Editorial:

For New Alliances Against the New World/CUNY Order

In their book *Communists Like Us*, recently translated by Semiotext(e) and reviewed herein, Felix Guattari and Toni Negri argue that Western European and American societies now explicitly include social groups which they dub 'new subjectivities'. These 'new subjectivities', which have emerged since '68, include "students and young people, the women's movement, the environmental and nature first movements, the demand for cultural, racial and sexual pluralism, and also the attempts to renovate the traditional conceptions of social struggle, beginning with that of workers." Of course these are not literally 'new' subjectivities, for history attests to their disparate and often tragic struggles for identity, that is, subjectivity. What is 'new', Negri and Guattari argue, is their relationship to a larger majority. The structural intent of the larger majority, whether capitalist or socialist, is to draw 'marginal groups towards the center, and to "confer on individuals, communities, and their reciprocal relations the character of universality." However, "the universality with which they were decked out didn't suit them in the least. Instead of a well-fitting hat it is a mask, a cowl which only disfigures the expression of their needs, their interests, and their desires." All marginalities must avoid universals which would squelch or hopelessly compromise their independence, and instead 'place their stakes' upon themselves and thereby become the "potential bearer of the needs and desires of the large majority."

Michael G. Pelias reviews:

Communists Like Us
Felix Guattari and Toni Negri (1990: Semiotexte).

With the publication and translation of *Communists Like Us* (*Nouvelles Espaces du Liberte*, 1985) American audiences now have the opportunity to engage a radical and revolutionary alternative vision of what a communism of the future may resemble, both in its possibility and necessity. Guattari and Negri attempt to retrieve the production of new subjectivities, redefining communism as a human renewal, in which people develop as they produce, akin to what Marx describes in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1848), privileging people in the workplace as valuable rather than functional, specifically in the service sector.

This text is based on a dialogue in 1983-4 between Guattari and Negri who was in prison at the time in Rome. The dialogue culminated in this English publication with postscript by Negri in 1990. The most obvious pretext is that alongside European "death of politics" and American "end of ideology" theses, technocratic power and state power merge. At the same time, the socialist movements are suffering from bad faith. This, according to the authors, has resulted in "an infinite array of reaction formations and paradoxical symptoms, inhibitions, evasions of all sorts, sabotage as well, the transformation of refusal into hatred" (37). This text is intended as a project to rescue communism both from the sterility of technocratic discourse, blackmail and also ineffective socialist practice.

At a first reading, the language of the text may seem foreign to readers familiar with a Marxian-Hegelian tradition of analysis. The call of the text is for new revolutionary subjectivities, the social workers for Negri, those formed by struggles for liberation in the 70's, and the method employed is clearly an anti-Hegelian dialectic.

The timely task in the United States is to demonstrate that the anti-Hegelianism in Europe that has developed since 1968 (Deleuze, Foucault, etc.) is perhaps a way out of the impasse facing the Marxian tradition today. Both Guattari and Negri are persistent in their relentless and precise attack on the Hegelian dialectic both in this text

Students vs. Budget Cuts

The On-going Lesson: A Brief History of Access and Tuition at CUNY
Kate McCaffrey

In 1950 the CCNY alumni association warned that once tuition was imposed at City University, "it would continue to rise as a result of political and economic pressures to a point where all but the rich and well-born would be priced out of the higher educational market" (Neumann 1986:341). In 1991 CUNY faces a $92 million cut in state aid, an $18 million cut in City aid, a $700 tuition hike and substantial cuts in financial aid. A brief look at the economic composition of the student body - at least 40% of the students come from families earning less than $16,000 per year, 20 thousand receive public assistance, many are single parents - suggests how devastating these cuts will be.

Today's students have inherited a legacy of declining economic support for City University that began most clearly in 1976 with the imposition of tuition. Yet the struggle for the existence of CUNY is as old as the institution itself. And this struggle should be recognized as political.

In a nation where higher education is largely regarded a privilege to those who can pay its price, CUNY stood as a unique example of a free academy for 129 years. At its inception, journalists, legislators, and private interests

Splinter Contents

Closing Down?: Democracy, the GSUC, and the Open University

Interview with Stanley Aronowitz

Splinter: You called us because you wanted to express your concerns about the budget crisis, its effect on the Graduate Center, and what actions might be taken.

Aronowitz: I've heard through several sources that one of the options, although by no means the only option, and that should be made very clear, is that instead of trimming the 19 campuses uniformly they would consider the possibility of shutting down some of the campuses. One of the scenarios is to phase out the Graduate Center, and that scenario is based on an assumption that the Graduate Center is a frill, that however desirable, like music or art in elementary schools, does not fulfill the fundamental mission of the university. This mission should be the training of people for the New York job market and making available the facilities of the City University to the largest possible group of the city's residents.

Now what I am suggesting is that there is an ambivalence in the way in which this whole thing is being treated now. It seems to me that we have to ask very seriously about the relationship of the Graduate Center and the non-degree programs to the fundamental mission of this university. If the mission of this university is to offer bachelor's and presumably master's programs to serve the New York City economy and the most immediate needs of the residents, it violates the profound point that established City College in 1847. The basic reason that City College established in that period, and by extension Brooklyn College, and Queens College and anything beyond that, is that the university was to be a measure of the degree to which culture was to be democratically disseminated throughout the city. The opportunities that would be provided by a university, which are not only vocational or professional but also cultural, would be broadly available to people in the City. As the city colleges developed in the 20th C. in the midst of this enormous immigration, one of the major attractions to the city was the fact that we had this university serving a large number of first generation immigrants and immigrants themselves. It was a terribly important part of the integration of the immigrant population into the city. Now, when the Graduate Center was established in 1965, it was in the context of fulfilling this sort of goal, not just of assimilating immigrants but providing the city population with high quality professional and cultural programs that would be commensurate with democratic purposes. Therefore, people who would never, never, never go to graduate school had it not been for the City University of New York Graduate Center can now attend.

You cannot say that the democratic purpose of this university has been fulfilled unless we have a way of consistently recruiting people of color and women into the graduate programs. They could become the teachers of the new populations that are coming into the City University. This is controversial, and we have a controversy about it because we, the academic world have a rule: you don't hire people to teach in the university that granted them the degree. That cannot apply at CUNY. It

Mc Caffrey:
A Brief History of Access and Tuition at CUNY

warned that the Free Academy would be "onerous to the city finances, injurious to institutions of learning already established, the fruitful source of strife among different classes and religious sects, and almost useless for all purposes of good" (Marshak 1973:6). Despite such vociferous objections, the public voted by a 6 to 1 majority in favor of the first free municipal institution of higher education in the United States, where the "children of the rich and poor [could] take their seats together and know of no distinctions save that of industry, good conduct and intellect" (NY Times 1976:36).

Free tuition, however, did not mean free education for all. CUNY has never been funded in relation to the demand for free higher education. Its funding needs to be situated in relation to fluctuating political and economic support - the interests of business, the needs of the economy, the strength of the private university lobby, the force of the demands of the public.

In the roughly 40 years proceeding the outcry for open admissions, one sees both the physical growth of the university as well as the imposition and gradual tightening of admission standards. Between 1926 and 1961, for example, the enrollment in the municipal college system grew from 43,000 to 93,000, while the population of NYC grew only from 6,276,000 to 7,782,000. At this rate, the college growth outpaced the City by 500% (Neumann 1986:110). In response to such demand, a Brooklyn branch of CCNY was opened in downtown Brooklyn, later to open as an independent municipal school in 1930. A Bronx branch of Hunter went under construction in 1929, and a new college in Queens opened in 1937 (Wechsler 1977:261). At the same time, it became more difficult to gain entry into the university, especially into what were to become known as the senior colleges. Until 1924 the only requirements for admission were NYC residence and a high school diploma. In 1924, the same year that the US passed the Immigration Restriction Act, entrance requirements were introduced at the City Colleges, in the form of a specified high school average. The cutoff that year of 72% excluded 60 percent of the applicants (Women's City Club 1975:15; Horowitz 1981:5). By 1963 Brooklyn College had raised the high school average required for admission to 87% (Women's City Club 1975:15). These increased exclusive admissions standards were quite clearly at odds with the college's original mandate to provide a free education to all of the people. The four decades prior to 1950 indicated fluctuating political and economic support for the CUNY endeavor that would ultimately affect those who sought an affordable education.

After World War II, the US experienced social and economic change on a scale comparable to that of the nineteenth century (Wechsler 1977:259). The growth of the service sector created an increasing demand for educated workers to fill white-collar positions, and there was a growing correlation between education and upward mobility (Wechsler 1977:259). Correspondingly, there was a tremendous expansion of higher education in the US in the years following the war. But at CUNY, the

expansion did not come close to meeting the demands of the citizens of New York.

In the '50s, three community colleges were established: Staten Island (1956), Bronx (1957), and Queensborough (1958). By 1961 however, these colleges together only served 3% of the city's high school graduates (Wechsler 1977:263). In 1950, City, Hunter, Brooklyn, and Queens Colleges instituted a uniform procedure for processing applications and continued to raise the entrance requirements; by 1959 it was set at 85% for all four colleges (Women's City Club 1975:15). Between 1950 and 1962 the municipal college system as a whole experienced little growth comparable to demand. At the 4-year senior colleges, total annual admissions increased from 10,337 to 11,945 in 12 years, while the number of bachelor's degree candidates decreased from 8859 to 8563 (Wechsler 1977:262).

What seems to have been at the root of this period of relative stagnation at CUNY was the City's wavering commitment to the municipal college system. After the City received partial state aid for the creation of the community colleges, officials sought the same level of state support for the first two years of the four year colleges. Since NY State created the SUNY system in 1948, there was a growing perception that higher education was a state, not a city responsibility. City officials began to intensify lobbying efforts to pressure Albany to commit the same amount of resources to CUNY as it was commiting to upstate colleges (Neumann 1986:336). As if to dramatize the situation, in the Winter of 1958-9, the City slashed 5% of CUNY operating budget (Neumann 1986:337). With the imposition of tuition imminent, the Alumni Association forcefully lobbied for the passage of state aid bills that would compensate for the City's diminished support (Neumann 1986:338).

The context in which the City began to pull away from its support for free higher education appears significant. On one hand, the '40s and '50s were times of unprecedented growth for higher education, and the level of resources required for expansion were significant. On the other hand, the '40s and '50s brought on a demographic revolution in New York. Federal highway policy contributed to a white middle class shift from the urban centers to suburbs where they could buy their first homes (Marshak 1982:4). Increasingly, African Americans and Puerto Ricans migrated into the city replacing the whites. So while NYC's population remained constant during the '50s approximately one million African Americans and Puerto Ricans replaced the same number of Euro-Americans who left the city (Wechsler 1977:264). Thus at the same time that "the children of the people" were changing color, the city was withdrawing its commitment to educate them. With immigration at a floodtide and financial support for the university wavering, admissions requirements were raised for the 4-year colleges from 78% to 85-87% (Granger 1965:3).

Albany stepped in to fill the gap left by the City's retreat from higher education, but there were significant implications of the shift to state support. There had long been a struggle in New York between the City and the State for control over the municipal college system and with increased State involvement, there were

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In the recent peace movement we have already seen the coalescence of the kind of collective practice described by Guattari and Negri. At least in New York City diverse groups such as ACT-UP, the African American Coalition, Students Against War, Transportation Alternatives, New Jewish Agenda, Military Family Support Network, SANE-Freeze, Palestine Solidarity Committee, and many more, sometimes separately and sometimes collectively opposed the U.S.-led war against Iraq. Indeed, these 'new subjectivities' found a way to work collectively without compromising their respective cause to a universal. ACT-UP, for example, always told us, "Health Care Not Warfare", while Transportation Alternatives urged, "Bikes Not Bombs" and here at the Graduate School our splinter of Students Against the War consistently stressed the disastrous economic impact of the war on public education as well as its implications for a democratic institution such as our own. At press time CUNY students are 'placing their stakes' on themselves and have begun to occupy buildings on the various campuses in opposition to tuition hikes which will make public education too expensive for many of

us, budget proposals which effectively gut the quality of our education, and standardization tests which restore, de facto, the racist and otherwise discriminatory entrance requirements which our minority and progressive predecessors literally fought to dismantle in 1970. Within the next month it is very likely that the CUNY adminstration in conjunction with the municipal and state governments will use the courts and then the various security forces to 'legally' and violently suppress the students defense of one the most crucial democratic gains of the last 20 years.

We urge all of our readers, whether student, staff, faculty, or non-CUNY citizens, to support us — to oppose all tuition increases, budget cuts, and entrance requirements, and instead call for tax increases for corporations, which must include Columbia University and NYU, as well as the wealthiest 5% of our state. Democracy entails more than an atrophied voting process, cannot be enforced by our military abroad or our police at home, and is only realized in institutions such as CUNY. S!

--Andrew Long, Michael Waldron

louder calls for the administrative reorganization of the system. The Alumni Association stepped forward once again, staunchly defending the local autonomy of the municipal college system, stressing that state aid to education did not necessitate state control (Neumann 1986:341). By 1961 a resolution was reached that validated the autonomy of the city system, and renamed it the City University of New York. Yet the same day that this bill was passed, another unrelated bill was passed in the State Legislature that repealed the tuition-free mandate of the municipal colleges, and substituted a tuition policy that would be at the discretion of the Board of Higher Education (Neumann 1986:346). Though student fees had constituted a substantial part of CUNY's budget since the Depression, and part-timers, who were perhaps the least affluent, paid for their classes, there now was the possibility of tuition being imposed on a whole new scale.

Open Admissions

The City University of New York's com-

mitment to and/or capability of meeting New Yorkers' demand for higher education was a problem that intensified by the '60s. With the number of high school graduates who would apply to college a veritable "tidal wave" there was a growing distiction made between "free higher education for the able," and "free higher education for all" (Neumann 1986:348). But the notion that there were students more capable of benefiting from higher education than others, and that this ability would be reflected in high school grades, was an idea clearly at odds with the mandate of a public university. It became increasingly apparent, moreover, that there were serious discrepancies between the ethnic composition of the city and that of the university. In the late 60's, African-American and Puerto Rican students led the fight for open admissions at CUNY. In an era of African-American struggle for civil rights, equal opportunity and social justice, students of color called for the white citadel perched on a hilltop in Harlem to open its doors to

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An Interview with Toni Negri

Alice Jardine and Brian Massumi
Translated by Brian Massumi.
Recorded July 24, 1986

[Editor's note: this interview originally appeared in the journal Copyright (#1, 1987). We thank Brian Massumi for his permission to reprint the interview in Splinter!]

Alice Jardine: Reading New Spaces of Liberty [also known as Communists Like Us] is what gave us the idea of talking with you. ... Why? Because there is a kind of disorientation, even despair or cynicism, among radical thinkers today, especially in the United States. You and Guattari admit that we are surrounded by despair, sadness, boredom, monotony. To make matters worse, the despair is individualized, and isolates people from one another. Even in your own texts there are things I find terribly depressing. Especially in your book with Guattari, in which you explain that under what Guattari calls Worldwide Integrated Capitalism we are all subjugated because power is no longer localizable. I find that attitude central to the pessimism surrounding us. But the reason we are here is that in spite of all of that, we found optimism in New Spaces of Liberty. In fact, I have never read anything of yours in which that optimism doesn't appear, at the beginning, at the end, or throughout. This is true even of your interviews. For example, in an interview in Liberation even the idea that the revolution has already come is optimistic: the revolution has been deepened by a kind of "irreversible strategic interiorization allowing it to join intrinsically with the immense ethical project of peace." That is an optimism I share at a certain level. Could you explain in more detail where this optimism comes from and where it leads, given the present state of things? I am particularly interested in the "optimism of reason, and pessimism of the will."

Toni Negri: "Optimism of reason, pessimism of the will" is directed polemically against the traditional position of the Communists of the Third International: "pessimism of reason, optimism of the will." What does that mean? It means that from the point of view of relations of force reality cannot be changed, that one cannot attack it, but that one can commit oneself to a cause in a totally voluntaristic way. The optimism of the will is will-power exercised against the dictattes of reason. I have always considered this position blind, mystical, and unreasonable in the worst way. Inherent in this conception is the idea that if reality can be changed at all it is only by a small minority, by an entirely singular will. I have seen this pessimism of reason and optimism of the will in action in terrorism. All of the terrorists I have known were people who thought that nothing could be done. They were desperate. They thought that only an individual act that broke through the crust of reality could have a positive impact. I would say, further, that this pessimism of reason and optimism of the will is found to some extent in all of the catastrophic, chiliastic currents of contemporary thought. This practico-material inertia of the real presupposes the exceptional moment, the Blitz of reason, the Jetzt of the moment of rupture. I see this as an internalization of Leninism: a thorough pessimism of reason and an opti-

mism of the will. Along with it comes an aristocratic attitude and a definition of the intellectual as one who is capable of voluntaristically pointing the way, as a Nietzschean intellectual capable of breaking through by force of will — a will that is not organized as an ontological rationality or a rationality weighed down by reality.

Felix's and my optimism is in opposition to all of that. Before defining the content of that optimism of reason, it is necessary to say that there is something in individuals' lives — respect, sharing ideas, the possibility of contact, the possibility of building something together — that in philosophical terms is a constitutive force. This constitutive force precedes every moment of profound illumination of reality. That is the optimism of reason. It is an optimism that pertains to the construction of subjectivity as such — as opposed to a pessimism of the will, in other words a pessimism with respect to action. Clearly, on the level of action we have suffered many, many defeats. We have lived through a terribly difficult historical situation in which defeat has been heaped upon defeat. That cannot be erased. But on the other hand, there is the hope or assertion that there is a human reality that in all cases creates a relation, a meeting of minds, a possibility of communication, of construction, of the constitution of something new. As for the content, the optimism of reason means that everything we did in all our years of struggle — more than that: everything that has characterized the twentieth century — is irreversible. This irreversibility is absolutely fundamental. What was the twentieth century? It's almost over!

I studied the nineteenth century extensively. People would say that, depending on the point of view, the nineteenth century either ended ten years before 1900 or fourteen years after. Ten years before: 1890, about when the Socialist Party was being organized in Europe. Or fourteen years after: the outbreak of World War 1. You really can look at it that way, even from the viewpoint of cultural history, of a Kulturgeschichte of the nineteenth century. Now, my impression is that, from the point of view of exploited peoples, at least two major phenomena have characterized the twentieth century: the October Revolution in 1917, and the great process of decolonization of the postwar years. From the capitalist point of view, it has been characterized by the construction of a world market, and the nuclear overdetermination of that market. This places us in a contradictory situation. We can say that the new relations of force that the twentieth century has constructed are indestructible, and that the working class has irreversibly negated itself by demanding wage rights, the right of reproduction, and the right of wealth. Or, we can point to the desire for revolution, the desire for transformation, a profound urge to transformation, as something irreversible. People have changed. But the change in the situation of the capitalist state is equally irreversible. It is undeniable that

...a collective mobilization for freedom that will inaugurate an entirely different way of working together...

Communists Like Us

and elsewhere (Anti-Oedipus, Marx Beyond Marx). As is well known, the Hegelian dialectic is a progressive movement; that is to say, it preserves, suppresses and lifts to a higher plane of synthesis that which it negates: wage labor in this case. It is from the standpoint of capital and that of the capitalist State which attempts to contain and manipulate any kind of working class antagonism in which Guattari and Negri make their intervention. They substitute the concept of antagonism for that of contradiction and describe the dialectic as relational rather than contradictory, situated in the relations of production and not in the forces of production. Although the working class is within and by necessity related to capital, it is nevertheless an autonomous expression against capital. From the perspective of the working class, there is no synthesis in its relationship to capital, but on the contrary purely an antagonism. For these authors, "antagonism" is central to a rejection and refusal of capital, rather than the Hegelian synthesis which would contain and manage working class antagonism.

By rejecting the more pious and compromising Hegel-like synthesis, Guattari and Negri envisage a new group of revolutionary subjectivities in the antagonistic dialectic who may actually refuse work or transform work itself, giving us a new revolutionary class composition. Two lines of alliance are delineated in this new political program, molar antagonisms as group struggles in the workplace against exploitation, and molecular proliferations as isolated instances of struggle within collectivities, transforming relationships between individuals and collectivities.

What does this new subjective consciousness engendered by the collective work experience mean? Labor has been de-territorialized, and the global blackmail that Integrated World Capital has induced makes it virtually impossible for people to live without being threatened into thinking that there is no future or possibilities of a future liberation for alternative modes of expression, experience and practice. Work and life are no longer separate. In a poetic flourish, Negri and Guattari call for love and reason, re-articulating the communism of the future as nothing other than a call to life, a collective mobilization for freedom that will inaugurate an entirely different

...people in the workplace as valuable rather than functional...

way of working together and "a singular expression for the combined productivity of individuals and groups emphatically not reducible to each other" (17).

In the sixth and last dialogue of the text, "Think and Live in Another Way," Guattari and Negri offer a five-point political program. Introducing a new series of definitive perspectives which imply the requirements of patience, courage, and intelligence, they see a crystalization of how organizations in which the old slogans, such as "let a thousand flowers bloom" are transformed into an analytic key for grasping the social characteristics and dimensions of productive labor and are recomposed into a subversive and innovative presence. The five tasks include (1) the movement's radical separation from the Capitalistic State; (2) the urgency of re-territorializing political practice by creating conditions for these by reconquering communication spaces of liberty, desires, and dialogue; (3) "dissubordination" and themes along this dimension of the molar and state apparatuses; (4) redirecting the peace movement as the beginning and end of the revolutionary program; and (5) finally creating capable organizations.

Although this series of dialogues is dated, Negri and Guattari in a prophetic vein have anticipated the further extension of Integrated World Capitalism into what is now called the New World Order. In the time of a generalized feeling of helplessness and despair following the capitalistic states' military display of its latest advanced weapons and bombing capacities, this text itself becomes a molecular proliferation, at once refreshing and hopeful, utopic in scope, providing new tools for analytic research, provoking new desires for subjectivity-in-process. The most remarkable aspect of the dialogue between these two thinkers is their tonal optimism and their relentless critique of Integrated World Capitalism and the subjection, surveillance and servitude it promotes. One can only be reminded of the words of Marx, "The revolution is dead. Long live the revolution."

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the capitalist state is overdetermining, in the sense that its power has reached metaphysical proportions: it has the power to destroy the world. The universe. For the first time in history human beings have the ability to do that, by means of nuclear power. Not only nuclear power, but also biological engineering and any number of other things under development. Nuclear

true that those in power have this enormous tool of destruction. But is is also true that the unification of the world market means that what was once the class struggle is now an integration of struggles that reaches right into the citadel of capital, the headquarters of comand; that the crisis in the Argentine and Brazilian economies strikes at the heart of capital. This contradiction is

the community. The call for open admissions was a challenge to the university to live up to its mandate of service and to revise its assumptions about the nature and purpose of public higher education.

Liberals in New York had long defended the City University's policy of free tuition and supported the institution as an important means of "democratizing" society. When there were attempts to impose tuition in the 50's, defenders of the university cried out in the name of the "children of the Negro families and Spanish-speaking families from the Caribbean" who were "desperately eager for the door of opportunity to be opened to them" (Neumann 1986:339). Yet by the 1960's, it was clear that free-tuition in and of itself was no guarantee of free-education and upward mobility:

It is a grim fact that the City's "no tuition" arrangement does not bring higher education closer to people who are barred from its attainment by rigid, unrealistic entrance requirements... a no-tuition policy will be of [no] service when a well qualified applicant is warned off beforehand because his high school average is "only" 82 instead of the required 85-87. (Granger 1965:8)

Moreover, it was clear that the group most affected by such admissions standards were the children of the new New Yorkers. Though African Americans and Puerto Ricans had replaced one million Euro-Americans in New York in the '50s, nonwhite graduation rates from high school remained at 13%. Of the 20% of NYC high school graduates admitted to CUNY, 1% were nonwhite (Wechsler 1977:264). At a time when higher education was crucial to occupational mobility and success, the city's new immigrants, the new "children of the poor," were unable to meet lofty admissions criteria. Critics called out that African American and Puerto Rican youth were victims of "educational genocide" occuring at the elementary and secondary school level in the NYC public schools (Ballard 1973:122). In 1968 for example, in the graduating classes of two predominantly African American high schools, Benjamin Franklin and Boys High in Brooklyn, only 11 of 318 graduates at the former and 7 of 353 graduates at the latter school had the requisite minimal average of 82% required for admission to CUNY (Ballard 1973:122).

There was a growing movement towards opening the doors of the university. Critics of CUNY's increasing exclusiveness argued passionately against its admissions criteria:

If one, or possibly two, of City University's Senior Colleges were designated as having a special concern for "the ablest and most original students," this would be understandable; but to organize the whole system into a higher educational reserve for a "talented tenth" - or 50 - of the City's high school graduates seeking a college degree smacks of a kind of "educational colonialism" that is far removed from the social-educational problems of an urban democracy. (Granger1965:6)

Still, there were those, particularly faculty and alumni, who had personal interest in preserving CUNY as the "proletarian

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Harvard," and the "alma mater of Nobel laureates;" who were romantically tied to the notion of CUNY as a place where hard working immigrants "were civilized" (see Martin Mayer's article in Commentary 2/73). Underlying these arguments about "maintaining standards" was a more charged debate about the centrality of a college degree for upward mobility.

The debate over open admissions at City University stemmed from a concern that rapid growth and lowered standards would lead to a "cheapened" degree. And in a city where all believed that a degree from Brooklyn, City, Hunter, or Queens College had heretofore facilitated social mobility and provided some economic security, a "cheap" degree rendered it too easy for newer racial and ethnic groups to "make it." It also placed in jeopardy the worth of "hard-earned" degrees previously aquired by members of older ethnic groups (Wechsler 1977:294).

While there were those who wanted to maintain their privilege, there were others who looked back to the mission of the college and demanded that it meet the educational needs of the city's population. Proponents of open admissions challenged the notion that college education was most useful to those who demonstrated academic aptitude through test scores and grades. They argued that public education should aim to "[maximize] the educational growth of the student, whatever his level at entrance," rather than "ensure its own prestige through a combination of stringent selection procedures and subsequent elimination of the lowest performers" (Rossmann 1975:2). At the core of the arguments for open admissions was the conviction that it was not sufficient to slot students of color into places at 2-year colleges. Over the years, the community colleges had become the place where students with high school averages of 75-85% had gone, with significant obstacles preventing them from further transfer. Proponents of open admissions were careful to call for a plan that would not result in the "ghetto-ization" of the community colleges (Ballard 1973:129).

In response to political pressure, the Board of Higher Education implemented an open admissions plan in the Fall of 1970 that was a compromise between a variety of plans put forth by students, faculty, and an ad hoc committee on admissions. Prior to 1970 admission to any CUNY college was based on an applicant's high school average or a combination of an applicant's high school average and aptitude test scores. Generally speaking, those students with averages of 85 or above had a chance to enroll in a senior college; those students with averages of 75 or above were eligible to enroll in 2-year liberal arts programs with the possibility of transfer, those students with averages of 70 or above could enroll in 2-year career programs. Those students with averages below 70 or those who had not taken an "academic" program in high school, regardless of their class rank, were ineligible for admission to any college within CUNY (Rossmann 1971:10). Thus, under this policy, only 20% of high school graduates were eligible for admission to CUNY. With the new CUNY admissions policy, all high school graduates were guaranteed admission to a

CUNY college. Rather than only high school averages, a combination of high school average and class rank were used to determine entrance into the university. For example, a students with an average of 80 or better, and/or ranking in the top half of their graduating class, were guaranteed spots in a senior college (Lavin 1981:19). The following Fall, the university admitted a freshman class of 35,000 students, a 75% increase over the previous year (Lavin 1981:19). The ethnic balance of the university changed dramatically: by 1971, enrollment of students of color rose to 24% at senior colleges and 36% in community colleges, among the highest representation of students of color for any public university in the country (Gorelick 1980:28).

Yet the depth of the commitment to the massive expansion of public higher education remained unclear. State support for open admissions came from a governor who in his re-election campaign would look for the votes of those who supported the open admissions plan (Wechsler 1977:287). At a time of heightened racial tensions in New York and in the nation, opening the doors of the City University was a politically sound way of avoiding conflict. Providing sufficient long-term funding commensurate with the undertaking was another issue. From the beginning, there was considerable resistance from certain factions over the expansion of public education. Former Columbia Dean Jacques Barzun, who presided over a conference on open admissions in Washington, DC, in 1971, predicted that "open admissions will be a minority privilege for which the entire country will be paying through various forms of taxation" (Ballard 1973:133). A 1970 article in Fortune magazine commented on open admissions:

Underlying CUNY's bold venture are the premises that a large number of disadvantaged students have the native ability to master college-level instruction, and that their initial handicaps in reading and math can be overcome in a fairly short time.... It is unsettling to think what the CUNY policy might lead to. Adopted universally, it would bring about a huge jump in enrollments. (Gorelick 1980:21)

A 1975 study of CUNY's open admissions policy concluded that it was unlikely that open admissions would be abandoned openly: "that would be politically impossible - but it could be nibbled away or starved to death" (Women's City Club 1975:4).

Conclusion

In June 1976 the Board of Higher Education voted to impose tuition at the City University of New York, ending a 129 year policy of free higher education. Tuition came at a time of system wide shut-down, ordered by the Chancellor after the collapse of legislative efforts to provide emergency funds to meet the university's year end bills. The imposition of tuition effectively abandoned the effort towards open admissions launched six years earlier. A student senate leader at the time denounced the resolution as a "complete sell-out" (NYT 6/2/76:34).

Most literature reflecting back to this period situates the imposition of tuition in the context of city-wide fiscal crisis (see Lavin 1981; NYT 6/2/76). Accordingly, the City University was seen as only one of many institutions inevitably affected by

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New York City's financial woes. There is evidence to suggest, however, that the imposition of tuition at CUNY was not an economic necessity, but one of many historic attempts to withdraw financial support from public higher education in New York City. In the '70s as in the '30s, critics argued that the City could no longer afford the university. Yet at its peak, financial support for CUNY amounted to only 4% of the City's budget (Gorelick 1980:29). John Sawhill, the president of NYU, chair of the private college's lobby group, and a member of the State Emergency Financial Control Board was instrumental in pushing for cutbacks at CUNY (Newsday 5/16/89:54). Yet even when tuition was imposed, the City called for more drastic budget cuts, with the aim of severing all municipal support for the university (NYT 6/22/76:1). Tuition fees never reached the university's operating budget, but went to pay interest on City construction bonds (Gorelick 1980:30).

There were increasing demands for the state to match aid for tuition-paying CUNY students at the same level to aid with tuition-paying SUNY students. Yet at CUNY, tuition was matched instead with severe budget cuts. The community colleges had been scheduled to take on an added importance with open admissions by absorbing most of the system's students. They now were forced to cut classes, staff, and tenured faculty (NYT 7/27/76:21). Brooklyn College, which served 30,000 students was forced to cut $18 million in two years to bring its budget down to $57 million (NYT 7/25/76:32). Medgar Evers College was shifted from a 4-year to a 2-year college. In three years CUNY was forced to shrink its teaching staff by nearly 50% and its student body by 75,000 (Newsday 5/16/89:54). African American and Puerto Rican students showed the greatest enrollment decline on all levels (Gorelick 1980:33).

Today CUNY faces some of the most severe budget cuts and tuition hikes since 1976. At the same time, the CUNY administration has announced a renewed concern for "stiffer preparation for students" and "higher educational standards" at CUNY. A quick glance at the history of the university reveals that such concerns have been most pronounced at times when there was a desire to limit the student body.

In the Fall of 1990, for the first time since open admissions, City University turned away between 3000-5000 qualified

students, claiming inadequate space and staff to cope with the level of applicants (NYT 9/26/90:1). At a time when its enrollment is the highest since 1976, insufficient financial support has brought on hiring freezes, tuition hikes, and substantial budget cuts. With increasing austerity is the growing perception that the battle over budget cuts is a power struggle whose pivotal issue is race (NYT 5/28/90:1).

In 1988 and 1989, student protestors took over administrative offices. Roughly 10,000 took to the streets of New York charging that now that more students of color are able to take advantage of public education, elected officials are abandoning their historic mission to educate the working class. The City and State continue to hide behind various budget crises to rationalize tuition hikes and budget cuts. Yet over the past 15 years while the State chopped away at CUNY it found millions of dollars to subsidize private education in the form of Bundy Aid.

In March of 1932 in the midst of the Great Depression, acting Mayor of New York, Joseph McKee, proposed closing down the municipal college system. The CCNY alumni association issued a scathing response to those who would attack their alma mater:

Now when the government of the city is profoundly disturbed by municipal problems of the gravest nature, all the tribe of detractors, whining over the shrinkage of their bloated money bags, jealous of a life and purpose they cannot understand, and dissembling under the cloak of civic welfare their hatred of races and creeds not their own, rise up in ignorance and hypocrisy to call the college a luxury, and by their blatancy in troubled times, to disturb the calm minds of those who desire to do well. (Neumann 1986:119)

At a time when the "children of the poor" are again facing the imposition of admissions requirements and tuition hikes that will function to homogenize and burden the student body, and at a time when the university faces budget cuts that threaten its diversity, its vitality, and ultimately its existence, students would do well to remember the words and the struggles of their predecessors.

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Aronowitz Interview
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cannot apply because in the first place we have the opportunity. Even if we take it as our mission to be held by and for the city as well maintaining a national or international reputation, we should be training increasing numbers of people of color, women, people from new immigrant background and immigrant groups who will go back into the university and become primary faculty. Columbia and NYU and Stanford and the University of Chicago and the Ivy Leagues and the Universities of California are not going to be the source for the faculty. We have to be the source for the faculty. Its a mission that we haven't defined for ourselves yet.

Aronowitz: Yes, I understand exactly what you are talking about. But I am posing this in the way through which historical figures that made this university made the colleges famous posed it. These people built the school as a way in which there would be cultural critique and cultural dissemination. Part of this contract is not simply know-how to create the technical labor for New York business and New York public agencies but to provide a democratic vista the city as a whole, to prevent the city from becoming basically depoliticized and decitizenized if you want to use that Eisenhowerism. This had a citizenship function, the power of this university. This was to prepare people to take their place of leadership in the politics of the city. The leadership in the sense of labor, occupations, professions as well as in politics. And I think that if you don't see the mission of the university in those terms, then it's clear that you can extirpate the must preserve the Graduate Center. We see the genuine purpose as the critique and dissemination of international and national as well as local cultures, then you have the obligation to maintain this place as a major cultural center.

Splinter: Actually if they are afraid of nepotism and inbreeding then what you just said about the campuses of City University being dispersed among quite a number of senior colleges actually speaks for the fact that we could hire CUNY graduates.

Aronowitz: Yes, this is what I just said. We could hire CUNY graduates. And we might violate the informal nepotism rule.

But what I wanted to emphasize is that the preservation of the Graduate Center has to do with the continuation of the orientation of the university itself. If we see as our mission not just bringing people and giving them training and allowing them to go out to the world and becoming intellectuals and academics but also making sure that we have improved the composition, in gender and race, of our own university then we

The disciplines, based upon the distinctions between natural science, social sciences and the humanities are largely spurious. They are rooted in 18th C. conceptions of knowledge and at best 19th C. conceptions of knowledge. After all many of the disciplines in the social sciences, and in the humanities are only a century old. We used to have literature, philosophy and theology and that was it. So that the new disciplines in the humanities—comparative literature and so on, they are very new. They themselves were responsive to changes. But I am speaking about broader categorical transgressions. We have to begin not simply to talk the language of an interdisciplinary approach, but to talk the language of non-disciplinary. We have to speak of knowledge in relationship to the new problematics that have been proposed not only by French and German philosophers but also within our own tradition by people like John Dewey. These have not been taken up as a significant prescription for our own educational project. Our educational project is grounded in German and old Cartesian conceptions of knowledge tradition, a Kantian conception of science.

Splinter: You started off by loosely describing a historical contract between the university and the immigrant and poor populations of the city. I think some people would say, well the contract, the terms of the contracts are that we are here to provide the kind of know-how that will guarantee these populations a means through which to rise socially, economically, whatever. That contract does not entail what the Graduate Center does, it does not entail intellectual and political developments.

Splinter: So how might we advise the chancellor who for instance thinks that it would be innovative to take non traditional students, people of color, women, and see that they are trained in graduate studies in the traditional disciplines?

Aronowitz: All I have to say is, in answer to that, I mean, what Ann Reynolds thinks is innovative and what I think is innovative may be two different things. I have letters here on this very desk from people of the Dominican Republic, of Venezuela and Puerto Rico, people who have called me many times from Latin America, who want to come here because we offer the possibility of a multi-disciplinary approach. And in fact, there are non traditional students from the South Bronx who have all the credentials and qualifications to get into any graduate school but want to come to CUNY because CUNY has the reputation, perhaps unjustly, of being a place which has something new to offer. Now you've got to enter into a traditional department, and in this traditional department you have to fulfill all the requirements of the department and do this kind of multi-disciplinary cutting-edge work on your own time. And that's a shame.

Splinter: If you were looking to address the kind of proposals that we have heard about recently, how would you respond?

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absolutely characteristic of our century: there are processes of totalization, processes of critical importance, that are completely irreversible. That is the optimism of reason. It doesn't mean ignoring the existence of nuclear energy and the overdetermination of destruction the point that the whole universe can be destroyed. The problem is to find a way to rearrange that irreversibility.

Brian Massumi: So the optimism comes from the fact that there are two contradictory and irreversible movements, the totalization of capital and

proletarian resistance, that will reach another crisis point?

TN: I don't know if there will be crisis points. This situation itself is the crisis. Crisis has become the content of our existence. Up to 1968 — that is really the end of the century — we were Leninist. But we were Leninist in the same way our adversary was Weberian. And the two weren't that different from each other. If we can pinpoint that mythical date, it was the 1950s, 1968 to be precise, that the crisis entered our reality as the normal state of affairs. The normality of it was what was new. It would be senseless to cite statistics, but economic evolution began decelerating in 1964. Why? Because that is when the conflictuality I have been talking about became completely interiorized, and when that interiorization became irreversible. This is an undeniable fact of the political history of the Western world. Something like it had already happened once before, with the birth of the bourgeoisie. I don't want to play the vulgar Marxist, but I believe that these are things that everyone can recognize, that they are part of our culture. There is a certain development that goes through very long phases of crisis. We cannot get out of the crisis by denying its subject, in other words that conflictuality. On the contrary, that subject has become indestructible. Furthermore, this is not a situation internal to each capitalist country. It is global. The pattern of the contradiction is entirely transversal, entirely open. There is a contradiction between East and West, and there is a contradiction between North and South. Then at every point in this framework of Cartesian coordinates there is an overdetermination of other contradictions. This is not at all to say that contradiction has disappeared, as the postmodernists claim. It means that contradicitons are ever-present. That is the real materialist conception. It means that contradictions have become infinite, that they exist as totalized structures of contradictions. That is the situation we are living in. That is the total schizophrenia we are experiencing. That is our reality.

Returning to our optimism: it is the somewhat bizarre optimism of someone who says, "Look, mister, you've got the power. You've got everything you want. But we're still here. We're here as contradiction. Every move you make reproduces contradictions. You can hold onto your power, but only by pushing relations of force to the extreme." Nuclear power is the perfect example. It's all one big knot that gets more and more complicated. It's our life.

AJ: So the complexity is a basis for the optimism?

TN: Yes, the optimism is based on that. It is based on a complete singularizationn, on this irreducibility between two terms, on this continual multiplication of relations of force. I am not talking about identities, or a divisionism as in painting. I am talking about knots of forces. The strange part is that all of this surfaces in conservatism as well. It doesn't only have a leftist cast. Take what is going on in France right now. It's classic: there is a rightist government that rides to power on unusually strong rhetoric. And does nothing. It can't touch a thing. Then there are the Greens in Germany, who adopt many political elements that are traditionally on the right and transform them into a leftist moment; it's incredible. The important thing is that the binary relation has splintered. And from that splintering has arisen a whole series of points of contestation that are everywhere. It is enough to make capital nostalgic for Marxism. That is why I am optimistic.

BM: In other words, power has become immanent to the social, and the points of confrontation have multiplied. Thus the possibility of resistance is everywhere.

TN: Precisely.

AJ: Then why is there a tendency to experience this complexity as monotony and boredom and the impossibility of action? Where does this sensation of monotony come from? If there are so many points of resistance and so many possibilities, where does the inertia come from that we feel so deeply in our bodies, in our daily life, in our struggles?

TN: From the gap between the two processes. On the one hand, there is a process of production of subjectivity, particularly in the domain of the state, and large-scale economic powers that have reached very high levels of efficiency. On the other hand, there are processes constitutive of *new* subjectivities that sometimes submit and sometimes resist. It is a classic gap. Our period resembles two other periods. First, the end of the Renaissance and the first half of the seventeenth century. That period saw the defeat of a revolutionary ideology coextensive with Italian humanism; and, parallel to humanism, of certain currents of then nascent protestantism. Both were reduced, the first to the new modern state, the second to the Reform Church. They are forms and contents of defeat. But beyond that there was life, a vital movement that continued and took on the most varied of forms. There were the libertines and the new sciences, which broke with one revolutionary politics and joined forces with another. The bourgeois revolution came out of that. The other period is the Restoration that followed the French Revolution and Napoleonism, when Romanticism was born. Romanticism was reactionary compared to the Enlightenment. But it had its strengths: it reinfused movement into the nationalities. These were phenomena of historical irreversibility that involved a break-up of ideologies and a splintering of subjective continuities. But they also included the possibility of following lines that were already in motion and were irreversible, and of taking them further. On the other hand, 1968 was something that came too early, and now must find a form to settle into. The last ten years have been truly horrendous in some ways. It is often said that all that remains of our social and historical panorama are shadows. We are now beginning to see the shadows take form. However, much remains to be done.

BM: You said that 1968 was the transition. It was the transition to what you call the "crisis state." What was the preceding stage of capital? What did that transition consist of? What brought it about?

TN: What I am about to say is in part based on my own research, and in part on work done by the Italian movement as a whole, and also the French. 1929 is fundamental to the changes that the structures of the contemporary capitalist state have undergone. What happened in '29? Big capital, international big business, came to the realization that the Russian Revolution was irreversible. By 1929 the Russian Revolution had consolidated itself in a certain form. The specter of Bolshevism swept the world — we must not forget the Chinese Revolution of 1926-1927. Of particular importance was the Great Depression, affecting all of Europe. And there was the Clyde revolt in 1926, in Great Britain's northern factories. Keynes's thinking was a product of the 1920s. I was just reading something by D. H. Lawrence on political theory, and he talked about 1926 too — he was from the mining region. An awareness grew that it was necessary to deal with the "menace" in a new way. It was betwen 1929 and 1933 that the United States put into place what was to be an intervention state, a planned state, a Keynesian state defining demand and the commodification of the necessities of reproduction as its basic concern.

BM: That marked the appropriation of the working class, its internalization in the system through mechanisms of mediation. . . .

TN: Yes. That was when the working class, laboring classes in general, came to be seen by capital as fundamental elements in the reproduction of the system. This is something absolutely fundamental. It meant that wages were no longer an independent variable. They became a dependent variable of economic growth. What drove the system was the wage variable, in other words the variable pertaining to the physical reproduction of the system, to the reproduction of the most important commodity of all: labor-power itself.

1929 represents the adoption of Keynesianism in virtually every advanced capitalist country. It represents the setting of standard monetary values which was accomplished on a global scale at Bretton Woods in the early 1940s. The postwar period saw the generalization of Keynesianism throughout Europe, by means of the Marshall Plan. A new economic model was set in place: recovery and restructuring through the transplantation of the American model to Europe. This was the rise of what I call the "planning state." The planning state lasted up to the 1960s, when pressure from the working class pushed it beyond its limits, namely the orderly reproduction of the system.

BM: So the transition, the crisis, was provoked by resistance. It wasn't an internal result of the logic of capitalism.

TN: Absolutely not. But we shouldn't oversimplify. Obviously, from a capitalist point of view, there is the ever-present problem of permanent overproduction. Keynes, analyzing the New Deal, stated that it was impossible for an economy organized along the lines described in his theory to sustain itself without war. The reason is overproduction: at a certain point things are produced that cannot be sold. The production of war has the enormous advantage that things can continue to be produced and destroyed without having to pass through the market.

BN: All of this relates to decolonization, in other words the creation of new markets and the exportation of the proletariat.

TN: Yes, the oppression of the decolonized proletariats is especially important. Decolonization comes to be interpreted as a new quest for commodities on the part of the decolonized nations, and for the money to buy them. For example, after World War II the Arab countries make their entry onto the world stage.

AN: And what an entry!

TN: The same thing happened with the Southeast Asian countries. Two systems were in operation: the Keynesian system within the advanced capitalist countries, and, internationally, another Keynesian system, that of Bretton Woods (the pinning of the gold standard to the value of the dollar, which was the basis of money exchanges betwen capitalist countries). That all fell apart in 1971, when Nixon declared the value of the dollar to be independent of gold. The capitalist countries had to learn to deal with the uncertainties of completely open exchange. That is what inaugurates the crisis state, in other words a state that no longer attempts to ensure orderly relations between the laboring classes and capital, between wages and profits, but instead seeks to regulate shifting relations that have not yet taken definite shape. The hope was that this would be a temporary situation. But it wasn't; it wasn't a period or a phase. It is the very definition of the turn of the century: crisis as a normal, organic situation.

BM: The planning state is characterized by a compromise, by the working class's compromising itself. The Italian Communist Party's campaign during the 1970s for a "Historic Compromise" with the Christian Democrats can be seen as an attempt to regress to that Keynesian phase. The Autonomia movement, on the other hand, was marked by a total rejection of that compromise, a total rejection of the existing organization of work. What exactly did this "refusal of work" involve? What strategies were employed?

AJ: And are they still applicable today?

TN: Before I can respond to the last question I have to cover a lot of history. The transition from the planning state to the crisis state also marks a transition in the structure of the subjects implicated in that process. Obviously, as always, there is an initiative on the part of capital running through the various state forms. The Keynesian state is also the Fordist state. Fordism is on the microscopic level what Keynesianism is on the macroscopic level. Fordism is a precise relation: the workers' wages should enable them to buy the automobiles they make. At the same time, the Fordist state is a perfecting of Taylorism, in other words of a form of work where skilled labor is replaced by the assembly line. The work required is completely unskilled . The working class is no longer hierarchically organized with the skilled workers of the large factories on top. There had been a whole working class ideology that went along with that and depended on the workers possessing the production plan. That falls by the wayside, becoming an archeological vestige. Today in Italy southerners go north to be thrown onto the assembly line to carry on that large-scale production. France has the Arabs. Germany has the Turks. The United States has everybody. They have lost the privilege the traditional working class had of knowing about production, possessing it.

BM: Everything becomes fragmented.

TN: And it's work that anybody can learn in two hours.

BM: Now only the capitalist knows the plan, while at the same time the worker has become a consumer.

TN: That's right.

BM: So the refusal of work is the rejection of this organization of work. . . .

TN: Clearly.

BM: . . . as well as of the consumer function.

TN: In short, of the role assigned to what we have called the "mass worker." The passage from skilled worker to mass worker is contemporaneous with the transition from the traditional liberal-democratic state form to the planning state. The planning state is predicated upon the mass worker. The mass worker is the flipside of the planning state. And in their massification mass workers massify desire, they massify their needs. That massified pressure is what brings the planning state down.

BM: So on the one hand we have a refusal of that organization of work. That implies, for example, the sabotaging of the industrial process — Italian workers practiced many forms of sabotage through out the 1960s and 1970s. And on the other hand, we have a rejection of the consumer function: hence auto-reductions, whereby people unilaterally decided to pay less for goods and services than they were asked to pay. The strategy was two-pronged.

TN: Precisely. There was a two-pronged strategy — the social side of which became increasingly more important. In other words, the role of auto-reductions and grassroots organization grew. Why? Because the breakdown of the planning state, its transformation into the crisis state, is accompanied by a restructuring of labor-power and the constitution of the working class itself. A struggle was waged against the planning state, inside and outside of the factory. People's lives and reproduction outside the factory came to be seen from a wage perspective. People came to understand that the processes of the accumulation of capital pervaded all of socciety. Society had become a factory — all of the mechanisms of the reproduction of labor-power were not completely dominated by capital and its state. Under these conditions, wages became social wages, and all of society became the battleground. In order to reconquer an individual territory, it was necessary to attack the state, to contest capital; it was necesary to try to destroy everything in order to build one's freedom. Auto-reductions played a role, but so did direct appropriation. And not only direct appropriation, but also widespread pressure on public spending, in other words on the welfare system. Public spending came to be seen as a form

of salary. This idea was taken up by the women's movement and by young people, by all those excluded from the factory as a center of struggle. Without the women's movement, Autonomia would never have gotten off the ground in Italy or anywhere in Europe. Autonomia in Italy began with demands for autonomy by the young, with attacks against the city and regional governments. The demand was made for a salary for the young and for students. Government budgets became overburdened and there was a crisis in public spending. Rember the budget crises of the late 1970s in the big cities in the United States, in particular New York; these were characteristic of a certain moment in the transition from the planning state to the crisis state. What happens when this kind of pressure gets to the point that it can no longer be sustained? According to Marx, and I am in complete agreement with him on this point, technological change occurs when struggles make it impossible to maintain the old technologies. Strikes attract new technology — strikes in the literal sense, in other words ruptures in the system. This is easily verified in Germany and Italy. It is in the most depressed areas that the work system falls apart, and it is there that it is first replaced: examples are the automation of factories, and, more importantly, the socialization of reproduction. It is true that production has moved outside the large-scale factory, and that the factory no longer exists as a center of struggle. The situation has changed, and it was the struggles that changed it. The new situation will be entirely different.

BM: We have passed from the mass worker to the social worker.

TN: We have passed to a form of the organization of work that presupposes a social subject. The workers are still mass workers, but their work-place is different. They are no longer to be found in the factory: they are spread throughout society in the most diverse forms. It is crucial to understand that this is more than a change in location. The quality of the work itself has changed. Workers are no longer simply asked to perform certain operations. They are asked to organize their own separate work in society, and to apply all of their abilities, intellectual and otherwise, to that work. These new forms of work and the relations they imply are very abstract. We are beginning to see social segments where wealth is no longer simply the absorbtion of labor, where it is no longer simply what people do. It is also, for example, the form of the family: for a man who works at home, his relation with his wife is a part of his wealth, as is his relation with his children, who may contribute to the work. Wealth has become an overall social organization. The phenomena we are beginning to see, like all phenomena of capitalistic change and transformation, are highly complex and highly ambiguous. On the one hand, we have the break-up of the factory as we know it. On the other hand, we have a socialization of production. At the same time, the application of labor-power has become increasingly abstract. In other words, the worker becomes more and more mobile, both in space and in terms of the work day. Above all, the worker's capacity to work becomes increasingly intellectual, and as a result increasingly adaptable and transformable. The labor-power of social workers is not tied to a craft, as was the case with the skilled worker; it does not hinge only their physical mobility, as with the mass worker of the assembly line. Their labor-power is general, abstract, as plastic as the requirements of the machine in the age of the computerization of production. However, the abstraction I am talking about is at the same time a very special kind that constitutes subjective qualities. All social processes fold back onto the worker, and it is through that folding back that the worker comes to recognize him- or herself as a subject, attaining a consciousness of his or her singularity. So, we have four elements: the break-up of the factory, the socialization of work, maximum abstraction of labor, and an extreme subjectification of the sites, positions, and wages involved. In other words, a powerful disunification has taken place.

AJ: In this context, sabotage . . .

TN: At that point, sabotage becomes meaningless. *At that point.* Sabotage played an important role. It has been the worker's natural defense — especially the skilled worker's, because the skilled worker has a greater possi-

bility of refusing to work. Think of that great undertaking of sabotage, the French Resistance: the communist Resistance was run by skilled workers who knew, for example, how to sabotage a railroad. Think of Basque terrorism. It is terrorism as a craft — skilled work. They can use dynamite as only miners know how. Sabotage is the form of resistance proper to the skilled worker. The mass worker also has the possibility of sabotaging. The incidence of sabotage in the old-style factories is very high, and goes up and down with the intensity of the struggle. The fundamental form of struggle for the mass worker was the wildcat strike, a sudden rupture that stopped production. They would turn off the electricity and walk away. Or they would go into the factory and kick out the scabs. Sabotage was a recomposition of the masses. It was the sabotaging, not of the product, but of work itself. Workers' struggles in the big factories of Detroit, Billancourt, or Turin are struggles involving large masses, and what is sabotaged is not the object produced but the process of production itself. In the large-scale factory, the work relation no longer involves a real relation to the object. Object after identical object passes before the worker. The object becomes something hateful. It is not even worth sabotaging. What must be sabotaged is the machine. The form of the struggle is relative to the figure or subject waging it. What kind of sabotage can the social worker practice? To answer that question we would have to define what the social worker is in more detail.

BM: That was my next question. It seems to me that what makes this new state of affairs possible is automation and the exportation of large-scale production to the Third World. Both are ways of side-stepping the traditional working class. At the same time, as the service sector grows, a new kind of worker is being created. It is true that they are no longer skilled workers, but neither are they simply unskilled. They are often quite highly educated and are capable of doing a wide range of jobs.

TN: We could go on and on describing the conditions under which work becomes increasingly socialized. It would be especially important to emphasize the collective, communitarian aspects of the process, in other words the autonomization of collective social structures and their absorption as such into central production. Capital no longer exploits only individuals, but tries to absorb homogeneous groups, even entire communities, into the mode of production. At Volvo and Fiat, for example, the bosses have responded to the workers' movement with a new organization of work, in "production islands." Work is done in teams, with each team completing a complex series of tasks. Small communities are created, preventing the growth of a mass movement. This method of production is the rule in factories where computer systems are designed.

On a much larger scale, capital is attempting to absorb whole societies and cultures. Its methods of absorbtion, however, do not necessarily bring revolutionary change, as has been the case in the past: capital has learned to be parasitical. It now has the ability to take in completely archaic modes of organization of social work and to integrate them into production with maximum efficiency. Japan is a good example. The social mobilization of work recuperates as many levels of society as possbile, including the most archaic social relations of production and reproduction. This could be called the subsumption of society by capitalist development. Brazil has every kind of production imaginable, from the tribal production of the Indians to computer technology so advanced that it competes with the United States. It is a country that is mediated to an extraordinary degree; even precapitalist forms of cooperation have been integrated into the social mechanism of production. It is very important to emphasize this. It has to be seen as a system of communicating vessels.

The big question is what forms of organization and of conscious subjectification are called for. Not knowing that is what has brought on the crisis in the movement. A whole series of critical positions from the past have entered consciousness, and, I am convinced, there is a consciousness of the irreversibility of the movement. But I don't see any evidence yet of a general experimentation toward a new form of organization. But once again, pessimism is not in order. Because from a scientific point of view, all of the elements are in place. The question is how

George Lakoff

Metaphor and War:
The Metaphor System Used to Justify War in the Gulf

Editors' note: Part 1 of this article can be found in the March Splinter. Although this article was written before the war began, it provides a context in which the language describing and communicating the reality of the war is critiqued. This context is still important as we continue to bring forth interpretations of the "action".

Is Saddam Irrational?

The villain in the Fairy Tale of the Just War may be cunning, but he cannot be rational. You just do not reason with a demon, nor do you enter into negotiations with him. The logic of the metaphor demands that Saddam be irrational. But is he? Administration policy is confused on the issue. Clausewitz's metaphor, as used by strategists, assumes that the enemy is rational: He too is maximizing gains and minimizing costs. Our strategy from the outset has been to "increase the cost" to Saddam. That assumes he is rational and is maximizing his self-interest. At the same time, he is being called irrational. The nuclear weapons argument depends on it. If he is rational, he should follow the logic of deterrence. We have thousands of hydrogen bombs in warheads. Israel is estimated to have between 100 and 200 deliverable atomic bombs. It would take Saddam at least eight months and possibly five years before he had a crude, untested atomic bomb on a truck. The most popular estimate for even a few deliverable nuclear warheads is ten years. The argument that he would not be deterred by our nuclear arsenal and by Israel's assumes irrationality. The Hitler analogy also assumes that Saddam is a villainous madman. The analogy presupposes a Hitler myth, in which Hitler too was an irrational demon, rather than a rational self- serving brutal politician. In the myth, Munich was a mistake and Hitler could have been stopped early on had England entered the war then. Military historians disagree as to whether the myth is true. Be that as it may, the analogy does not hold. Whether or not ~~Saddam is Hitler, Iraq isn't Germany. It was 17 million people, not 70 million. It is economically weak, not strong. It simply is not a threat to the world. Saddam is certainly immoral, ruthless, and brutal, but there is no evidence that he is anything but rational.~~ Everything he has done, from assassinating political opponents, to using poison gas against his political enemies, the Kurds, to invading Kuwait can be seen as furthering his own self-interest.

Kuwait as Victim

The classical victim is innocent. To the Iraqis, Kuwait was anything but an innocent victim. The war with Iran virtually bankrupted Iraq. Iraq saw itself as having fought that war partly for the benefit of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, where Shiite citizens supported Khomeini's Islamic Revolution. Kuwait had agreed to help finance the war, but after the war, the Kuwaitis insisted on repayment of the "loan." Kuwaitis had invested hundreds of billions in Europe, America and Japan, but would not invest in Iraq after the war to help it rebuild. On the contrary, it began what amounted to economic warfare against Iraq by overproducing its oil quota to hold oil prices down. In addition, Kuwait had drilled laterally into Iraqi territory in the Rumailah oil field and had extracted oil from Iraqi territory. Kuwait further took advantage of Iraq by buying its currency, but only at extremely low exchange rates. Subsequently, wealthy Kuwaitis used that Iraqi currency on trips to Iraq, where they bought Iraqi goods at bargain rates. Among the things they bought most flamboyantly were liquor and prostitutes-widows and orphans of men killed in the war, who, because of the state of the economy, had no other means of support. All this did not endear Kuwaitis to Iraqis, who were suffering from over 70% inflation. Moreover, Kuwaitis had long been resented for good reason by Iraqis and moslems from other nations. Capital rich, but labor poor, Kuwait imported cheap labor from other moslem countries to do its least pleasant work. At the time of the invasion, there were 400,000 Kuwaiti citizens and 2.2 millions foreign laborers who were denied rights of citizenry and treated by the Kuwaitis as lesser beings. In short, to the Iraqis and to labor-exporting Arab countries, Kuwait is badly miscast as a purely innocent victim. This does not in any way justify the horrors perpetrated on the Kuwaitis by the Iraqi army. But it is part of

what is hidden when Kuwait is cast as an innocent victim. The "legitimate government" that we seek to reinstall is an oppressive monarchy.

What is Victory?

In a fairy tale or a game, victory is well-defined. Once it is achieved, the story or game is over. Neither is the case in the gulf crisis. History continues, and "victory" makes sense only in terms of continuing history. The president's stated objectives are total Iraqi withdrawal and restoration of the Kuwaiti monarchy. But no one believes the matter will end there, since Saddam would still be in power with all of his forces intact. General Powell said in his Senate testimony that if Saddam withdrew, the US would have to "strengthen the indigenous countries of the region" to achieve a balance of power. Presumably that means arming Assad, who is every bit as dangerous as Saddam. Would arming another villain count as victory? If we go to war, what will constitute "victory"? Suppose we conquer Iraq, wiping out its military capability. How would Iraq be governed? No puppet government that we set up could govern effectively since it would be hated by the entire populace. Since Saddam has wiped out all opposition, the only remaining effective government for the country would be his Ba'ath party. Would it count as a victory if Saddam's friends wound up in power? If not, what other choice is there? And if Iraq has no remaining military force, how could it defend itself against Syria and Iran? It would certainly not be a "victory" for us if either of them took over Iraq. If Syria did, then Assad's Arab nationalism would become a threat. If Iran did, then Islamic fundamentalism would become even more powerful and threatening. It would seem that the closest thing to a "victory" for the US in case of war would be to drive the Iraqis out of Kuwait; destroy just enough of Iraq's military to leave it capable of defending itself against Syria and Iran; somehow get Saddam out of power, but let his Ba'ath party remain in control of a country just strong enough to defend itself, but not strong enough to be a threat; and keep the price of oil at a reasonably low level. The problems: It is not obvious that we could get Saddam out of power without wiping out most of Iraq's military capability. We would have invaded an Arab country, which would create vast hatred for us throughout the Arab world, and would no doubt result in decades of increased terrorism and lack of cooperation by Arab states. We would, by defeating an Arab nationalist state, strengthen Islamic fundamentalism. Iraq would remain a cruel dictatorship run by cronies of Saddam. By reinstating the government of Kuwait, we would inflame the hatred of the poor toward the rich throughout the Arab world, and thus increase instability. And the price of oil would go through the roof. Even the closest thing to a victory doesn't look very victorious. In the debate over whether to go to war, very little time has been spent clarifying what a victory would be. And if "victory" cannot be defined, neither can "worthwhile sacrifice."

The Arab Viewpoint

The metaphors used to conceptualize the gulf crisis hide the most powerful political ideas in the Arab world: Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism. The first seeks to form a racially-based all-Arab nation, the second, a theocratic all-Islamic state. Though bitterly opposed to one another, they share a great deal. Both are conceptualized in family terms, an Arab brotherhood and an Islamic brotherhood. Both see brotherhoods as more legitimate than existing states. Both are at odds with the state-as-person metaphor, which sees currently existing states as distinct entities with a right to exist in perpetuity. Also hidden by our metaphors is perhaps the most important daily concern throughout the Arab world: Arab dignity. Both political movements are seen as ways to achieve dignity through unity. The current national boundaries are widely perceived as working against Arab dignity in two ways: one internal and one external. The internal issue is the division between rich and poor in the Arab world. Poor Arabs see Arabs as rich by accident, by where the British happened to draw the lines that created the contem-

porary nations of the Middle East. To see Arabs metaphorically as one big family is to suggest that oil wealth should belong to all Arabs. To many Arabs, the national boundaries drawn by colonial powers are illegitimate, violating the conception of Arabs as a single "brotherhood" and impoverishing millions. To those impoverished millions, the positive side of Saddam's invasion of Kuwait was that it challenged national borders and brought to the fore the divisions between rich and poor that result from those lines in the sand. If there is to be peace in the region, these divisions must be addressed, say, by having rich Arab countries make extensive investments in development that will help poor Arabs. As long as the huge gulf between rich and poor exists in the Arab world, a large number of poor Arabs will continue to see one of the superstate solutions, either Arab nationalism or Islamic fundamentalism, as being in their self-interest, and the region will continue to be unstable. The external issue is the weakness. The current national boundaries keep Arab nations squabbling among themselves and therefore weak relative to Western nations. To unity advocates, what we call "stability" means continued weakness. Weakness is a major theme in the Arab world, and is often conceptualized in sexual terms, even more than in the West. American officials, in speaking of the "rape" of Kuwait, are conceptualizing a weak, defenseless country as female and a strong militarily powerful country as male. Similarly, it is common for Arabs to conceptualize the colonization and subsequent domination of the Arab world by the West, especially the US, as emasculation. An Arab proverb that is reported to be popular in Iraq these days is that "It is better to be a cock for a day than a chicken for a year." The message is clear: It is better to be male, that is, strong and dominant for a short period of time than to be female, that is, weak and defenseless for a long time. Much of the support for Saddam among Arabs is due to the fact that he is seen as standing up to the US, even if only for a while, and that there is a dignity in this. If upholding dignity is an essential part of what defines Saddam's "rational self-interest", it is vitally important for our government to know this, since he may be willing to go to war to "be a cock for a day." The US does not have anything like a proper understanding of the issue of Arab dignity. Take the question of whether Iraq will come out of this with part of the Rumailah oil fields and two islands giving it a port on the gulf. From Iraq's point of view these are seen as economic necessities if Iraq is to rebuild. President Bush has spoken of this as "rewarding aggression", using the Third-World-Countries-As-Children metaphor, where the great powers are grown-ups who have the obligation to reward or punish children so as to make them behave properly. This is exactly the attitude that grates on Arabs who want to be treated with dignity. Instead of seeing Iraq as a sovereign nation that has taken military action for economic purposes, the president treats Iraq as if it were a child gone bad, who has become the neighborhood bully and should be properly disciplined by the grown-ups. The issue of the Rumailah oil fields and the two islands has alternatively been discussed in the media in terms of "saving face." Saving face is a very different concept than upholding Arab dignity and insisting on being treated as an equal, not an inferior.

What is Hidden By Seeing the State as a Person?

The State-as-Person metaphor highlights the ways in which states act as units, and hides the internal structure of the state. Class structure is hidden by this metaphor, as is ethnic composition, religious rivalry, political parties, the ecology, the influence of the military and of corporations (especially multi- national corporations). Consider "national interest." It is in a person's interest to be healthy and strong. The State-as-Person metaphor translates this into a "national interest" of economic health and military strength. But what is in the "national interest" may or may not be in the interest of many ordinary citizens, groups, or institutions, who may become poorer as the GNP rises and weaker as the military gets stronger. The "national interest" is a metaphorical concept, and it is defined in America by politicians and policy makers. For the most part, they are influenced more by the rich than by the poor, more by large corporations than by small business, and more by developers than ecological activists. When President Bush argues that going to war would "serve our vital national interests", he is using a metaphor that hides exactly whose interests would be

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Atrocities Past:
Excerpts from the Vietnam War Crimes Inquiry

Page Dougherty Delano

These testimonies from the National Veterans Inquiry (NVI) on U.S. War Crimes in Vietnam, held in December 1970, were read into the Record by Congressman Ron Dellums. The NVI was organized by Tod Ensign and Jeremy Rifkin of the Citizens Commission of Inquiry, and was followed in Jan. 31-Feb. 2 1971 with the Winter Soldier Investigations organized by Vietnam Veterans Against The war in Detroit, when more veterans testified about their role in war crimes. Encouraged by the horrific revelations of the My Lai massacre, in which U.S. soldiers raped and murdered over 500 Vietnamese in one afternoon, many veterans sought to reveal their own actions. The attempt in all of these hearings was to show not only the magnitude of the horrors inflicted upon the Vietnamese people, but to show that such activities were standard operating procedure, and were condoned if not commanded by the highest levels of the military.

The excerpts presented here are only a few from the many testimonies of men and women who participated in and observed war crimes in Vietnam. There is much that is unknown, and certainly even more that is forgotten by the public. We are expected to forgive if not forget completely, and now we are faced with a new war in which the tonnage of bombs dropped and artillery used is unparalleled in history. The extensive cover-ups, mystification, and lies from the Vietnam war may begin to shrink in comparison to the U.S./"Allies" war against Iraq.

Mike McCusker, correspondent, Vietnam, 1966: I was trained in Recon, which meant that I became a jumper, a parachutist, scuba, and all the other John Wayne varieties. In the two years that I was active I was what was called a combat correspondent for the First Marine Division in Vietnam, generally out of Chu Lai. In that position I was damn near everything....

My job was essentially to cover things up from the press, to be the PR, and come off with the Marine Corps looking like a shining knight on a white horse. If anything was coming up that would embarrass the Marine Corps, we were to take reporters someplace else and make sure that they didn't know about it. The general trend was

to allude in our stories to all Vietnamese as Communists, not only dehumanizing them but indicting them as something that we were programmed to fear and abhor. Every dead Vietnamese was counted as Viet Cong, because they would not be dead if they were not Viet Cong, whether they were ninety years old or six months old. The body count was any pool of blood, and I used to think that, perhaps multiplied by seven. The villagers were destroyed or forcibly removed to New Life Hamlets - which is what they were called - which were nothing more than concentration camps with barbed wire and machine guns. The huts were too close, there was hardly any food - which forced beggars and whores of once-proud farmers....

Now, what's an atrocity? The killing down of one man running in the field? Well, in other testimony, whenever you naped [napalmed] a village, the villagers were running from it, helicopters would shoot them down. Under the general operating procedure ... anybody running must be a Viet Cong or he wouldn't run from you. It was not taken into account that he might be just scared to death.... And so they were shot down in the field as they were running through the paddies. No, these were the general rule, whether it was the shooting down of one man or whether two villages were hit.

Floor: You're absolving the CO (Commanding Officer) of the battalion as just doing his duty under standing orders, are you?

McCusker: I'm absolving him as, in essence, the same way I'm absolving myself. That he was just as much a victim of the rigid structure in which he was involved, which especially his whole career was involved and so he was frozen within that position and could not do much more. And he was under orders as I was under orders. And I felt a great sense of powerlessness....

Kenneth Osborn, area intelligence specialist, Vietnam, 1969: ....They had two hootches right there on that 3rd Marine Amphibious Force compound which were devoted to interrogation and they used the following modus operandi: at one point I had described a certain individual of a

local village.- suburban village of Danang. They went out and scarfed her up and brought her in and simply put her in there. There were no facilities other than a wooden bench which stood on, like a sawhorse...on which she could sit. sleep do whatever she wanted to. There were no toilet facilities. There was no food and no water. And the idea was that she should stay there until she talked, when they had weakened her. I was on the compound one day and the - a lieutenant said to me, I want to show you what we're doing with so-and-so whom you - whom we got from your report there. Come on over next door and I'll show you the process. And when we went over and they had set this hootch up within the week. And they were quite proud of the fact that they were just leaving the people there to starve. I said, well, we'll just leave her there until she talks. They did leave her there for about ten days until, finally, she was so weak that she couldn't respond to anything, and at that point, they just sent her back to her village and called it a loss - got no information from her.

[A male prisoner was picked up]. He was put in the same hootch with the four cages, in another cage, and he was forced to lay back on the floor with his hands tied behind his back. And they would insert a bamboo peg - a wooden peg, I'm not sure if it was bamboo - a wooden peg, a dowel with a sharpened end, into the semicircular canal of the ear, which would be forced into the head little by little as he was interrogated. And eventually, did enter the brain and killed the subject. They never got any viable information out of him - they called that a loss. But in any case that was one thing that was a standard operating procedure.... I won't describe the ringing up of the telephone sort of thing to the woman's breast nipples and the men's genitals. When these things talked, then they went further into—the, I think, worst of the torture methods that I saw was the one of inserting the dowel into the ear.\

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served and whose would not. For example, poor people, especially blacks and Hispanics, are represented in the military in disproportionately large numbers, and in a war the lower classes and those ethnic groups will suffer proportionally more casualties. Thus war is less in the interest of ethnic minorities and the lower classes than the white upper classes. Also hidden are the interests of the military itself, which are served when war is justified. Hopes that, after the cold war, the military might play a smaller role have been dashed by the president's decision to prepare for war. He was advised, as he should be, by the national security council, which consists primarily of military men. War is so awful a prospect that one would not like to think that military self-interest could help tilt the balance to a decision for war. But in a democratic society, the question must be asked, since the justifications for war also justify continued military funding and an undiminished national political role for the military.

Energy Policy

The State-as-Person metaphor defines health for the state in economic terms, with our current understanding of economic health taken as a given, including our dependence on foreign oil. Many commentators have argued that a change in energy policy to make us less dependent on foreign oil would be more rational than going to war to preserve our supply of cheap oil from the gulf. This argument may have a real force, but it has no metaphorical force when the State-as-Person's health is taken as fixed. After all, you don't deal with an attack on your health by changing the definition of health. Meta-

phorical logic pushes a change in energy policy out of the spotlight in the current crisis. I do not want to give the impression that all that is involved here is metaphor. Obviously there are powerful corporate interests lined up against a fundamental restructuring of our national energy policy. What is sad is that they have a very compelling system of metaphorical thought on their side. If the debate is framed in terms of an attack on our economic health, one cannot argue for redefining what economic health is without changing the grounds for the debate. And if the debate is framed in terms of rescuing a victim, then changes in energy policy seem utterly beside the point.

The "Costs" of War

Clausewitz's metaphor requires a calculation of the "costs" and the "gains" of going to war. What, exactly, goes into that calculation and what does not? Certainly American casualties, loss of equipment, and dollars spent on the operation count as costs. But Vietnam taught us that there are social costs: trauma to families and communities, disruption of lives, psychological effects on veterans, long-term health problems, in addition to the cost of spending our money on war instead of on vital social needs at home. Also hidden are political costs: the enmity of Arabs for many years, and the cost of increased terrorism. And barely discussed is the moral cost that comes from killing and maiming as a way to settle disputes. And there is the moral cost of using a "cost" metaphor at all. When we do so, we quantify the effects of war and thus hide from ourselves the qualitative reality of pain and death. Real costs are costs to us. What is most ghoulish about the cost-benefit calculation is that "costs" to the other side count as "gains" for us. In Vietnam, the body counts of killed Viet Cong were taken as evidence of what was being "gained"

in the war. Dead human beings went on the profit side of our ledger. There is a lot of talk of American deaths as "costs," but Iraqi deaths aren't mentioned. The metaphors of cost-benefit accounting and the fairy tale villain lead us to devalue of the lives of Iraqis, even when most of those actually killed will not be villains at all, but simply innocent draftees or reservists or civilians.

America as Hero

The classic fairy tale defines what constitutes a hero: it is a person who rescues an innocent victim and who defeats and punishes a guilty and inherently evil villain, and who does so for moral rather than venal reasons. If America starts a war, will it be functioning as a hero? It will certainly not fit the profile very well. First, one of its main goals will be to reinstate "the legitimate government of Kuwait." That means reinstating an absolute monarchy, where women are not accorded anything resembling reasonable rights, and where 80% of the people living in the country are foreign workers who do the dirtiest jobs and are not accorded the opportunity to become citizens. This is not an innocent victim whose rescue makes us heroic. Second, the actual human beings who will suffer from an all-out attack will, for the most part, be innocent people who did not take part in the atrocities in Kuwait. Killing and maiming a lot of innocent bystanders in the process of nabbing a much smaller number of villains does not make one much of a hero. Third, in the self- defense scenario, where oil is at issue, America is acting in its self-interest. But, in order to qualify as a legitimate hero in the rescue scenario, it must be acting selflessly. Thus, there is a contradiction between the self-interested hero of the self- defense scenario and the purely selfless hero of the rescue

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they will combine. That is the question we asked in *New Spaces of Liberty*. The word "alliance" (the original title was *New Lines of Alliance*) is ambiguous. It is usually used to refer to alliances between sectors of the same class or between different classes. What is going on now is not an alliance in that sense, but a process of recomposition of sectors that can no longer even be said to constitute a "working class." If work has been socialized in the way we have been describing, then it is no longer possible to make the classical Marxian distinction between production and reproduction. What is the home today? It is entirely implicated, imbricated, taken up in the unitary flow of production. A whole series of problems arise. If work is no longer skilled and qualification for a specific trade is no longer important, if the maximum abstraction and flexibility of labor-power as such has become fundamental, then *it is obvious that the school regime is absolutely crucial to the shaping of the new kind of worker. It is no longer the hands that must be shaped, but the head. People's work schedules must be shaped. The workday is a major issue today.*

What you were saying before about the essentially multinational character of the social worker is very true. The composition of the social worker is no longer nation-based. There is a new international unification of work. The labor market is undergoing a process of unification, in large part through the control of the cost of production and reproduction of labor-power around the world by the American banks in charge of the International Monetary Fund. But struggles arise in different countries, and they can be very significant because they are fighting the same mechanism of production.

BM: This is what you call Worldwide Integrated Capitalism.

TN: Right. I have to say that Felix sometimes sounds a little too Frankfurt School when he talks about that. But then it is very difficult to put these two aspects together: absolute singularization on the one hand, and the construction of a unified market on the other. The process of market construction creates contradiction even as it unifies. In creating contradiction, it creates singularization. Singularity arises at a point of contradiction, and reaches its height when the contradiction turns into an open antagonism. The singularity of the social worker, for example, came into being after the struggles of the mass worker had turned into an antagonism that capital found intolerable. What organizational form corresponds to the new solution? I don't know. I do know that the organizational form of the skilled worker was the union, and that the organizational form of the mass worker was autonomy. What is the form of organization of the social worker? I just don't know. The contradictions must be overcome through the elaboration of new organizational processes.

AJ: When someone asks the question "What will the new form of organization be?" the question that comes to my mind is "Who will conceive it?" This brings us to the question of the role of the intellectual. In this knot, in the midst of this complexity, does the intellectual as an entity disappear? If the organic intellectual no longer exist, but intellectuals are still implicated in that knot of production and reproduction, what is their place? Are they reduced to being dissidents? Is it the intellectual who will conceive the new organization?

TN: I really don't know. I think there is terrible confusion around the term "intellectual." The word is sometimes used to refer to those who participate in a particular market, namely the book market. There are very few intellectuals in that sense. Most intellectuals in our society, even in my parents' generation, are professors, school teachers, or salaried workers who read a lot and are active in political parties. I am convinced that the big intellectual is going extinct. The intellectual is being absorbed into the media industry and the spreading tertiarization of social production. Intellectuals still have an important position. But what has become most important is not the question

of their responsibility, but the fact of their repression. An effort is under way to eliminate those who have the now archaic power to disseminate ideas on a mass scale. Today, influence functions increasingly on a micropolitical level. This will also be true of the passage from social work to the production of revolutionary subjectivity. It cannot result from the actions of an intellectual, or of any individual. There will be no more Lenins. What was Lenin? Lenin was the representation of a separate working class function vis-a-vis the rest of society. The working class was a minority. Lenin was the idea that a minority could transform society. Henceforth it will have to be the majority. That is a cause for optimism.

The important issue now is not so much the function of *the intellectual as the function of representation*. There is a crisis in representation. Democratic representation has been emptied of any meaning by the structure of political parties and organizations, and by the structure of the media. This can already be seen in the American film of the 1920s and 1930s. *Citizen Kane* is an example. Democratic representation as it was traditionally conceived is no longer possible.

BM: If it ever was.

TN: Right. If it did exist, it is now merely ridiculous. But we obviously can't talk about a new kind of representation until we know what the new organization will be. In classical philosophical terms, the formal conditions for the new organization exist, but not the material conditions. We are confronted by a form of social work that is half abstract and half absolutely singularlized. It is enormously difficult theoretically to make the conection between abstraction and singularization, or to short-circuit it. As I have said, singularity is born of the contradiction created by processes of abstraction. It is on that level that *subjectivity is determined. Singularity and abstraction go hand in hand. Singularity is in fact an abstract prosthesis. I do not think that it is still possible to speak of singularization in the classical sense of a reterritorialization, a return to roots. That is not at all what I am talking about. We must create the territoriality within which the new subjectivity will grow. How can we foster this process? That is the problem Deleuze and Guattari tackle in A Thousand Plateaus. Their approach is entirely consistent with my own, except that they place less emphasis on organizing and critical experimentation. One must begin to individuate certain totally abstract reterritorializations as part of an organizational process, and new subjectivities will come to occupy them. What is the body? That is the question. Today's conception of the body is patently reactionary. What is the body, if not the relation between abstraction and singularization — the connection between which is becoming harder and harder to make? What is the difference between organization and the body? I really don't know.*

BM: What you are saying is that the new collective subjectivity you discuss in *New Spaces of Liberty* is no longer built on class consciousness and no longer implies any relation of representation. Does that mean that it will constitute itself on the level of the unconscious and desire, and that consciousness will come after?

TN: To some extent that is true. But we must be careful. This is not an irrational process. It is a process of confrontation involving concrete machines and desires.

BM: You are using a new model of desire that does not define it as irrational.

TN: It is in no way irrational.

AJ: But who creates the new human model that you have alluded to in your writings, that new subjectivity that the state aims to crush at all costs? It seems to me that every time this subjective collectivity begins to take shape, every time that unconscious process of desire begins to reform and a new organization is finally on the verge of being

found, it is destroyed. It's too dangerous. It is smothered. We don't know how to prevent that.

TN: It is true, as you say, that desire is constitutive of subjectivity. But there is a danger in speaking of desire as though it were indifferent to content. Desire is never something indifferent or undefined. It is something determinate. Desire is a machine, an aggregate of determinate moments. It is a principle of singularity and determination. Politically speaking, desire must be seen in relation to the machine of state organization. State organization endeavors to place desire in a relation of subordination and functionalizaion. Desires constitute new subjectivities everywhere. Some are absorbed by the state and smothered, emptied of their vital substance. There are parameters we can use to define these constitutive desires. For example the discourses on freedom that treat it as a material potential, a potential for being. Concepts of alienation and exploitation follow from that. The discourse on desire makes sense only if desire is placed in the real, concrete context of the muliplicity of powers and potentials forming the fabric of our experience.

BM: You define freedom as a power to act, a potentiality, rather than a static condition.

AJ: What is the difference between freedom conceived in this way and the freedom produced by the state and state media? What role does freedom have in your thinking?

TN: Freedom is the ontological enrichment of the subject. It is the power to choose between possible paths. Maximum freedom is having a maximum of possibilities. That it is a thoroughly communist conception of freedom. It has nothing to do with freedom of the press. It is a taboo of liberal thought to challenge that freedom. But what meaning could freedom of the press possibly have when in Italy, for example, the press is owned by two people, and cousins at that?

AJ: It's the same in the English-speaking world. Rupert Murdoch owns everything.

TN: And what does freedom of the courts mean when they are controlled by corporations? What does a free market mean when there is no longer any imaginable material relation betwen labor and ownership, access to the market and access to equipment, etc.? The concept of liberty advanced in the liberal constitution is in truth a concept of slavery pure and simple. Freedom is something entirely different: it is the free choice of individuals to do what they believe is right, and to fight to bring it about. That is sacrosanct.

AJ: So the word freedom still has meaning for you.

TN: Yes, it is profoundly meaningful. Provided that it is connected to the thematics of desire and of singularization in being.

BM: Freedom, then, is a continuous process of creation rather than a state that is reached or the practice of certain rights conferred by the state. Are there times when it is nevertheless necessary to ally oneself with, for example, the social democrats, to defend bourgeois freedoms against the kind of emergency powers under which you yourself were arrested?

TN: Yes, if they are not interpreted simply as capitalist freedoms, but as irreversible gains won through revolutionary action, as collective possibilities opening the way for a blossoming of individuals and groups.

BM: Possibilities that the state was forced to codify in spite of itself.

TN: Exactly. Of course those freedoms can enter into contradiction. The project of communism — which I be-

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lieve is the project of all of human history — is to create forms of compatibility between freedoms. Freedom is a singularizing phenomenon, but it is also a phenomenon of socialization. There has never been any incompatibility between freedom and communism. Never.

AJ: That was another word I wanted to ask you about. In the opening pages of *The New Spaces of Liberty* you describe how the word "communism" has been betrayed and heaped with infamy. If that is the case, why call that fight for freedom communism? If the word has become so infamous, why use it?

TN: Because it is full of history. Today, what is commonly called communism is actually socialism, and sometimes not even that. The distinction between socialism and communism was fundamental for me and my generation. Socialism meant when property was abolished and each received according to his or her merits. Communism referred to the final form of production, when the human community became a totality within which each received according to his or her needs and desires. The Soviet system is still called communist, when it has nothing at all to do with communism. This causes terrible confusion. Hatred is directed against the word. It is a sad situation. Not only has communism been betrayed, so has socialism. The utopianism of communism as a positive project has never entered historical and collective experience. To speak of communism, certain conditions must be met, namely the socialization of work, desires, and possibilities of freedom. The world today is ripe for communism. That might sound a bit rhetorical, but we use the word because generations of revolutionaries grew up on it and fought for it, and it is they who have safeguarded our freedom.

BM: In an interview in *L'Autre Journal* you spoke of the oblivion revolutionary struggles have been consigned to, and the need to revive a collective memory of them. Is that one of your motives for using the word communism?

TN: Yes. The question of memory fascinates me. It really should be studied more. How is it erased, and how is it reconstituted? What interactions take place between memories, between stratifications of memories, and the struggles that develop at various times? It is very important to find a way of thinking about that. Some incredible things have happened in Italy. Fully a third of the population emigrated between 1890 and 1914, and not a trace of it is left in official memory. It's unbelievable. Italians populated the United Stats, Argentina, and later Australia. Half of Sao Paolo, a city of fourteen million people, is of Italian extraction. New York is heavily Italian. It was the defeat of southern Italy and the unification of the country that brought it on. There was famine. There had been extensive agricultural and industrial activity in the south. Then the northerners came, created a domestic market for their own products, and reduced the south to colonial status. The people's resistance was to flee. Ask an intellectual, someone like Martin Scorsese, what his memory of it is. At most, a landscape!

AJ: Do you think that the media plays an important role in this process of forgetting?

TN: Yes, now it does. Before, in Italy, it was the schools. The first I heard of emigration was in 1968, when the intellectuals and students began to work with southerners employed in the factories of the north. Intellectual labor went into establishing the continuities, but it was too late.

AJ: So you use the word communism to keep alive the memory of that history. Is that also the reason you retain th word Marxism even though you no longer believe in the working class as a vanguard?

TN: A lot of my friends have stopped using the words communism and Marxism, and I see their point. But Marxism is still a very important technical tool of analysis. We need to remember that. We shouldn't throw . . .

AJ: . . . the baby out with the bath water.

TN: In particular, we shouldn't throw out Marx's Marxism along with the Soviet interpretation of it, which is truly vile. The Marxism I know, Marx's Marxism, is ex-

traordinarily important.

BM: But isn't an anti-state Marxist an anarchist? Why do you reject that label?

TN: Because I think anarchism is tied to a social organization that no longer exists, in which there was a high degree of solidarity between different sectors. It is true that anarchism provided great impetus toward a far-reaching conception of revolution. But anarchism has solidified into something negative in revolutionary consciousness. In particular, the anarchists' resistance to what the later Sartre called "praxis process" was quite negative. Anarchism — perhaps this applies to Marxism as well — did not understand that capitalism could turn into fascism, into something truly monstrous. In order to fight fascism you need higher forms of solidarity and organization. I like anarchists. But I see them as people who throw themselves at a powerful enemy armed with sticks and stones. Today we are not confronted by fascism, but by forms of democracy policed by the horrendous overdetermination of nuclear power: the power to destroy the world used as blackmail to ensure order. We must organize all of social power against that. Anarchism is not equal to it.

AJ: Is it possible to do that democratically?

TN: All I know is that we have to try as hard as we can. We need to base the struggle on individual rights, fully exercised in an open democracy. There is always the danger of falling into mystification when the word democracy is used. It is not a mystification as long as we are clear about what questions have been left unanswered. We must experiment — on reconstituting a new subjectivity, new forms of organization, and new forms of representation. Those are the three crucial problems.

AJ: What recent French thinkers have influenced you?

TN: Deleuze, of course, has been most important to me. My book on Spinoza, for example, is from a certain perspective a thoroughly Deleuzian work. Where I differ from him is that he tends to overlook the metaphysical dimension of totality and antagonism. That is very much a part of Spinoza, and it is worth retaining.

AJ: Do you think that the French philosophical corpus of the last twenty years offers, not a consensus, but a series of responses to the problems we have been discussing? There is a debate going on in the United States about whether the thought of French thinkers like Foucault, Deleuze, and Derrida really provides new tools to help understand the knot of complexity we have referred to, or whether it was a transitional phase that we must move on from.

TN: I think it is both. Recent French philosophy is a continuation of the post-Nietzschean project of German philosophy of the first half of the century: Husserl, Heidegger, Wittgenstein. In keeping with the traditional independence of French thought, that project was given a specifically French vocabulary that was often enriching, as was often liked to moral questions. Avove all, French philosophy is philosophy in the bedroom; it is philosophy for nonspecialists. I belive that that is very important. These are also thinkers who experienced the crisis in Marxism. Therefore in a certain way what they have done is a repetition of nineteenth-century philosophy. Their responses to the crisis in Marxism were highl original. There is Foucault's structural response, which redefined resistance at increasingly marginal levels. And there is Deleuze's apology for singularization, which I find wonderful. Then there is Derrida's critique of the crisis in epistemology. Marxism was present in the debate, in its Sartrean and Althusserian forms. There thinkers weren't simply academics; they were there in the bedroom.

AJ: I like that image.

TN: It's not meant to be belittling. A tremendous amount of research was done, particularly if you think of Foucault, especially his work on historical discontinuity.

AJ: It changes everything.

TN: The discourse of discontinuity was already present in

Lakoff:
War as Metaphor
from page 9

scenario. Fourth, America may be a hero to the royal families of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, but it will not be a hero to most Arabs. Most Arabs do not think in terms of our metaphors. A great many Arabs will see us as a kind of colonial power using illegitimate force against an Arab brother. To them, we will be villains, not heroes. America appears as classic hero only if you don't look carefully at how the metaphor is applied to the situation. It is here that the State-as-Person metaphor functions in a way that hides vital truths. The State-as-Person metaphor hides the internal structure of states and allows us to think of Kuwait as a unitary entity, the defenseless maiden to be rescued in the fairy tale. The metaphor hides the monarchical character of Kuwait, and the way Kuwaitis treat women and the vast majority of the people who live in their country. The State-as-Person metaphor also hides the internal structures of Iraq, and thus hides the actual people who will mostly be killed, maimed, or otherwise harmed in a war. The same metaphor also hides the internal structure of the US, and therefore hides the fact that is the poor and minorities who will make the most sacrifices while not getting any significant benefit. And it hides the main ideas that drive Middle Eastern politics.

Things to Do

War would create much more suffering than it would alleviate, and should be renounced in this case on humanitarian grounds. There is no shortage of alternatives to war. Troops can be rotated out and brought to the minimum level to deter an invasion of Saudi Arabia. Economic sanctions can be continued. A serious system of international inspections can be instituted to prevent the development of Iraq's nuclear capacity. A certain amount of "face-saving" for Saddam is better than war: As part of a compromise, the Kuwaiti monarchy can be sacrificed and elections held in Kuwait. The problems of rich and poor Arabs must be addressed, with pressures placed on the Kuwaitis and others to invest significantly in development to help poor Arabs. Balance of power solutions within the region should always be seen as moves toward reducing, not increasing armaments; positive economic incentives can used, together with the threat of refusal by us and the Soviets to supply spare parts needed to keep hi-tech military weaponry functional. If there is a moral to come out of the Congressional hearings, it is that there are a lot of very knowledgeable people in this country who have thought about alternatives to war. They should be taken seriously. S!

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Nietzsche. Sartre's theories of heteronomy, historical development, and the conversion of effects into causes was the integration of that reading of philosophy into French thought. I think Sartre's book on Genet anticipates many later developments and is of enormous importance in the history of philosophy. Bachelard's studies of epistemological discontinuity followed, and were central to Foucault and the philosophy of singularity.

AJ: So you think recent French philosophy has made fundamental contributions.

TN: Yes. But at the same time it is only a beginning. We must forge ahead. Perhaps the most important book of all is *A Thousand Plateaus*. It is in many ways the culmination of postwar philosophy. It is the definition of a plateau from which to launch a reconstruction. Historical discontinuity must be seen in a future perspective as well. That is the optimism of reason we discussed at the beginning: it is possible to make a leap.

Aronowitz Speaks

Aronowitz: I don't know who argues for cutting health or safety. And I will argue there is no differentiation between cutting funding for environment or health: these are fundamental needs. These are needs that transcend anything else, and if you are cutting health, education or the environment, you are going to make it much more difficult for the city to maintain itself.

Splinter: Those are fundamental resources for the future.

Aronowitz: Exactly. So, when these people, the Governor and the Mayor and the administrative agencies actually ask for budget cuts without protest and without conceiving alternative fund-raising, I feel that they participate, they become part of the problem and not the solution. Now, the problem is that one has to then convince this chancellor. We don't have a president at the Graduate Center so we lack an articulate well trained spokesperson to actually represent our interests. We are in a bind in that respect. A lot of changes could take place between now and the political appointment of the next president. We have to convince the department chairs and the Graduate Center administrators to be serious and maintain the current budget——City University should not be cut. We the unions, the social welfare agencies including education have made proposals for tax increases.

Change, creative change only takes place if not in the context of friendship at the very least in the context of stability. I mean of economic stability. When you have economic deprivation and all people are concerned about is deprivation. And our Union, I mean the PSC, our chancellor, and the best people in the system, can think of nothing but job preservation. Now, I think job preservation is very important. Especially my own. No, seriously, it's not that unimportant. But if all we talk about is job preservation, I think we will miss the point of the university at the moment. And that's why I wanted to talk to you. Everybody *is sort of assuming, you know, my arse is not going to be caught, I'm gonna be safe, I'm tenured or whatever.*

The next thing will be proposals to increase the work loads. There will probably be proposals such as cutting down the number of deans, putting deans back in the classrooms, increasing the work load of some of the faculty. When you increase the work loads of the faculty to three to four courses, you then reduce scholarship. More egregiously from our prospective, you begin to bump adjuncts. Because in addition to trying to cut down the number of students, which we've seen in the newspapers, budget cutting will cut down the number of faculty, eventually. They will try to cut down the number of adjuncts by making faculty work longer in the classroom. Now, we were not hired, although this might be considered rather controversial, exclusively as full-time classroom teachers. One of our responsibilities, is to be intellectually creative and productive. How do you go to the classroom if you don't have the time not only to prepare the courses but actually have time to write and do original research? Increasing the work load in the classroom doesn't give us a hell of a lot of time for research.

Splinter: Yes, but isn't that consistent with the type of technocratic vision we have talked about?

Aronowitz: Of course, if you are not interested in the broad areas of cultural development, if you are interested in training, then you won't be so concerned with work load.

Splinter: You know that I am in agreement with what you are saying, but I think the problem or the counter-argument will be that you haven't explained the line between cultural development, as you term it, and democracy. You will have to demonstrate that people from the South Bronx are allied with us against the technocrats and that there are some democratic principles at stake here.

Aronowitz: You see, it is my experience that the Graduate Center is one of the few universities, certainly the only university in New York that has a considerable minority enrollment. We recruit community leaders to the Graduate Center. There's a community organizer from Bronxville in the Sociology program of the Graduate Center. There is the head of the South Bronx based Puerto Rican Immigration Project, a sociology graduate student. There are people who have been active in the Lower East Side, in housing activities, who are graduate students doing studies of their own communities and their own activities.

Splinter: But I think that multi-cultural education is inherently linked to a democratic society because if you conceive of a democratic society as a sphere in which exchange and negotiation of differences between communities takes place, the multi-cultural education has to be the proving ground, the training ground for that kind of dialogue and exchange.

Aronowitz: I think it's misdirected to believe that what we ought to be doing is recruiting people of color and women to become ordinary mainstream professionals. There are people who have said that to me that this position is very arrogant. But I think the real opportunities, I'm speaking simply on a vocational, on an occupational basis, are in the exploration of new forms of knowledge, new forms of community exchange, new kinds of educational curricula.

Splinter: There is another pragmatic reason when looked at from the opposite point of view. The committee for Cultural Studies did a survey of one year's job listings posted by the MLA, the year ending in the Spring of 1990. It indicated that positions were fillable some 60% of the time by graduates trained in what we call here at the CUNY Graduate Center Cultural Studies. Which is to say inter-disciplinary programs, programs in which one often needed to teach Latino or Black or Asian or Women's literature, rhetoric programs, programs that ran along the dividing line between the humanities and the sciences. Anybody who thinks that people studying in this merged and joined way will not be employable is dead wrong.

Yet people might want you to point to something tangible within CUNY. As far as the Graduate School is concerned, what would you point to?

Aronowitz: There is nothing tangible. Let me just tell you, in '75 there was a proposal to terminate the Graduate Center, it was floated in the legislature and in the State Education Department. Harold Proshansky had go up there and lobby like hell to preserve, to save the Graduate School. We haven't got anybody yet. I am trying to talk about this because we don't have anybody. Who is going to go to save the Graduate School to explain the reasons that the Graduate School is valuable to the people of the City and State of New York. That's the issue that we have to address. Now somebody will come along and say: "Oh, Aronowitz is full of shit", terrific. Then let Cuomo deny it.

EVERYTHING'S ALLRIGHT. ONLY A SMALL AMOUNT OF FALLOUT IS REPORTED.

CUNY Grad. S...nts Say NO! ...uomo's ...t cuts