male dominated capitalism" and its sciences: a war over the borders of organism and machine, whose stakes, like those of Marx, are production and imagination, and unlike Marx, involve reproduction. Haraway both discovers and enacts this violent border war; like Marinetti crashing the reader/passenger into the industrial muck, like Marx disassembling the image of the organic society and the craft worker, she forcibly situates us: "we are cyborgs." On one level this simply refers to the nature of late capitalism: she argues for a fundamental change, "an emerging world order...a movement from an organic, industrial society to a polymorphous, information system." In this new world dis/order, the makers of material cyborgs - the military, industry, medicine - all reduce the "human" to parts within a larger cybernetic system that includes machines. To give her readers the feeling for this reality, she ironically deploys the language of engineers and systems:

In relation to biotic components, one must think not in terms of essential properties but in terms of strategies of design, boundary constraints, rates of flow, systems logics...Any objects or persons can be reasonably thought of in terms of disassembly and reassembly; no "natural" architectures constrain system design...Human beings, like any other component or subsystem, must be localized in a system architecture whose basic modes of operation are probabilistic, statistical. No objects, spaces, or bodies are sacred in themselves; any component can be interfaced with any other is the proper standard, the proper code, can be constructed for processing signals in a common language. (Haraway, 594).

This language performs its own violence; try as we might, it is difficult to think of ourselves as bounded organic individuals within such a field of discourse. And this is the discourse that governs the political and technical world Haraway wants us to inhabit.

Haraway deploys another type of violence: the violence of precision. Her opening section relentlessly piles on multiple definitions of the cyborg, refusing to change register or descend to illustration, development, explanation. Like Marinetti, she knows the power of speed and substitution. If "we are all cyborgs" then these fast-shifting definitions all somehow apply to us, no matter how diverse. It is exhilarating to imagine that a technological shift, one which batters down socially constructed boundaries of organic humans and mechanical machines, could have such futuristic and utopian effects: "we" are thus in a postgender world, beyond false unities and false origin stories, heterosexual and patriarchal expectations, with a natural feel for united front politics. And besides these laudable feminist qualities, we also are monstrous, capable of bestialities, always multiple and incomplete. These latter qualities are also effected by her language; it disassembles us as organic and reassembles us as a proliferation of qualities which do not easily fit any whole or synthesis or even politics. We cyborgs are torn apart as by maenads, spread across a discursive field, mingled with various technologies and discourses (C3I, late capitalism/economics, feminism, socialism, poststructuralism, literary theory) and thus capable of any number of assemblages.

If Haraway rhetorically reembodies us as cyborgs, she also makes our cyborg selves visible. This is in fact a trope of manifesti: metaphors of sight, of disclosure, of making the invisible visible, run through Marx, Marinetti, and the others. "The ubiquity and invisibility of cyborgs is precisely why these sunshine-belt machines are so deadly. They are as hard to see politically as materially." (Haraway, 584) In Haraway's postmodern melodrama, cyborgs haunt not only Europe and its humanist legacy, but also left and other oppositional groups who find it hard to confront borderless transnational corporations, science always already implicated in military research, political and technological maps based on systems theory and invisible flows of data over networks whose bodies are at once human and mechanical and electronic. Haraway's point in violently resituating us: the tendency of progressives to confront the "domination of technics" with "an imagined organic body to integrate our resistance" misses the increasingly hybrid, cyborgian nature of our lived bodies and societies. Marx critiqued socialisms which failed to "see" the ubiquity and dynamism of industrial

techniques; Haraway critiques oppositional groups (Marxist feminism and radical feminism) which fail to take into account the "informatics of domination" based on cybernetic and communication systems, neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism.

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The hybrid as hybrid: rhetorical feedback loops of reflexive nontotality

Both Marx and Marinetti construct technology as a "vital machine," hybrids of organic and machinic ways of looking at the world. As David Channell writes, many post-Romantic 19th Century writers revived an organicist mode of looking at the world, including technology:

an opposing organic world view...used the symbol of an organism, such as the body or a plant, to understand the world...For the organicist the organization of parts into a whole result in qualitatively new phenomena such as a vital spirit principle or force...In such a world view there is also no conflict between machines and organic processes since both will be thought to arise from some vital organization. (Channell, 9).

Hegel's figure of the bud that flowers, and Marx's appropriation of this type of image for the force of technology, are typical. By constructing railroads, telegraph systems and other communications technologies, along with industrial modes of organization that allow new communication of misery and solidarity between workers, the bourgeoisie unwittingly build an "organic machine" on the scale of society, which will literally manufacture the proletarian or Futurist class. And Marx's manifesto is also such an organic machine: the sum of its analytic parts are greater than bourgeois society, greater than any demonstration or proof. The melodramatic ghost in the technological machine breaks all mechanistic fetters, all attempts by bourgeois society to contain it.

Haraway replaces the notion of holism and organic machine with the figure of the cyborg; in this she is joined by theorists such as Channell and Bruce Mazlish. Mazlish sees the human/machine boundary breaking down and providing a fourth great discontinuity to our conception of the human ; Channell suggests that artificial intelligence, genetic and biomedical engineering reflect a watershed merging of mechanism and organicism into a bionic world view:

Unlike the reductive approach of the mechanical view or the holistic approach of the organic view, the bionic world view is consciously dualistic in its understanding of the world...[which] emphasizes the role of interactive processes or dualistic systems in understanding the world. (Channell,10)

If the organic machine circulates through Marx and Marinetti, it also circulates as a narrative of holism and necessity. Thus Marinetti can call war "hygiene." Thus Marx can with utter assurance give us an etiology of socialism that rejects amputated or excessive bodies of knowledge as literally diseased, while retaining health and bodily coherence for his own ideology. By contrast, Haraway deploys the cyborg to do more than point at new intimacies of technology and human; she attacks the discursive claims to holism and to vitality, to totality and total explanatory and motivating power, of organicist narratives. She does this partly by using familiar poststructuralist arguments, but also by demanding that we see her manifesto as both fictional and "real", both constructed and in some important sense vital, alive.

Calling attention to the fictional and assembled nature of her production, framing her manifesto with notions of myth and story and fiction, Haraway theorizes technology in similar fashion, not as organically developing but as assemblable and so disassemblable and reassemblable. Humans are part of and parts of social technologies; to the extent that the cyborg figure makes visible the blurred boundary between biotic and mechanic, between individual humans and technical systems, it allows humans to tell different, multiple stories about technology. And it gives those stories potential feedback loops and prosthetic rhetorical limbs: we might replace Haraway's discussion of science fiction with newer or different texts, or add an entire section on bioengineering and gender.

One important feedback loop in this manifesto concerns the figure of the cyborg and the limbs of analysis. If the organic machine centers Marx's text and gives it coherence, the cyborg both centers and decenters Haraway's text. In true manifesto form, she enacts "the" cyborg, in all its utopian, violent, monstrous possibility; yet the excessive list of qualities could easily continue. The cyborg is a defining figure, one which dramatizes our imbrication within technical systems and allows us to rethink dualisms about humans and technology; but it is itself inherently capable of many transformations. Marx proclaims his theory of technology inevitable and scientific; Marinetti ends his masculinist manifesto "Erect on the summit of the world" and sees from airplanes, the God perspective. Haraway rejects this God's eye view and forces us as readers to negotiate the blurred boundary between science fiction and fact, myth and analysis. This rhetorical cyborg for example involves the cybernetic discourse systems of feminism and materialism; we could as easily build a "central" cyborg out of military or medical discourses. The latter might similarly confuse gender constructions, but with arguably different effects.

This feedback has discomfited more than a few readers. How can Haraway describe what "the" cyborg means with such confidence, and yet make statements like "who cyborgs will be is a radical question"? Or how can a reader understand "the" cyborg if she is asked to take two perspectives, one "the final imposition of a grid of control on the planet...the final appropriation of women's bodies in a masculinist orgy of war" and the other a

lived experience of partial identities and kinship with animals and machines? The key is in the notion of performatives and textual machines. Haraway indicates that the figure of cyborg works for seeing many elements of 20th Century technology and politics; if indeed a cyborg is product of variable systems, then Haraway persuades us to inhabit more than a couple of cyborg bodies during the course of the essay. None is "necessary"; none makes everything whole or complete; the multiple shifts make a mockery of all consuming taxonomies and inevitable trajectories of technical development.

Thus Haraway's cyborg manifesto contains a cyborg writing that joins the reader to different prosthetic rhetorical machinery. She imagines the aeropoetic pleasures of a Marinetti joined to the social responsibility of a Marx, while inviting the reader to see technologies and rhetorics as discursive, narrated, rewritable. Her manifesto implicitly critiques all manifesti that attempt to hide their discursive and mythic status, while arguing for the engaged and political nature of all representations of technology.

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Conclusion

"The cyborg is the figure born of the interface of automaton and autonomy."

Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions* (139).

If writing is a technology, then writing about technology, writing technohistories, demands a doubled vision. Cyborgs and other technologies as discursive, chimerical, mythical objects circulate in the least likely places: government policy statements, military research and development reports, medical journals. They carry with them narratives, perspectives, genres, that belie the staid generic prose of their textual bodies. Even a cursory look at the history of attempts to represent technology and its social implications must surely reveal that all such attempts are always already mythical, narrated, fictional; bringing these ghostly figures to light in current technohistories must be a prime goal. This is not to enter the slippery slope of relativism, in which all texts are equally false or suspect; rather, it is to suggest that nuclear power plants, waste management systems, and medical cyborgs all escape any one genre of representation, comedy or tragedy, romance or farce. We must look at the institutional and political interests embedded in such generic representations, as well as our own framing stories and technologies of representation. Initially, this may be giddy, unfamiliar business, rather like the figure/ground reversals of avant garde collage, the fragmentations of cubism.

Artefacts indeed have politics; technologies can be agents. We want to think of organic humans making autonomous decisions about humane uses of technologies, but instead we must learn to think of humans and machines linked in multiple, often invisible, networks and systems of power. The discursive systems used to represent such systems are part of the system, but they are not the whole system; human bodies, wills, and stories do not consciously rule these systems (autonomy), but neither are they absent (automaton). Every technohistory constructs what it pretends to discover, performs what it pretends to demonstrate; Haraway's great gift to both political and technological history is to acknowledge that this is always so. Humans are radically constrained and constructed by the technological systems developed up to now; as John Christie points out in his "A Tragedy for Cyborgs," the future is in certain ways already written. Yet as I write this, technologies like the Internet, bioengineering, genetic research, and expert systems are undermining basic tenets of political bodies/technologies like nation-states and their governmental apparatuses. These organic machines and their legitimizing stories will be transformed in ways impossible to imagine now; more manifesti wait to be written. In questions of whether or to what extent the resultant bodies are authoritarian or liberating, socially just or more unequal and oppressive than today, theorists of technology and writers of science/fiction will have a good deal to say.

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