

GOLDSMITHS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

A Journey of Spectacle between London and Shanghai:

(An)Other Hermeneutics of Spectacle

PhD in Politics

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Huang Gang hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed:

Date:

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Abstract

This thesis is aimed at exploring a different interpretation of the spectacle. The existing literature is based on Situationism and the Frankfurt School's interpretation within which the society of spectacle is demonstrated to not only visually encapsulate the subjects in an enchanting commodification but also restrict the perceptual experiences to regular boredom through such repetitive and exclusive rendition. This criticism rests on a Hegelian and Marxist reading and suggests that the alienating and un-lifelike phantasmagoria of commodification haunts people's daily lives and subjugates the personal struggle that emancipates the subject from being reified in alienation to being unitary in intimacy. The dialectical negation imposed upon the spectacle is challenged in this work by a divergent hermeneutics, which relocates the spectacle in an epistemological complex drawing inspiration from Bataille's general economy of excess expenditure, Foucault/Deleuze's genealogy, Benjamin's historiography, Barthesian semiological analysis, and Baudrillard's hyperreal simulacra. Illuminated by this different hermeneutics, the spectacle is rather a kind of unproductive expenditure, which is heterogeneous to dissipate the excess restrictively exuded from the homogeneous mechanism of production in utility as irreducible to realistic production. Thus, the society of spectacle is not negative to the productive mechanism but inhabits it to have incapacity wherein an unreserved play of images is restricted by utility and territorialised fragmentarily by different political-sociological milieus to prohibit the channel of excess towards an unconditional expenditure as an unruly and destructive torrent. The solution is to blur and transgress the restriction, rather than negate it, whereby to fuse the prohibited and the allowed in restriction as a visual hybridity of incompatibilities. Then, a journey of spectacle between London and Shanghai is a concrete method of substantiating this visual fusion as an experiential and incommensurable distribution that drifts between different spatiotemporal fragments on the surface of multiple images. This optical disparity is not restricted to a bourgeois-ruled phantasmagoria but transgressive to uncover time flow to recollect and merge the hidden and accursed heterogeneities outpoured from revolution.

Glossary

*This glossary is to list all the in-text Chinese characters, with its pinyin and translation, according to pinyin's alphabetical order.

Please refer to dissertation content for the details.

Chinese Term	Pinyin	Chinese Term	Pinyin
上海	Shanghai	南京路	Nanjinglu
山寨	Shanzhai	秦始皇	Qinshihuang
跑马厅	Paomating	魔都	Modu
马路	Malu	大马路	Damalu
先施	Xianshi	永安	Yong'an
新新	Xinxin	大新	Daxin
和谐社会	Hexieshehui	广州	Guangzhou
厦门	Xiamen	福州	Fuzhou
宁波	Ningbo	万国建筑博览群	Wanguojianzhubolanqun
新感觉派	Xinganjuepai	刘呐鸥	Liu Na'ou
穆时英	Mu Shiyang	大光明	Daguangming
旗袍	Qipao	延安	Yan'an
百乐门	Bailemen	浦东	Pudong
中山东一路	Zhongshandongyilu	陆家嘴	Lujiazui
黄浦江	Huangpujiang	金茂	Jin Mao
施蛰存	Shi Zhecun	农贸市场	nongmaoshichang
宝山	Baoshan	南京	Nanjing
武汉	Wuhan	深圳	Shenzhen
天津	Tianjin	无锡	Wuxi
江阴	Jiangyin	绍兴	Shaoxing
东莞	Dongguan	温州	Wenzhou
乾隆	Qianlong	温家宝	Wen Jiabao
何镜堂	He Jingtang	斗拱	Dougong
鼎	Ding	梁思成	Liang Sicheng
气	qi	和	he
浩然正气	Haoranzhengqi	周礼考工记	Zhouli Kaogongji
西安	Xi'an	杭州	Hangzhou
临潼	Lintong	陕西	Shanxi
秦	Qin	俑	Yong
帝王之气	diwangzhiqi	女娲造人	Nüwa zaoren
女娲	Nüwa	道	Dao
顺天者昌，逆天者亡	shuntianzhechang, nitianzhewang	华强北	Huaqiangbei
襄阳路	Xiangyanglu	秀水街	Xiushuijie
黄牛	huangniu	攒	cuan

花样姐姐	huayangjiejie	生肖	shengxiao
里	li	户口	hukou
户口簿	hukoubu	群众	qunzhong
人民	renmin	新人	xinren
踢开党委闹革命	tikaidangweinaogeming	大字报	dazibao
造反有理	zaofanyouli	大串联	dachuanlian
黑五类	heiwulei	刑天	Xingtian
破四旧	posijiu	永红	yonghong
永斗	yongdou	大世界	dashijie
东方红	Dongfanghong		

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A Journey of Spectacle between London and Shanghai: (An)Other

Hermeneutics of Spectacle

Introduction

This thesis is about another way of looking at the spectacle, using China as the site of enquiry and using the journey between London and Shanghai to do so. The central theme is intended to be underpinned by the analysis of the differential nature of the spectacle reappearing between London and Shanghai. The spectacle is not restricted to a homogeneous mechanism of production, which entails the imperative of utility to encapsulate reality by a regular rendition, then, the perceptual and diverse experience is appropriated in such tedious repetition. In this regard, as visualisation of real lives, spectacle is not simply visible representation but is affirmatively visual sensation, by which the inner flux that is inherent to the excess lives is channelled out, re-circulated as a torrent of desires, then dissipated as surplus expenditure. This visual surplus squandered as useless inhabits the productive imperative of utility and rationality but is irreducible and heterogeneous to the former homogeneity, and unceasingly and autonomously repeats its appearances as dispersive and disparate images floating over reality to fabricate a semiotic exuberance, whereby the subjects are seduced and immersed in a fused, hardly unitary, experience of disintegrated perceptions. This perceptual fusion means that the homogeneous imperative of utility to produce reality never rejects or allows its surplus rendition as visual dissipation of the excess but is restrictive to preclude the prohibition and circumscribe the unreserved exudation of the excess in the intentionally allowed rendition. At this point, such fusion, as pictorial recurrence that intermingles different images scattering along different lines of time and space, transgresses restriction to admit the incapacity of showing disparities, reveals disintegrated experiences, and more importantly, demonstrates a symbiosis between the heterogeneous and hybrid spectacle and the homogeneous production in utility.

Another hermeneutics, which accentuates the symbiosis between heterogeneous excess and homogeneous base rather than the dialectic of them, confirms that the spectacle exists as an epistemological complex rather than as mere negation of its existence. This affirmation derives from a theoretic divergence from the existing literature in the modern society of spectacles, and this divergence indicates bifurcations, rather than abandonment, for hermeneutical differentiation, since there is no exclusive knowledge and theory that can distil this complex with a sole standard. The spectacle is historically situated in critical theory and used to cast a light of negation. To entail the dialectical logic, situationism criticises the spectacle as a superficial and deceptive appearance, which never ceases to conceal its irreversible alienation that not only detaches the subject by exchange of labour in production but also permeates the entirety of social relations to falsify them with a diverting but boring regularity of commodification. To end this falsification of reality and reconstruct a new situation, resistance is called up to awaken the anesthetized subjects, disrupt the proliferation of commodified images, and put spectacle at stake. Critically, this spectacle has evolved to possess a capability of recuperating itself from any hostility. This recuperability enables spectacle to be liberal to tolerate, entertain and dissipate intense resistance. In this sense, critical forces cannot send spectacle to its ruination but are spun as a self-criticism to make it invulnerable. Frankfurt School demonstrates this recuperability of spectacle as an instrumental reasoning, by which the dialectic of reason to unify the separation of external rationalism and internal perceptibility and a self-consciousness that varies along conflicts between subordination and resistance are nullified. While the subjects self-renunciate their self-awareness of criticism and struggle as redundant to the spectacularisation of reality as an affluent society, such a spectacle is omnipresent to represent anything provided it can infiltrate it. Thus, resistance insisted on by situationism and surrealism, although the latter resistance tends to escape the impoverished reality to seek a romantic dreamland, is never an organised and hierarchical movement that has been integrated by the total representation but those spontaneous actions of grass roots that are diffused into everyday life as discontinuous and fragmentary but permanent and unstable to recur and hardly to be integrated.

Recuperation of spectacle and fragmentation of resistance further bifurcate the theorization of spectacle, which diverges from Marxist criticism and phenomenology towards a non-critical light. Structuralism does not presume a universality of self-consciousness, nor insist upon an intimate unity of subjects and object, but rather contends the subject as a product of a scientific system of codification in signs. Thus, spectacle to represent reality is not to alienate and deceive the real lives but to give them a complex system by which they can inhabit and express themselves as meaningful within a ubiquitous discourse. Since spectacle is disentangled from negation, Bataille's theory of heterogeneity and general economy can be further applied to developing it as an unproductive expenditure by which the infinite and disparate heterogeneous elements born with excess life can be exuded out of the imperative of subsistence and necessity. Insofar as spectacle channels the inner flux towards expenditure, its problem is to restrict an unreserved play of excess within the allowed expenditure but prohibit those ungovernable and hazardous heterogeneities as accursed shares. This restriction means that spectacle exists in a symbiosis between the general economy of expenditure and economy of utility. That is, utility does not reject spectacle as expenditure, but bifurcates and filters the exudation of heterogeneities to avoid immoderate and accursed expenditure, then, re-distributes and transforms the filtered into the preferable and worthwhile contents. What to allow and what to prohibit are also differentiated with the different society of spectacle, i.e. capitalism and socialism/Fascism. Without transgression of prohibition, a panoramic spectacle wherein the allowed and accursed shares are fused into a hybridity cannot be achieved as an unconditional expenditure. Influenced by Bataille and Barthes' mythologisation of reality with semiotic exuberance, Baudrillard exalts the society of spectacle on the ruination of the productive reality to be a hyperreal seduction, by which the history that progresses dialectically by an unceasing conflict between production and resistance is suspended and overridden by a carnival of signs. In this case of seductive power to absorb reality, what subjects can do is not subsist but defend themselves from overabundance and repetition of simulacra, that is, to remain apathetic since resistance is tempted by spectacle as little more than an expenditure that dissipates intensity to remain a radical simulacrum alone. Baudrillard celebrates the disappearance of reality with a hyperreal spectacle. More importantly, this

disappearance of reality further nullifies the power-knowledge modality that reproduces reality by a new power modality, seduction. In this regard, Foucault's justification of utility as one of the governmental arts relocates the correlation of spectacle and reality into a re-circulation of power, which is channelled by the variable utilization of the produced to result in different governmental effects. Thus, affirmation of utility can defend reality from being engulfed by hyperreality, and does not reject the hyperreal effervescences, but puts both in a symbiosis of two incompatibilities. The hyperreal spectacle is pegged into reality as a dissymmetric seduction of the latter that is bearable and possibly resists this seduction. However, this resistance has been reduced to an ambiguous event that happens in reality only to expect an accidental 'bug' that would trigger the system of simulation to malfunction.

The above theoretical complex distributes epistemologically the spectacle into bifurcating interpretations. Situationism and the Frankfurt School tend to think of spectacle as a self-development pseudo world that represents the bourgeois-ruled modernity as an exclusive reference to appropriate reality with a false deception. These critiques claimed to reveal the nature of modern spectacle, alienation and total domination in the name of enlightenment. To find emancipation, they insist on their critical consciousness and use a dialectical way to negate this visual presence. In this negative fashion, the spectacle can be only an exhaustive and alienating illusion always circumscribing the subjects in the fabricated boredom. Diverging from this critique, this thesis grounds its position to re-interpret the spectacle. The spectacle cannot be extracted as a total representation for a dialectical analysis. It should be a live process of embedding itself as visual perception into everyday life as incommensurable surplus wherein the disintegrated epistemic subjects can experience the irreplaceable and fragmentary images considering Foucault-Deleuze genealogy, Bataille's general economy of expenditure and Baudrillard's contestation of seductive hyperreal simulacra. The application of genealogy to examine spectacle can freeze the temporal consecution of a total representation as discontinuity. This pause can snatch the epistemic faculty from a predeterminate law of progress and re-distribute it into a discursive practice of enunciating the regularity of things, images and events drifting along

different spatiotemporal positions (*à la* Foucault). In terms of this genealogy, the recurrence of spectacle in the presence penetrates the medium of representational discourse as a dispersive force to inhabit the unstoppable torrent of unruly desires to intermingle the fragmented and incongruous images that exude the heterogeneous excess. The subjects are also reduced and disintegrated from the pre-existing and singular idea into non-identical and multiple empirical experiences (*à la* Deleuze).

The method of implementing this genealogy is a journey to experience spectacle repeating its different appearances between London and Shanghai. The journey is an experiential distribution by which to reveal the spectacle as a visual ubiquity existing in multiple images and drifting along the spatiotemporal differences. To experience the visual multiplicity, the spectators cannot stand in the distance away from the spectacle but must motivate themselves to travel as a *flaneur* (*à la* Benjamin), penetrating into everyday life and immersing visual sensibility in those mobile and various images. In this way, a visual historiography casts real life in an aesthetic rendition. More importantly, this visualisation also illuminates the ubiquity and dispersion of images happening in different regions and periods perceived as diverse appearances. This diversification should be an existential regularity of spectacle recurring in the presence. In this sense, the journey also performs as a discursive practice (*à la* Foucault) to conglomerate the different experiences as a visual hybridity.

This hybridization means that the travel between London and Shanghai is a coexistence of disparities rather than a negation of discrepancies. The particularity of London can spotlight the spectacle in the form of bourgeois-ruled modernity. The journey around London will exhibit the phantasmagoria that settles in the market and technology. The 1851 London Great Exposition at Crystal Palace, the sale carnival at Oxford Circus, the super-tall showpiece at City of London, the London Eye, Madame Tussaud's wax simulacra, Tube tickets, Oyster cards, and the London Tube strike, all these various images diversify the spectacle to enchant the subjects within the different phantasmagorical perceptions. The particularity of Shanghai telescopes the spectacle to another global phenomenon that is an

alternative to the experience of London. Shanghai Bund, Nanjing Road, dance halls and cinemas in the Golden Age of Shanghai, a panorama of Lujiazui, and the 2010 Shanghai Expo, all such images have been justifying a different global myth with the Chinese characteristics of modernity. Furthermore, this Chinese characteristic of spectacle is also affirmed by a technological particularity of reproduction and simulation, that is, *shanzhai*. Simulacra are overflowing with the rampant industry of *shanzhai*, which enable the spectacle to reappear as a controversial experience of disparity other than the phantasmagoria generated by conventional mechanical reproduction. Moreover, the Chinese unique rendition of real life comes from its differential socialist governmentality. This governmental practice not only visualises the disciplinary power in the ubiquitous image that infiltrates the political scrutiny into people flow, i.e. Resident Identification Card. It also substantiates the political intensity by the continuous campaigns as revolutionary images to breed the collective body in a different optical rendition whereby the spectacle reappears in another heterogeneity of mass ecstasy rather than individual enchantment. At this point, the journey of spectacle between London and Shanghai is neither an area study nor a global research. It is a comparative analysis of uncovering the spectacle as inassimilable heterogeneity that is hardly unitary but fractured to disseminate and limit in disparate territories. The choices of London and Shanghai cannot be a singular typification to negate any other multiple travels for experiencing the ubiquitous spectacle.

This thesis uses the journey as a methodology to enunciate the spectacle in seven chapters. Each chapter demonstrates a salient feature of the spectacle. The first chapter elaborates the theoretic divergences and convergences with regard to interpreting the spectacle. Another hermeneutics of spectacle is clarified as a bifurcation wherein the spectacle is not simply negated and overcome by the unitary and dialectical logic but blurs the restriction and transgresses the regular gratification of instinctual excess to reveal those prohibited images as incompatible but coexistent to fuse with the regular spectacularisation. Furthermore, the spectacle, as unproductive expenditure, is not only inassimilable semiotic excess that drifts over and tempts reality into a visual hybridity of experiencing the accursed and allowed images but also reveals itself as heterogeneously as symbiotic with the

homogenous mechanism of production in utility that partially exudes the excess as heterogeneous as what it selectively allows. That is to say, the problem of the society of spectacle is its incapacity that constrains the spectacle from its unconditional play of images, so the solution is not to negate but to transgress and reveal the forbidden as coexistent incongruity with the reserved.

The second chapter illustrates the start of the journey. It traces the spectacle back to its basic definition, the phantasmagoria. It is a ubiquitous experience in which the ordinary routines have been immersed by the proliferation of market and technology. Benjamin's '*flaneur*' enchanted by the mass consumption and monetary circulation will actualise the phantasmagorical experience of London and Shanghai. Not only do phantasmagoria of the marketplace at Oxford Circus and pedestrianisation of Nanjing Road immerse the city strollers in an inescapable capsule but they also traverse time flow to appropriate the history as visual, as a perceptible experience of consumption.

The third chapter continues the journey from London to Shanghai. Following a specific definition of the journey, the trip to Shanghai will start from the showpiece of the Bund. What follows the Bund is the rendition of old Shanghai in light of New Sensation School. Illuminated by such fictionalisation, the city spectacles, especially, cinema and dance hall, function as erotic machines that not only proliferate commodified phantasmagoria but also circulate the torrent of excess desires to render old Shanghai as surreally as a heavenly wonderland. Despite the colonial memory inhabiting the urban space, the live experience of spectacle reappearing in modern Shanghai is rather instantaneously changeable to be distinguished from the *flaneur* of London, i.e. London tour buses, bridges crossing the Thames River and the London Eye. The subjects can acquire the visual contrast between Shanghai and London. The spectators use the different mechanical apparatus, i.e. Ferris wheel and high-speed elevator, to achieve diverse experiences wherein the spectacle can be perceived as the different panoramas.

The fourth chapter associates the spectacle with another pertinence, myth. This chapter

re-justifies the faculty of representation and reveals its limitation, whereby the spectacle inhabits the representation but never ceases to exceed by play of signs as symbolic effervescences, whereby real life is hardly falsified in a superficial appearance but allured into a visual mythologisation. This semiotic exuberance diverges from the critical consciousness that claims to annul the spectacle as deceptive encapsulation. Such semiotic surplus recurs along the journey of spectacle as the Shanghainese myth of *modu*, wherein a hyperreal spectacle has been formed as an overwhelming contrast to the disappearance of productive elements and the end of history driven by revolution as the dialectical force that can be only found as exhibits in the museum. Also, this hyperreal myth cannot leave aside the super-tall icons at Canary Wharf/the City of London and Lujiazui. This spectacle residing in the overabundant market is driven by the money flow whereby the financial authority never ceases to self-verify its omnipresence and infiltrates its governmentality into everyday life. Although money circulating in Shanghai is different from that flowing in London, they both encrypt a myth of the bubble as a symbolic effervescence that transgresses the economic rationale to embrace the heterogeneous excess in the form of squandering money. Then, the travel of spectacle is telescoped as a visual shift to the 2010 Shanghai Expo. Along with this, the technological employment of the iconographic architectures renders a different myth of 'Great Harmony' to the global spectators.

Following the visual mythologisation, the spectacle relates to the simulacra in the fifth chapter. Baudrillard contends the nature of spectacle is an ecstatic and autonomous simulation of signs as the infinite simulacra overflow to immerse all in hyperreality. For him, all the hyperreal simulacra go beyond realistic reproduction that entails the imperative of utility to erase any trace of authenticity and originality, whereby these simulacra float over reality, never negating real life but always seducing subjects into a phantasm that is neither real nor fake. The journey of the spectacle reappearing as simulacra will begin with the wax simulacra of Madame Tussaud. When wax works of Madame Tussaud travel to China, another indigenous simulacrum of *Qinshihuang's* terracotta army rather regenerates the spectacle with a different craft, in a different appearance and for a differential purpose. Also, the industry of *shanzhai* that copies the reproduced and crosses out the authenticity has

been proliferating the simulacra to stage the Chinese spectacle industry, which is further elaborated as the phenomenal Disneyfication of the present Shanghai.

Simulacra reproduce for themselves alone. Apart from simulacra, the spectacle further diffuses into daily governmentality. The power no longer fabricates spectacle to hide but uncovers and affirms itself in the very appearance of dispersive images to be felt by the subjects. Regarding this visual affirmation of power practice, a modality of puzzle/solution will be enunciated in the sixth chapter. Ordinary life is banal, and daily experience is routinized and saturated in trivial matters. A small matter can trigger a puzzle to be solved. The exercise of each solution always relates to a technological invention or application of apparatus. This practice is not only material but also perceptible to refashion the visual appearance of the daily environment with new images. To clarify this modality, the ticketing upgrade of the London Tube, i.e. from mechanisation to digital card, is developed as a visual and technical contrast with another image in China, the resident identity card, which visualises the socialist panopticism as another governmental technique different to the marketing assessment. The modality of puzzle-solution supplements the hermeneutics of spectacle by amending Nietzsche-Bataille's libidinal economy in which spectacle is seen as the heterogeneous excess, and also the Hegelian-Marxian phenomenology wherein spectacle is understood as an external and omnipresent phenomenon to alienate the inseparable subject in light of Foucault's concept of governmentality.

The technological upgrade either of the London Tube or socialist surveillance reveals a close link between spectacle and technology. However, an irresistible progress of technology formulates a technical automatism, but this technological homogeneity also triggers a crisis of experience to divert and restrict the subjects in the boredom of technological rendition. The seventh chapter transgresses the homogeneous imperative of utility and distorts the restriction of phantasmagorical rendition to uncover another heterogeneity in which the spectacle regenerates as revolutionary images to gather subjects and re-channel their passions in the collective experience of political intensity. The distortion starts with the London Tube strike. This political event is disenchanting and hardly an excess intensity of

struggle against the technology-oriented spectacle. Workers are neutralised by the trade union as pertain to the limitation of benefits and utility. Despite the political antithesis diverted as an economic demonstration against unsatisfactory payment, the Chinese revolution, as the prohibited share of exuding the heterogeneous excess, rather renders the spectacle through the cultic expenditure of excess in a general economy of gifts. The collective body is cultivated in commitment to worship the paramount leader. This experience is differential to the spectacle of capitalism that validates its claims to the mesmeric effect of the phantasmagoria through the technological proliferation of commodities in an economy of value in rational exchange.

1st Chapter – Divergence/Convergence

A Background: Nothing else but Spectacle

The spectacle is historically formulated by critical theory as an indispensable concept to interrogate modernity that is preoccupied by the market/technology-centralised regime and put an affluent consumer society under diagnosis. This concept rests on Marxist and Situationist readings and entails a dialectical logic to cast a light of negation. Briefly, the modern society intermediated by spectacle is suggested as a visual omnipresence in which the subjects are immersed in a deceptive encapsulation of the capital regime. Under this circumstance of deceiving and alienating, an impersonal and un-lifelike phantasm of commodification that is driven by a productive imperative of accumulation haunts people's everyday lives and appropriates the personal and emancipatory struggle.

Such a radical attack at the society of spectacle reveals that not only does the reproductive system of commodification render an inebriating spectacle but also it is unable to cease criticism that casts a subversive 'shadow' on the spectacularisation of reality. In contrast to a prosperous background of capitalism that ran smoothly during the 1950s and 1960s, subversion always accompanied the spectacle to launch resistance. A riot by French students in May 1968 was typical. Productive boredom exacerbated by commodified consumption to extract interpersonal communications as value exchange was interrogated. However, resistance did not escape its failure, which rather testified to the recuperation of spectacle in which any dissension cannot exceed but is tolerated and neutralised as little more than an incongruous image. Then, a presumably free and full gratification of instinctual needs born to be diverse and insatiable was withdrawn from an exorbitant consumption of violence and constrained to the commodity-ruled satisfaction. To be disenchanted by its impotence, resistance was unable to repel the spectacle that never ceases to globalise its domination. With the rise of Neo-liberalism that is driven by deregulation of the free market, commodification and its effect of alienation is further indulged by the entrepreneurial boom

wherein financial stimulants intensify the spectacularisation of reality with overabundant investments to permeate everyday life.

Due to this permeability, spectacle is perceived as omnipresent in the presence. Its rendition has been reshaping, or even blurring and displacing, reality, which is supposed by self-consciousness to be a meaningful plane wherein subjects alienate their labour to necessary and repressive production of objects, then dialectically, reclaim their alienated autonomy from objectification through active negation. In this dialectical logic, sufferance expresses a necessity of reconstructing reality by resistance. Such an opposition of sufferance and resistance, as a dynamic, never ceased to be repeated over time and overcome each other as unitary to regenerate reality in space; thereby a history is formed by this spatiotemporal variation. While ubiquity of spectacle is complete without exceptions to assimilate any resistance as recuperable, reality loses its dynamic of reconstruction to be petrified, and everyday life in the spectacle is repeated in a boredom of commodification. Due to the petrified reality, history ends its variation accordingly and stops in the static presence.

Facing such a background of the end of history, postmodernists are hardly pessimistic about the impossibility of resistance. Baudrillard celebrates an ecstasy of spectacle that engulfs the bearable reality, nullifies any produced meaning, and allures revolution and utopia out of production as expendable simulacra to be integrated by spectacle's recuperation; Lyotard admits fragmentation of knowledge and rationality of representation to reveal a meta-narrative of critical consciousness that is but hypocrisy to skip itself and vacuity to be self-referential; Foucault proposes a discursive formation in which power practice is shifted from a dialectical dichotomy of domination and resistance to an immersive nexus, whereby not only are things, machines and technologies reproduced but also different knowledge is formulated, then, power is substantiated into the promulgated knowledge with utility of the produced objects to exercise on subjects to correct, transform and cultivate them for different governmental effects. If adhering to such postmodern non-critical hermeneutics, spectacle can be re-interpreted to eliminate being negated as alienation. That is to say,

spectacular power, which multiplies things, renders images and fabricates reality as fragmentary experiences, does not have to detach and subjugate subjects but can invest itself to them as inherent and abundant human capacity. Inspired by this re-interpretation, despite history being frozen, this temporal discontinuity can relocate the change of this world from being external variation of a self-development consciousness as a unitary progress towards being differentiation of which the univocal presence of things are unconstrained to disperse and be perceived by bifurcated experiences as incommensurable images and events. Inspired by Deleuze, the dispersal of empirical experiences, rather than self-evident ideas, is claimed to be transcendental and enables the ubiquitous symbolism of things, that is, images, to be irreducible to an ideal representation.

Situationist Critique of Spectacle

This non-critical review of spectacle diverges from critical theories that protect the historical reality from intrusion of spectacle. Thus, it is worthwhile to specify divergences or convergences among these disparate theories as a comparative analysis, by which theoretical incompatibilities or hinges can be found to develop a different vision.

Tracing back to 1957 and across Europe, situationism, or namely Situationist International, coined the term of spectacle as its radical gesture to preserve the subjective intimacy from contamination of the alienated commodification. Not only did a group of Marxists, surrealists, and avant-garde artists publish their journal, *Internationale Situationniste* (until 1969) to demonstrate their relentless criticism but also engaged themselves in experimental arts, theoretical challenges, and radical political commitments. Since its birth, situationism never ceases to position itself on the front to subvert the capitalistic predominance without any compromise. Its irreconcilable attack is characterised by two virtues at least.

Situationists insist on a dialectical criticism to examine the society of spectacle as a disenchanting illusion of modernity, and suppose resistance as a 'gravedigger' generated by the spectacularisation of reality to revolt against the repetition of commodities that immerse subjects in boredom. Conversely, they are never pessimistic about the future, even

if history is paused by spectacle and the spirit of struggle to reclaim the subjective autonomy which is snatched by an enjoyment of overabundant images; to revitalize history, situationists, as the most radical humanists, never rest to stir revolution to awaken subjects from inebriation to return to a meaningful plane, wherein a total subjective gratification is no longer separated, estranged and delayed by the mere acquisition of commodities but achieved by the struggle of everyday life to release passion, violence and ambition.

Guy Debord leads situationists. In his *Society of the Spectacle*, spectacle is negated as a *pseudo* world. Its fabrication of reality, despite being perceived as enchanting, is self-portrait to disregard any spontaneous participation of subjects. Without active interventions of spectators who do little more than passive acceptances, such a spectacle has a joyful appearance and a reproducible form but cannot help itself but to impoverish the living contents rooted in the everyday life and experience. In this sense, spectacle is merely a lifeless capsule that renders reality but banalises it. Immersed and enchanted by this capsule, subjects can only obtain a false gratification. As long as human society cannot subsist without production and consumption of commodities, this falsification, driven by such a productive imperative of necessity, never recedes to breed a consciousness with perceivable illusion to convince subjects of the capital regime constructing and improving real life. Then, a perverse ideology is formed, or as Debord said, this ideology is materialised as spectacle.¹ Persuaded by this ideology, people trust the society of spectacle and conform to the accumulation of wealth and the liberty of marketing exchange, but ignore its essence of deprivation in which calculability and exchangeability are distributed as universal to measure and extract concrete life as a homogeneous value relation. Also, this deprivation means that abundant commodities proliferated by the marketing mechanism are visualised as images to diffuse as specific symbolism to impose an exclusive reference of happy consumption on individuals but to conceal, or even subtract, their incommensurable demands. This total representation only achieves a total domination in which, as Debord himself argued, the non-living things and symbolic vacuity subjugate the living.²

¹ Debord, G. (1977). *The Society of the Spectacle*, Detroit: Black & Red

² Debord, G. (1977). *The Society of the Spectacle*, Detroit: Black & Red, p 3-7

Furthermore, as a ubiquitous play of images to render or even veil reality, the predominant spectacle is never immobile, nor centralised in a singular system, but mobile and acentric to vary itself in multiple forms. This variation of spectacle as variable appearances to contaminate different systems is a self-variation, which is derived from the singularity of the modern regime that is based on the productive imperative of utility and rationality. The more derivative forms exist, the more appearances occur, and the more severely the effects of alienation happen. In this sense, for spectacle to vary itself is not confined to commodification mediated by the market regime, it also reappears to the collective commitment and mass movements ruled by the socialist regime as well as political aestheticisation and agitative campaigns intensified by Fascism. As for Debord, to render reality as an overabundance of commodified images is a diffuse spectacle, which is operated by the marketing mechanism to infiltrate into trivial matters as subtle as an advertisement; on the contrary, spectacle performed by socialism/Fascism, e.g. Stalinism, also permeates ordinary lives but agitates people from trivia to concentrate their emotions as intensity, no longer being consumed in mundanity but sublimated in the consecrated form of commitment, sacrifice and national spirit. The former is diffusion and the latter is concentration. They are both liable to surprise subjects by the variation of spectacular rendition. At this point, a distinction between capitalism and socialism/Fascism is not merely based on the productive imperative of necessity that varies between privatization and collectivisation/nationalisation, but perceivably, laid on the different visual arts performed by this variability to fabricate reality in various aesthetic forms to convince and mobilise people with different effects, either becoming obsession with consumption or political fanaticism. However, such a spectacular reappearance as variable forms cannot avoid its essence of separation, despite subjects being immersed in different regularity of either diffusing without intensification or concentrating without idleness. Nor does Debord show any interests in the proletarianisation of reality as compared to the disenchantment of bourgeois-ruled spectacle.³

³ Debord, G. (1977). *The Society of the Spectacle*, Detroit: Black & Red, p 26

As for situationists who criticise modernity that is presumed by capitalism to colonize the entirety of social relations with spectacular commodification, alienation has become the 'Achilles' heel' of the spectacle. Any irreconcilable criticism to attack the alienation would become a fatal 'arrow' to crumble the spectacular phantasm. This relentless rejection of alienation is traced back to Marx's criticism of industrial capitalism. While a political economy in which the produced is consumed exclusively for reproduction saturates itself in the productive activities of subsistence, subjects have to sell their labours, due to the private ownership of production tools, as exchange of themselves to earn wages to consume for their needs of survival. Alienation is formed. This passive and necessary exchange of labour is the alienated labour of subjects who are oppressed. Those owners of production tools acquire the alienated labours and crystalize them in products to further exchange for money, which remains the surplus as profits after the payment of wages and maintenance of reproduction. This exchange of products as commodities for money not only impoverishes proletariats in need of survival but also alienates both them and the bourgeois towards a sole need of commodities and money. This alienation of labour and need, according to Debord, is no longer confined to the productive domain as Marx delineated at the end of the 19th century. It rather permeates the entire society to integrate every scenario of daily communication into consumerism that has overwhelmed the post-industrial system.

This inevitability and irresistibility of alienation is also verified by Lukács who coined the term 'reification'. Basically, alienation can be interpreted as synonymous or derivative of reification, which reveals that objectification cannot preserve itself from becoming an external subordination of the inner world to the production of things.⁴ This criticism of reduction of subjects to things is derived from Kantian critique of pure reason. The virtue of Kant's epistemology of reasoning is to reveal reason as an immanent faculty of subjects by which this objective world is no longer obscure but can be grasped and translated as knowable. However, this enlightenment of reasoning on the subject cannot avoid its

⁴ Lukács demonstrated that in reality alienation exists only when "the essence of man comes into conflict with his existence". Alienation can be understood as a deviation from reification that reproduces externally reality by objectifying the inner world. Lukács, G. (1983) *History and Class Consciousness*, London: Merlin Press, p xxiv, quoted by Jappe, A. (1999) *Guy Debord*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, p 31

deficiency, that is, knowledge of this world has to pertain to reason.⁵ In other words, to know as pertinence of reason is to extract concrete contents, which are perceived by sensations as the inner experience, into abstract forms measured and formulated by the faculty of reasoning. Although this refinement represents the perpetual experiences as rationality, it is rather a distilment of impurity to purity, wherein the subjective experience that is intimate with intuition, sensation and emotion is estranged and succumbs to the rational forms of substantiating reason. In this sense, as a transcendental inhabiting subjects to be self-awareness, reason that accentuates itself to represent this world is also a dualization of subjects into the internal perceptibility and external rationalisation. More importantly, both never cease to alienate each other. That is to say, the external rationalization is a process of objectification to embody externally the reason contained by subjects as objective variation to reappear across spatiotemporal sequences in multiple forms, systems, principles, and formations, etc. The birth of the modern state, democratic systems, industrial mechanisms, commodified exchange, and the society of spectacle, etc., is all subsumed as derivatives regenerated by this process of rationalisation/objectification. This rationalisation cannot avoid a necessity of alienation in which the subjective perceptibility must be transformed as imaginations, ideas, or conceptions, to be detached from the inner world and thus to be reified externally as objective enrichment. At this stage, alienation cannot be denounced as a condition of externalization and creation. However, this necessity of alienation also reveals an epistemological paradox of rationalization, that is, an oppositeness always exists in the separation between subject and object, content and form, perceptibility and rationality, and reification and alienation, etc. To solve this oppositeness, Kant supposed that the critique of practical reason should be subjectification, a kind of internalization, i.e. morality, by which the alienated contents of the inner perceptibility can be restored as irrational elements from the abstraction of pure reason to supplement the external objectification to achieve a unitary epistemology.

This unification of opposition between subjectification and objectification is further

⁵ Kant, I. (1964). *Critique of Pure Reason*, 2nd edition, Norman Kemp Smith (trans.), London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd.

developed by Hegel-Marx as the dialectic. As reviewed by Nick Land concerning the distinction between Kant and Hegel, Kantian critique of reason was to delimit boundaries of the epistemological practices to the transcendental world existing in reality, whereby a distinction between the unthinkable and the cognizable can be defined as intelligible to the theoretical endeavour; that is, what is located in the legitimate domain of theoretical cognition is named *phenomena*, whilst the extra and excessive which are outside the cognizable territory as unknowability are called *noumena* or *things-in-themselves*.⁶ As for Hegel, Kantian delimitation of the epistemic subjectivity to hardly appropriate those unknowable things in themselves should be dissolved by the 'inherently self-transcending character of reason' to become a kind of self-overcoming spirit, which is hardly restricted to the difference between *phenomena* and *noumena* but ascends to be 'auto-differentiation' that exalts the subject as an infinite and absolute spirit to appropriate the external world as merely 'its own un-reclaimed or alienated works' at any moment in history.⁷ At this point, Hegelian phenomenology of absolute spirit becomes omnipresent to involve everything and preclude Kantian unknowability of things-in-themselves, and it is also dialectical to reproduce this spirit autonomously to be historical, rather than to be in the Kantian fashion of being timeless, along with self-incurred consciousness and through time.⁸ Although the Kantian view of reason is self-legislated and the Hegelian contention of the phenomenal world is a reflection of self-incurred and absolute spirit, such limits cannot stop the dialectic from presuming that the intimate subjectification and alienated objectification are interwoven and overcoming each other as a self-development and helical progress, by which reality is reflected as a self-variation to negate and reconstruct along time and across space. Then, history is formed in this way. It never ceases to embody its predetermined consecution as a dynamic variation of reality, so reality must be historical as Lukács argued.⁹ If reality is historical, the alienation, as necessity of dualising and externalizing subjects to be reified as reality, is also historical.¹⁰ However, the society of spectacle fabricated by the

⁶ Land, N. (2003) *The Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism*, [Kindle version]. Retrieved from Amazon.com. Taylor & Francis e-Library, p 5

⁷ Land, N. *The Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism*, p 6

⁸ Land, N. *The Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism*, p 6

⁹ Lukács, G. *History and Class Consciousness*.

¹⁰ Lukács, G. *History and Class Consciousness*.

capital regime rather conceals this historicity and distorts the alienation of spectacle from necessity to exclusivity. That is to say, the ubiquity and inebriation of commodification have saturated individuals in a servile consciousness of utility and rationality, by which the necessary alienation is presupposed to be so unchallengeable that a critical consciousness of overcoming this alienation to internalize the rational modern system as a perpetual intimacy becomes impossible. Actually, alienation is not irreversible before production that becomes the denominator of reducing all to inescapable fetishism of commodities. For instance, the theological economy of consuming things as gifts in ritual spectacles, though it alienates and reifies subjects in the external forms of myth, cult, and prayer, etc., is reciprocated with an intimate internalization wherein subjects experience divinity and sublimation. Since the reversibility of alienation is precluded, rationalisation and spectacularisation, no matter how affluently they reconstruct the reality, are rather disenchanting. This disenchantment caused by the unmodifiable alienation also echoes Max Weber. For him, the rationalisation, utilitarian practice and secularisation that were supposed to illuminate bourgeois-ruled modern system with reasoning could not preserve themselves from degeneration, but colonize the personal interdependence as a regularity of productive schemes by lifeless bureaucratisation and numb inner experiences.

Furthermore, this disenchantment also echoes Siegfried Kracauer's arguments on the mass ornament. For Kracauer, mass gymnastics performed collectively by tiller girls with geometric formations on the stages of public stadia can be seen as ornamental as a derivative of the early phenomena of spectacle happening in the period of the Weimar Republic, which also indicates a shift of the historical process to being 'determined more strikingly from an analysis of its surface-level expressions'.¹¹ The dialectic of surface-level expression and foundational substance in essence is formed. Insofar as spectacle is derived from phenomenal ornament, it can be understood as a kind of encapsulation, which externally renders geometric rationale as visualised as concrete formations, e.g. lines, circles, squares, etc., on the surface; also, Kracauer associates the gymnastic movements in which

¹¹ Kracauer, S. (1995). *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: Harvard University Press, p 75

individual girls are extracted and subsumed to a generic formation with the assembly-line production system wherein the impersonal calculability abstracts individual workers who are assigned with specific tasks as anonymous and commensurable as the exchangeable equivalence.¹² This imaged analogy between the legs of tiller girls dancing on the stadium and the hands of workers labouring in the factory cannot be simply interpreted as a materialistic dichotomy between superstructure and productive base, but a spectacular rendition of the modern productive mechanism, as Kracauer himself said, ‘an aesthetic reflex of the rationality to which the prevailing economic system aspires.’¹³ However, this rendition rather reveals the dialectic wherein the spectacle that ornaments the productive rationality and utility as enchanting cannot prevent its visualisation from being disenchantment. This disenchantment, to echo the above arguments of Debord, Kant, and Weber, is attributed to *Ratio* with which the modern regime is embroiled. Not only does *Ratio* indicate a universal and transparent translation that represents qualitative differences as proportionately measurable as quantitative equivalences, but it also accentuates itself as an external and rational form by which reason can substantiate itself in concrete reification (see details in discussion of Kant). In this case, *Ratio* cannot avoid becoming abstraction that distils incommensurable as commensurable, and extracts differentiation as integration, whereby the subjective intimacy with natural excess and inner perceptions is alienated from external rationalism and also located as conflict with the latter as oppositional hierarchy. This rationality, as disenchanting as a ‘murky’ reason that justifies itself for the end of instrumental rationalisation alone, is incapable of retrieving the inner experience for a unitary and intimate subjectivity.¹⁴ Then, such incapability formulates history, which is driven by the productive mechanism schematised by the instrumental rationality, to be a process of de-mythologisation wherein the mystic and original flux of natural excess, as ‘the basis of man’, and the theological mystery of the God, as the spirit of man, are both withered away and displaced by the lifeless and analytic abstraction. What is critical, for Kracauer, is that such de-mythologisation not only degenerates and de-substantiates the organic elements of human society but also substantiates ‘a false mythological concreteness’,

¹² Kracauer, S. *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, p 76-79

¹³ Kracauer, S. *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, p 79

¹⁴ Kracauer, S. *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, p 80-81

which does not overcome the instrumental rationalism but grounds and repeats it as a visually fetishistic ornament.¹⁵ Intermediated by this visual ornament, or namely decorative spectacle, girls in the mass gymnastics and workers in the factory are all extracted as superficial images alienated from their substantial lives. Facing such visualisation and historical regression, Kracauer is hardly dismayed. He demonstrates that the recovery of the dialectic of reason, which attempts to overcome instrumental rationalism to retrieve the subjective intimacy with the inner world, coincides with the disenchantment triggered by the false ornament. Only if this disenchanting ornament of modern society continuously develops towards its extremity and omnipresence wherein an insufferable boredom is thereby aroused towards such exclusive continuity, the dialectic of reason interrogating, revolting and overcoming this falsification can be fully actualised. Insofar as history is not confined to the materialistic dialectic of production and superstructure but relates to the aesthetic dialectic of enchantment and disenchantment, the problem of the society of mass ornament in the period of the Weimar Republic is not rationalisation too much but rather too little.¹⁶ In other words, it is not spectacularisation too much but rather too little. In terms of Kracauer's logic, when the society of spectacle developed its visual ornaments by the 1960s and 1970s to infiltrate alienation into details of everyday life and saturate the subjects in plethora of mass consumption, such disenchantment, for situationists, was approaching its extremity that also alarmed its deadline.

Resistance

Facing such an inescapable spectacle that alienates the incommensurable inner world of subjects, situationists never surrender. They never confine their criticism to theoretical debates, but engage it into a straightforward intervention in actions, without any evasion and compromise. Their actions of resistance sabotage the spectacular rendition to withdraw reality from un-lifelike phantasm of commodification and reconstruct it as the desirable and intimate situation. The situation to be reconstructed through resistance indicates that the

¹⁵ Kracauer, S. *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, p 81, 83-84

¹⁶ Kracauer, S. *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, p 81

subject would be no longer be a spectator who is encapsulated but feels solitary by the produced affluence but a participant to engage him/herself into spectacle. This direct participation must raise itself as a dissension to recover the perceptual intimacy with intuition, imagination, sensation and emotion from the external institutionalization. As Sartre argued, situation is not on an artificial plane wherein infinite resources and choices are pre-given to subjects, but rests on an existential revelation by which subjects can claim their self-consciousness to resist any predetermination in actions for freedom.¹⁷ In this regard, it is a dialectical internalization to dislocate the spectacularisation of reality and rebuild a resistant situation with a self-consciousness of overcoming alienation and servitude for intimacy and self-determination.

As for situationists, this internalization cannot avoid becoming an artistic practice in which resistant actions, such as demonstrations, riots, sabotages, loot, and vandalism, etc., are aestheticised as antagonistic symbols to repel rationalization and instil such antagonism as a turbulence born and hidden within everyday life into the lifeless mechanisms to fill them with living contents. At this point, arts are no longer reducible to the denominator of reproduction, as argued by Benjamin, in decorative appearances of commodification and obliterating an aura of authenticity and originality, but turn into a weapon of resistance, or a war machine for channelling the inner intensity out to disrupt the unceasing reappearance of spectacle. It is not denied that spectacle appears to be enchanting, but its repetition of inebriation and affluence that permeate trivial matters as a regularity of everyday life generates boredom, an inassimilable anxiety on the repetition in regularity. Despite this boredom being triggered by the external spectacularisation, it still requires a self-consciousness that is able to be aware of such an external repetition with a repulse of internal perception as a negative anxiety, whereby resistance becomes possible. In this sense, arts, as a machine of resistance, must function as a channel, which can internalize the spectacular reappearances as anxiety, or even repugnance to boredom, then, to release such a negative emotion outwardly as intensity to revolt against this boredom and

¹⁷ Sartre, J.P. (1969). *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, London: Methuen, is cited by Plant, S. (1992). *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, London and New York: Routledge, p 20-21

reconstruct the reality in another situation. This aesthetics of intense resistance testify that what situationists are concerned with is never how to subsist in spectacle but a fear of boredom in which subjects are convinced to survive and consume their lives with a sole gratification.¹⁸ Thus, arts of resistance must intervene into everyday life and internalize the spectacle to be a different perceptibility. Another perceptibility is not confined to the regular experience given by spectacle, such as admiration, enchantment, obsession, or pleasure, etc., but exposes other emotions, including loneliness, anxiety, apathy, repugnance, or hatred, etc.

Insofar as situationists' artistic contestation disturbs the superficial appearance to embed it in actions of intervention and reveal what is concealed by everyday life as dissonance to the regular and exclusive gratification of commodities, it converges with surrealism. To echo Dadaism, which is hostile to any aesthetic forms colonized by bourgeois-ruled modernity, surrealists merely carry out more radical intervention into the daily practice enveloped by spectacle to stir sensations from tediousness, whereby an eruption of marvellous and extravagant moments would be triggered to awaken the subjective experience from regularity and triviality.¹⁹ They inherit the dialectical aestheticisation to reject any inferior forms, such as ignobility, obscenity, filthiness and chaos, etc., which impoverish life as mediocre, then, neutralise them as oppositeness to be sublimated as high forms of fantasy, surprises, and miracles, etc. This surreal transformation from impurity to purity is to create a dreamland, which is unexpected by a productive life of subsisting in boredom to avoid poverty. In such a dreamland, there is only an affective experience of love in romance. Everything is beautiful, every image is intimate, every action is passionate, and every communication is erotic. Although such an extraordinary dream woven by surrealism no longer suffers banality to inspire real life to reject any delay but to embrace an imaginary plane with an immediate gratification, this impulse rather has to encounter two dilemmas. That is to say, irreconcilable abandonment of the regular but impassive reality is to ignore a Freudian dialectic of pleasure and reality in, which a transformative sublimation to pleasure

¹⁸ Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 7

¹⁹ Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 48

is based on negating and overcoming the opposite sufferance in reality, thus, there is no pleasure without reality; on the other hand, surrealists' partial contestation of romantic experiences in a dreamland hardly avoids becoming a derivative of spectacle, which renders an affection as conspicuous as an imaginary plane that is beyond reality but ignores a hope of struggle and improvement stirred by banal reality to leave the reality as still impoverished as a hinterland. At this point, it is hard to distinguish the affective experience reclaimed by surrealists from the regular fabrication of reality as diverting spectacles. Then, surrealists cannot escape from being captured by spectacularisation, despite being in the name of revolutionary intervention into everyday life, because their reconstruction of reality dilutes the intensity of resistance and distracts it as merely affective experiences that escape from the banal reality to another plane but preserves the dominant spectacle from attacks.

Situationists never escape. They struggle within reality to reconstruct it by the dialectic manner. What is to be reconstructed must be in the presence rather than imagined as a dream. In other words, their radical actions, unlike surrealism, are a total rejection of spectacle since spectacularisation has become a total representation to intermediate and subsume each detail of social relations into its ubiquitous alienation. While subjects are unable, perhaps never owning such a capability, to distinguish their true and instinctual needs from the fabricated and falsified gratification of spectacle given by an unchallengeable objectification, there is no way to evade or selectively reject this omnipresence. Then, what can be done alone is annihilation, even if what to be destroyed is imaged pleasure wherein perception is deceived by phenomena to separate subjects and objects from being unitary. Thus, as for situationists, the desirable situation must be built upon the ruination of spectacle.

More importantly, this destruction cannot be a self-negation of the modern regime that founds and maintains such a total spectacularisation. That is to say, to destroy a mechanism of total representation cannot depend on a power apparatus that has been assimilated by this mechanism as its integral component but merely remains an empty form of negation or criticism. Otherwise, this destruction will be neutralised as little more than a revision by

which spectacle varies itself as another appearance. This insistence upon the discharge of resistance as an anarchistic movement of grass roots without any organised leadership is also why situationists diverge from Marxism that formulates revolution as a scientific discipline. Vaneigem in his *The Revolution of Everyday Life* demonstrated such anarchistic resistances as an undelayed end to all the alienations and separations.²⁰ The radical subjects motivate their born and unruly wills as a revolutionary potential contained by everyday life, and never concede their immediate and self-managed interventions to either any persuasive excuses that delay revolutions as premature or any bureaucratic medium that functions as an apparatus of spectacle to console and evade resistance in the name of guiding it in a scientific way. For instance, a utopian society delineated by a bureaucratic vanguard, i.e. the communist party, as the goal of history and the surreal beyond the real struggle of destroying alienation and deception is nothing more than a self-variation of spectacle. Stalinism's homogeneous society of concentrated spectacle is a good example as argued already, which reduces all the excess energy of subjects into an exclusive imperative of production only to render a variant alternative to the diffused spectacle fabricated by commodification.

Through such delay and intermediation, rebellion is distracted as pseudo intervention by which rebels alienate themselves from resistance to enjoy their actions as only an intense way of consuming life. In this regard, resistance of everyday life demonstrated by situationists must be rather spontaneous actions.²¹ This spontaneity indicates that resistance is an inherent capacity to substantiate a dialectical repugnance to the deceptive spectacularisation by releasing the internal impulse, desire and will as resistant intensity. Once without a systematic organisation, this spontaneous and leadless resistance is not expected to be durable but erupts as ephemeral. Despite being discontinued as ephemeral, such spontaneity is too unstable to be seized and unceasingly re-emerges to revolt.

At this point, any resistance, once being integrated by the rational system, becomes merely

²⁰ Vaneigem, R. (1979). *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, London: Rising Free Collective, and Donald Nicholson-Smith, n.p., Left Bank Books and Rebel Press, 1983

²¹ Vaneigem, R. *The Revolution of Everyday Life*.

an instrumental means to drive a recurrence of spectacle itself, or in other words, to improve spectacle by self-criticism and self-repair. Destruction would be precluded as impossible. Debord in his *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle* further demonstrates this reduction of resistance to spectacle's self-criticism as recuperation. Reappearance between the marketing diffusion and bureaucratic concentration as self-variation of spectacle, namely an integrated spectacle, is to verify its recuperation. Having such a capacity, spectacle does not suppress, nor conceal, any resistance that has been erupting in the presence. All the disturbances happening within reality that is covered by spectacle, although being hostile to oppose and end it, is presumed to be governable, whereby such oppositions are not forcibly repulsed but, inspired by Foucault here, tolerably channelled, corrected and transformed as incompatible disparities with an entertainment of openness and liberty. That is to say, while individuals dispersed by daily routines are stirred and concentrated to intensify their passions as revolt, such passions are neutralised as a discrepant manner of spectacularizing reality with intense and violent images since the public authority tolerates and concedes to give legitimacy to resistance; while the masses are tired of the concentrated campaigns, political intensification, and personal cults, an economic reform towards the marketing liberty and commodification is also likely to be engaged to divert the political spectacularisation of reality. In this way, the hostile intensity is distorted, spun, diverted and finally dissipated; then, spectacle, seemingly on the edge of destruction, evades risks and evolves to another more attractive form. In short, this governmental art of recuperation owned by the society of spectacle transforms its destruction to perfection as an alternation of different power effects, being simultaneously diffused and concentrated, whereby spectacle is strengthened to invulnerability.

Such an invulnerability of spectacle also converges towards an important concept of 'instrumental reason' coined by the Frankfurt School. Situationists' demonstration of spontaneous resistances accentuates partially the release of internal intensity and eliminates any bureaucratic rationalization and scientific method as an integral part of spectacularisation. Then, a crisis is revealed. That is, the dialectic of reason separating and also unifying between internal perception and external rationalization has been nullified, but

becomes irreversible between them. Without reversibility to the inner experience, the external rationalization enables the epistemology of reasoning to be merely an instrumental reason. This instrumental reason, as an imperative of abstracting and calculating in utility and rationality, cannot avoid its embodiment as a permeating technocratic system wherein specialists, experts and technicians propose theories, formulate knowledge and reproduce things. This technocratic system, then, becomes a technical framework of spectacle, and its specialists, experts and technicians, including their theories, knowledge and reproductive skills, also constitute the recuperability of spectacle.

Confronted with this technocratic recuperation, a self-consciousness of subjects as a dialectical resistance is distorted. Conventionally, capitalist production of commodities and their spectacle alienates subjects from their labour and needs to be poor in the struggle for survival, so the more spectacular, the less to be gained. This proletarianisation, in contrast to spectacularisation, is not simply a suffering material poverty but also a solitude in which the alienated subjects are squeezed and wasted as useless to be absorbed by spectacle. This solitary un-absorbability, dialectically, enables subjects to be conscious of their impoverishment by themselves as insufferable, having to struggle. However, while reality is produced by modern mechanism and spectacularized as affluent, not anymore in poverty, the self-consciousness of proletarianisation that motivates resistance for subsistence becomes redundant, or exorbitant. Immersed by the affluent spectacle, it is not impossible for such a self-consciousness to be aroused, but it is repeatedly persuaded, constrained and renounced by the subjects themselves although they are aware of alienation and inequality never ceasing, because resistances have been verified as useless and unnecessary in the face of being neutralised by the recuperable spectacle as merely critical suggestions. Thus far, the self-consciousness of alienation/struggle is distorted by self-repression as a servile consciousness of utility, or coined by Marcuse as 'repressive de-sublimation', by which an 'organised ego' is imposed on subjects to measure reality as risky or safe, thereby their actions are presumed to be useless or useful to acquire threats or benefits.²² Then, the

²² Marcuse, H. (1966). *Eros and Civilisation: A philosophical inquiry into Freud*, Boston, MA: Beacon Press, p 3-8, 11-19

society of spectacle becomes unshakable. Though its appearance is diverting, such an encapsulation of reality is rather a deprivation in which humanity is reduced with the end of becoming rational, utilitarian and technological. This end is also a dilemma of the dialectic. A unity of oppositeness between alienation and intimacy, spectacularisation and resistance, or objectification and subjectification, seems to become elusive. Recuperability of spectacle enables itself to be perfect. Turbulence is tolerated to release, but diverted, emptied and remained as a violent appearance. Then, threats are spun and evaded. Spectacle can vary itself as a customization to adapt to any reconstructed situation.

Divergence

Debord demonstrates that this perfection is fragile. This fragility is triggered by those spontaneous actions, as argued already, which are leadless, fragmentary, and immoderate plays of violent intensity, such as riot, loot, sabotage, vandalism, or even terror attacks. Their purpose is to disrupt the variation of spectacle and cause its recuperation to malfunction. As Vaneigem said, while recuperation attempts to console and saturate dissension in re-spectacularization, the unintegrable resistance rather reveals this self-repair as self-contradictory.²³ An example is the French student riot of May 1968. The French Communist Party, as the main Marxist force for criticising the productive system of capitalism, did not support it, and even accused rioters of their guerrilla fights. Also, a few important figures in structuralism, including Louis Althusser and Roland Barthes, held their ambiguous attitude to this grass-roots movement. However, those who claim to criticise capitalism and its spectacle are self-contradicted with their contestation. Such equivocal attitudes and bureaucratic oppositions to the disturbance of alienation also function as a recuperation of alienation to re-spectacularize the attacked society. As for situationists, this self-contradiction exposes an irrecoverable separation between theoretical vacuity and real practice, by which those revolutionary theories are rather degenerated to be counterrevolutionary obstacles. Furthermore, for rioters to nullify the recuperable spectacle does not confine their eruption to the occupation of public spaces, such as streets,

²³ Vaneigem, R. (1979) *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, p 97

universities, squares or cinemas, etc., but counterattacks the rational machinery of spectacularisation by performing its self-contradictory contents. They launched public debates on revolutionary theories in the occupied cinemas that were used to perform Hollywood films; they occupied broadcast stations to play revolutionary manifestos, and public spaces, including the occupied boulevards; vandalized city squares, looted shopping malls, and were rendered with disparate images of radical graffiti and slogans, whose appearance repelled the prevailing of advertisement boards.

Situationists insist on the spontaneity of actions as an arbitrary play and the resistance as a game of exploding a raw force to totally annul the recuperative power of spectacle.²⁴ However, this insistence cannot preserve the riot of May 1968 from being recuperated as merely those revolutionary images of graffiti on the wall or those slogans printed on the T-shirts worn by the intense crowds. Then, a post-spectacle view of reinterpreting the spectacle's recuperability and invulnerability diverges from situationists and Leftist critics who persist in a unity of opposition between recuperation and resistance. This divergence is implied from the ambiguous attitude of structuralism towards the 1968 riot. As for structuralism, the subject immersed in spectacle does not have to be condemned by a critical modality that is inherited from Kant-Hegel tradition. In this tradition, as argued already, the subject is self-awareness of transcendental reason, which substantiates itself externally in objects and reversibly internalizes rational objectification in subjectivity. Encountering such a dialectic opposition between alienation and intimacy, a unity of subject and object, as inspired by Althusser, is expected as a humanistic destiny and imposed on the entire history of reality to reconstruct it around a self-consciousness of overcoming separation for unification. However, structuralism supposes the subject as an epistemological product of codification in a complex structure of signs rather than a self-consciousness that develops between alienation and struggle; the object is not either an external reification of alienated subjects in rationality but rather a medium, or an impersonal plane given by transcendentality, which is available to the structural signification to generate and proliferate meanings by which subjects can express themselves in

²⁴ Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 75

transparent discourse.

In regard to structuralism, Saussurean paradigm is related. Our world is dualized into two planes. One is the real and concrete plane, and another is the meaningful plane. Both are intermediated by a signification system of different signs performing infinitely. In this sense, all the meanings are not from the real plane but are imposed by the system of different signs.²⁵ Then, a gap of mechanical signification is instituted between the world of meanings in signification and the reality.²⁶ Sign becomes the new key to driving the faculty of representation to connect things and subjects, or reality and minds. At this point, representation can be also reinterpreted. As for the Kant-Hegel tradition, the faculty of representation is illuminated by reasoning as a logical mechanism to conform to self-consciousness, whereby the historical reality is presumed within the dialectical progress between externalization of the internal spirits and internalization of the external rationalism. Structuralism shifts the conformity of representation no longer with self-consciousness but with a system of coding. The representation is supposed as a scientific structurality. Also, this structurality is never immobile, but an infinite and acentric play in which images are proliferated, and signs are exchanged to generate an overabundance of symbolic references inhabiting things.²⁷ Such a multiplicity of reproducible symbolic references, then, immerses and transforms the subject into codification, an endless hermeneutic practice of interpreting ubiquitous signs.

In this sense, if spectacularisation of reality is seen as a total representation, this representation of reality does not necessarily entail the dialectical unity of external alienation and internal intimacy to unstoppably negate and reconstruct reality. It can be but a scientific system of coding that rests on the scattering things to reproduce images (a kind

²⁵ Saussurean himself said, 'in language, there is only difference...whether we take the signified or the signifier, language has neither ideas nor sounds that existed before the linguistic system, but only conceptual and phonic differences that have issued from the system. The idea or phonic substance that a sign contains is of less importance than the other signs that surrounds it.' Saussure, F. de. (1974). *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. W. Baskin, ed. C. Bally and A. Sechehaye with A. Reidlinger, London: Fontana, p 120

²⁶ Tallack, D. (1995). *Critical Theory A Reader*, ed. Tallack, D, Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, p 13

²⁷ Derrida, J. (1967). Structure, Sign and Play In the Discourse of the Human Sciences. In *Writing and Difference*, London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2001, p 353-354

of visual signs) and multiply meanings to enrich the ordinary lives. This epistemological discrepancy is perhaps one of the reasons why those who remained aligned with structuralism did not openly support those situationists or surrealists. As for the former, the latter humanistic contestations to decry spectacle as an irreversible alienation of subjects is little more than self-evidence of a moral claim. What this self-evident claim can do is only to attack but is unable to verify such a spectacle that cultivates and enriches subjects in a multitude of signs as unjust. In other words, no matter how ambitious and intimate a situation to be remade by those Leftist critics, avant-garde artists or grass-root rioters cannot leave aside a system of clarifying such a new situation and new social relations as meaningful. In this regard, spectacle as a visual expression of a society with specific symbolic references cannot be abandoned, and its inescapability should be justified.

This divergence that happens between phenomenology and structuralism casts a non-critical light on spectacle to undo negation imposed on it and revise its recuperability and the opposite resistance upheld by situationists, since structuralism unshackles the recuperable spectacularisation from the dialectic opposition of alienation and struggle. George Bataille further illuminates this revision of spectacularisation and resistance. Although Bataille's critique of modernity does not directly relate to the society of spectacle, his notion of general economy, in which human lives reveal and play with their heterogeneous elements as an unproductive expenditure of excess energy as surplus and irreducible to the productive homogeneity, can find theoretic hinges with situationists, surrealists and other Leftist critics whose criticism is aimed at the spectacle. However, his concepts of heterogeneity and homogeneity, when they are applied to the interpretation of spectacle, are not necessarily fixed with the Leftist critiques that entail the dialectic of unity and opposition, but can be a non-critical relocation of them in a hybridity of two irreplaceable incompatibilities. In short, Bataille's theory and its application to spectacle are twofold and bifurcated.

Firstly, convergences are discussed. The general economy of which violence is expended in struggle as an unintegrable eruption of raw and excess intensity born with natural impulse in

a principle of loss and destruction is converged with the spontaneous actions of resisting the spectacular rendition of alienation to reclaim the subjective intimacy. As for Bataille, intimacy cannot be acquired from production but only by expenditure of the nature of excess. In this sense, the general economy of war and sacrifice in the archaic society to release and dissipate the natural excess without any reserve and delay should be the most intimate interconnection between the outer world and inner world.²⁸ Illuminated by the solar principle, for human lives to be intimate with their nature of excess should squander their exorbitant energies as giving, without any compensation of economic benefits, but in return for cult in sacrifice and destruction. To reach such an unreserved play of excess life, war or slaughtering in bloodshed to unleash animality should be the most immediate expenditure.²⁹ Not only can the violence of killing bring about the horror of death but it dialectically generates the honour of plunder and conquest. Also, death of captives produced by war is rendered by ritual of sacrifice as an archaic spectacle, in which captives are consumed as gifts in return for the solar divinity and giving an ecstatic festival of death. This intimate play of death to give excess life honour and ecstasy enables life to be exposed in an immoderate expenditure to embrace absolute risks of loss without any conservation. This risk of loss, for Bataille, is bound up with the economy of *potlatch* clarified by Marcel Mauss. As a symbolism of gift-exchange, *potlatch* indicates that a gift is not reserved for accumulation but to give in return as a loss of the owned. In other words, this dissipation by generosity of giving does not merely acquire rank and glory but is also a waste of wealth and destruction of property, whereby life is hardly conserved as stable in utility but stirred in rivalry to encounter a risky gaming of social degradation as destitute.³⁰ When the economy of gift-exchange exposes life in a gamble to obtain respect or be impoverished, social hierarchy and cultural distinction rest on how much or how willing to waste in ostentation rather than how much to accumulate in austerity. This economy of giving and squandering things as symbolism of gifts to arouse the internal intimacy, e.g. respect, glory, honour or

²⁸ Bataille, G. (1991). *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol I Consumption*, New York: Zone Books, p 28, 45-61.

²⁹ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol I Consumption*, p 28, 45-61

³⁰ Bataille, G. (1985). The Notion of Expenditure. In: *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p 118-122; & Bataille, G (1991) *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol I Consumption*, New York: Zone Books, p 63-72.

ecstasy, is still inherited from the theological economy of Christianity, which is not independent from the unproductive expenditure.³¹ That is to say, things to be produced are wasted by the churches, which are idle and never produce, in their lavish rituals as gifts that carry a symbolism of mystery and divinity in the form of salvation, redemption and torments, to arouse the internal experience of spiritual sublimation.

Thus far, extending from the economy of war in archaic society to the medieval economy of theology, the general economy of gifts always accentuates an intimacy between subjects and things at the expense of excess life to fulfil heterogeneous elements, such as violence, honour, faith and divinity. However, those ritualistic spectacles fabricated by the economy of gifts, either Aztec pyramids or cathedrals erected at the city centre, are rather relegated to the modern regime that renders a spectacle of commodification with the economy of utility. Secularization, marketing calculability, transparent social contracts, and austere and utilitarian accumulation, do not think of squandering things as gifts in prodigality but formulate an economic compensation by which a productive economy can reproduce and accumulate to compensate for the consumed. Then, ordinary life is conserved in stability and security to keep a distance with an unreserved exposure of life in risks of loss, destruction and death. This distance delimits a border between an unproductive expenditure of risks for intimacy with inner heterogeneities and a productive imperative of utility. Then, alienation is generated, while an independent economy of producing things enables a productive expenditure, namely consumption for objective accumulation, to be separated from an unproductive expenditure for subjective intimacy.

As argued above, since the marketing economy spectacularised reality with commodification, the bourgeois-ruled consumption has submitted gratification of the inner experience to recourse to buying. Subjects, then, are preoccupied by a self-consciousness of labour to be frugal and disciplined with the end of accumulation and progress. Also, expenditure of life is circumscribed within a regularity of employment, and a heterogeneous play of life as

³¹ Bataille, G. The Notion of Expenditure. In: *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 118-122; & Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol I Consumption*, p 63-72

exorbitant to waste it like a gamble is rather condemned and precluded as decadence. According to Bataille, this economic shift in expenditure relates to a 'deep subjectivity', which means the inner experience should be fulfilled as aimless.³² That is to say, economy is not merely an external means that is imposed on expenditure to estrange and circumscribe it in production and consumption of things as commodities; it is but also an intrinsic practice in which the excess and inassimilable heterogeneities are channelled out and invested into an infinite creation of objects, machinery and technology but never succumb to the latter objectification. In this sense, what are to be created are not simply the exchangeable things but erotic objects, which release the subjective excess as gifts given to enrich this world; and creation of such erotic objects as machines to dissipate the inner flux is surplus, purposeless, and irreducible to the productive imperative of utility and subsistence. Insofar as unproductive expenditure releases the diverse internal impulse to affirm life as heterogeneous and intimate, Bataille's general economy inherits the dialectic logic of which subjects and objects are restored to a unitary world to converge with situationists' uncompromising rejection of alienation and its spectacularisation.

On the other hand, bifurcation also happens in regard to spectacle and its recuperation. This bifurcation means that application of Bataille's theory to re-interpreting spectacle can untangle the negation imposed on it. A critical point should be noted. That is, situationists and Bataille both converge at criticism of the productive imperative of utility and rationality as well as repugnance to boredom generated by a regularity of subjects being exclusively gratified with diverting commodification. However, their solutions to such an inescapable spectacle are divergent. Situationists do not refuse spectacle as an enchanting appearance that obsesses subjects but negate its exclusivity and its falsification of other genuine demands of subjects than this superficial enchantment, so they are keen and never cease to go beyond this spectacular appearance by the dialectic of opposition, substitution and overcoming to reclaim the essence of unitary and intimate subjectivity. Although Bataille's general economy, being an unconditional expenditure of excess life as voluntary waste in

³² Bataille, G. (1993). *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol II The History of Eroticism & Vol III Sovereignty*. New York: Zone Books, p 234.

uselessness, similarly repels alienation and boredom, this economy rather admits that the enchantment of spectacular commodities, as an inebriation of subjects, is a kind of unproductive expenditure by which some heterogeneous elements, e.g. joy, pleasure, ecstasy, etc., can be exuded to consume life within the spectacular rendition. Thus, the problem of spectacle is its restriction, or incapacity owned by the capitalistic system of commodification to only spectacularise ordinary life with the limited expenditure. This limitation confines the reproduction and rendition of reality to a repetition of sole activities, whereby to impoverish the diverse heterogeneous elements of the inner world in a perceivable boredom. However, it must be admitted that this boredom is itself heterogeneous. As one of emotions triggered by the internal perception that is immersed in overabundance of commodities, such boredom cannot be assimilated by the homogeneous mechanism of production. That is to say, while spectacle of commodities exudes partly some shares of heterogeneities as a restricted expenditure whose regularity triggers boredom, this restricted expenditure, despite being partial and repeated as boredom, is rather excess and incommensurable to the imperative of necessity and subsistence that alienates subjects to exchange.

At this point, the solution to this limited expenditure released by spectacle cannot simply inherit the dialectic logic that negates, rejects and overcomes spectacle as an indisputable alienation and deception, because the subjective intimacy with external objectification is not entirely alienated but allowed as a partial exudation of heterogeneous excess into the consumption of spectacle. Once spectacle is negated totally, the allowed exudation of heterogeneities is thereby annulled. Thus, the modern society of spectacle criticised by situationists, if as an unproductive expenditure of commodities for fun, does not rule out the exuberance of inner heterogeneity but merely restricts it to some allowed contents, thereby the intimacy with the internal perception is not totally impoverished but partially alienated. To solve this limitation, it is necessary to exceed its circumscription and blur the border, rather than to subtract the restricted expenditure that is incommensurable to the homogeneous state, but reveal those prohibited outside the restriction as incompatibilities to coexist with the shares allowed within the restriction. This coexistence of the allowed and

prohibited elements, with a vague limitation, is no longer a mutual repulse and substitution, nor a simple juxtaposition, but an equivocal hybridity of which such disparate elements are fused but scarcely erase their incongruity. This fusion of heterogeneous disparities does not avoid becoming a unitary experience in which such differences can transform into each other as variation, e.g. a dialectic transfiguration between violence and honour. More importantly, such a fusion admits and tolerates the disintegrated experiences by which those discrepant heterogeneous elements are bifurcated and fragmented to non-identical individuals (*à la* Deleuze). In this sense, expenditure is no longer restricted but channels the excess out, without prohibition, as immoderate. Then, spectacle, as a perceptible effervescence to which the exorbitant internal flux is channelled and dissipated, is no longer either limited in a repetitive proliferation of commodified images but an unreserved play of disparate images as a hybrid show. This show exposes and affirms those accursed images to supplement the allowed images. A panorama is thereby formed to visualise reality, whereby the excess life can go beyond the daily routine of utility and subsistence towards not only the diverting expenditure of commodities but also the obscured expenditure that is condemned by consumerism.

However, such a hybrid spectacularisation of reality is hard to achieve, but always subtracted as a partial show. This is because which heterogeneous elements are to be prohibited and which are to be allowed to be exposed in spectacle are intentionally selected by the homogeneous system with the economy of utility. Then, the unreserved expenditure of excess and its heterogeneous contents are dissevered, measured and distinguished as discrepant shares. Such partition and distinction are not merely with knowledge of being useless or useful but also for a preferable governmental effect. Some shares to be allowed in expenditure are measured as worthwhile to trigger a preferred experience, for example, joy and comfort are always allowed because nobody repels this experience; other shares to be prohibited as the accursed expenditure are rather measurably distinguished as hostility to conservation to trigger ungovernable risks, e.g. destruction and death. A critical point is that such a utilitarian distinction is never immobile but rather changeable with the undecidable perceptibility of personal experiences. In other words, which heterogeneous contents to be

perceived as preferred and can be invested as worthwhile are unstable and equivocal. Although this utility cannot avoid its preference of fulfilling subjective demands with comfort and joy and have a tendency of avoiding risks of loss, it does not reject utterly the exudation of risks, but the risky expenditure must be adventured as worthwhile. That is to say, intermediated by the utility, the accursed expenditure can be revealed and released but must be governable to stay away from an unreserved play of destruction and death. Finally, it is purposed to re-distribute the excess intensity as a transformation of expenditure into the allowed shares that reward life merely with consolation.

At this point, as for the society of spectacle, the general economy of unleashing expenditure is not necessarily repugnant to the economy of utility. The utility does not have to be rejected as a negative imperative of alienation as situationists argued, nor is it ahistorical to conceal the antecedence of general economy that is intimate with nature of excess. Such two economies can be rather re-interpreted as to coexist with each other in a complex, without assimilating each other. In other words, the general economy, as unproductive expenditure, is surplus but inassimilable to the homogeneous regime that is running with the economy of utility; more importantly, the former also embeds itself into the latter as an extravagance, despite some extravagant content always being subtracted as prohibition, which stirs up the vital intensity to challenge and transgress the limitation of utility and rationality for an immoderate play, but the latter utility does not utterly preclude such an incitement, and always tolerates with liberty an exudation of such an intensity to eliminate the plane of subsistence but channel and transform this exudation into a filtered expenditure with the allowed heterogeneous elements, insofar as the prohibition is not transgressed. In short, the general economy and the utility are located in a symbiosis. The homogeneous system with its productive imperative of utility cannot reject the exudation of heterogeneities towards the unproductive expenditure of excess, but what it does is to let the heterogeneous flux overflow partly, but re-channel, filter and restrict such an excess flow to the allowed expenditure. Then, a bio-technical complex is formed between homogeneity and heterogeneity, or between utility and excess. The latter is excessive but symbiotic to the former. That is, the homogeneous growth and heterogeneous expenditure

do not have to oppose each other in the dialectic logic but can be relocated in a coexistence of incongruities.

Thus far, spectacle cannot be negated as a sole domination that alienates subjects by productive subsistence and bores them by deceptive images. It can be rather reinterpreted with a non-critical manner to be unproductive expenditure, by which the heterogeneous excess is not suppressed by the homogeneous mechanism but is symbiotic to it and filtered by this mechanism to exude towards dissipation. This homogeneous system can vary itself by unceasing reproduction of things, machines and technologies as commensurable derivatives, and the productive imperative of necessity and the economy of utility become a unitary denominator to underpin this variation. However, how and where such mechanisms can be used, what kind of spectacular appearance can be rendered by utilization of these mechanisms, or which heterogeneous elements are allowed or forbidden to exude by them to achieve which governmental effect, are incommensurable. Such incommensurable disparities, then, scatter things to render different images, whereby different spectacles are fabricated to immerse personal perceptions in disparate expenditure. For instance, the capitalist regime allows the heterogeneous exudations of enchantment, pleasure, vanity, comfort, etc., with the overabundance of commodified images and advance of modern technology, but prohibits other incongruous elements, such as violence, filthiness, struggle, torment, commitment, sacrifice and death, etc.; on the contrary, what to prohibit by the capitalistic spectacularisation is rather allowed by the socialist/Fascist regime to be exposed in the form of parades, political campaigns and public ceremonies, etc., whereby intense images that are disparate from diverting commodified images are rendered and proliferated to aestheticise reality and immerse subjects in spectacle on which individual emotions are withdrawn from dispersal to concentrate as an intense expenditure of collective commitment. As argued before, this recurrence of spectacle as a partial show between the allowed and prohibited expenditure, as for Debord, is criticised as the recuperability owned by an integrated spectacle to be invulnerable. However, if casting non-critical light on such a recurrence, the restricted spectacle, in which the subjective heterogeneities are split into disparate exposures, i.e. the allowed and the forbidden, and re-circulated between them as

a conjunction of two incompatibilities, should be affirmed as a disintegrated expenditure of reproducing different subjects.

Resist Spectacle Again?! Is it Possible in the Disappearance of Reality?

Structuralism withdraws the subject and spectacle from the self-consciousness that overcomes and reconstructs reality with the dialectical variation between alienation and intimacy towards a mobile and acentric play of codification system. Inspired by Bataille's theory, spectacle is distracted from being totally rejected. Its problem should be not its visual omnipresence and falsification but its restriction, or incapacity, by which the unlimited and diverse heterogeneous elements cannot be overflowed as an unreserved expenditure. A hybrid show cannot be achieved. If criticism of spectacle is revised, resistance demonstrated by situationists to overcome such a rendition can then be revised. No longer is resistance a dialectical negation of spectacle to displace it as ruination upon which reality is reconstructed as another desirable situation. This resistance, as inspired by Bataille, can be rather reinterpreted as a transgression of prohibition, blurring the border of restriction, to reveal the prohibited as incongruous heterogeneities that supplement the allowed show as a coexistence rather than a substitution. In other words, resistance does not necessarily entail a state of homology wherein the alienated heterogeneous elements, spectacle and resistance are all homogenised as commensurable and unitary to the dialectic of self-consciousness varying itself between alienation and struggle. As prohibited content to transgress the restriction, resistance is released as a violent expenditure of intensity, which is one of the limitless and fractured heterogeneities but bifurcated and irreplaceable to other elements. Insofar as resistance is bifurcated as one of heterogeneous expenditure, its relation to the recuperability of spectacle can also be reconsidered. Such a recuperation is likely to be a spectacular fusion that multiplies the possibilities of expenditure whereby the diverse heterogeneous contents, including resistance, can be intermingled in hybridity, since the recuperation is used to be located in the dialectical opposition to resistance, that is, either recuperation neutralising resistance or the latter displacing the former. In this regard, recuperation cannot simply be negated as a domination to neutralise resistance, but a

multiplication of channels to release and dissipate the internal intensity as resistance.

This reinterpretation of resistance as expenditure makes it elusive that those inassimilable, fragmentary and marginalized forces, regardless of any bureaucratic leadership and hierarchical manipulation, intensify a revolutionary politics of overthrowing spectacle in spontaneous and unintegrable actions. Vaneigem demonstrates resistance as a revitalization by which the unruly and exorbitant intensity prohibited by the regularity of everyday life erupts and overflows beyond the restriction as a festival of giving love, pleasure and affections to transgress acquiring merely commodities and benefits.³³ Although this transgressive play of intensity as a desirable game of giving and dissipating love as gifts echoes surrealist romance and fantasy, it has to be admitted that such a play cannot disrupt the recuperation of spectacle, because love as gifts to be consumed is heterogeneous, which is allowed by spectacle as a kind of unproductive expenditure. In this sense, resistance of violence, desire of love, or boredom of daily consumption, are all fused to be mutually alternated and supplementary, despite being incompatible with each other, within a hybrid play rather than surrealist partial play of love alone.

Thus far, as for situationists and Leftist critics, resistance seems to be impossible and recuperability of spectacle is hopelessly perfect to tolerate, dissipate and absorb any repulse happening within the spectacle itself. Indeed, while resistance is itself a consumable intensity, what is to be resisted can divert to refashion itself from an aim being criticised towards an allurements of stirring, entertaining and expending such intensity. However, this recuperability of spectacle cannot be simply overstated as a nullification of resistance, although spectacle already becomes an irresistible nihilism. As an irreducible and unproductive expenditure, resistance is not impossible and intense struggle is neither precluded but exists as heterogeneous, excessive and unnecessary to rid the homogeneous imperative of utility and subsistence. In other words, intermediated by spectacle, the plane on which resistance can be actualised is changed. Resistance that happens as a homogenous force within the reality of productive necessity cannot sustain itself but is distracted,

³³ Vaneigem, R. *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, p 15, 183-190.

transformed and nullified by the utility; only if it bursts as a heterogeneous impulse in the spectacle that is an unproductive plane of expenditure surplus to the reality of necessity, such intensity cannot be assimilated but unstably and permanently revitalised as little more than a play of violence. At this point, this reinterpretation of resistance and recuperation of spectacle further relates to another critical theme, disappearance of reality with the end of history, which generates divergent contestations on the post-spectacle. Also, this theme is associated with a discussion about the possibility of spectacle existing as effervescence irreducible and symbiotic to reality.

The disappearance of reality with the end of history does not only dismantle the univocal strategy upheld by situationists wherein the reality that is separated into subjective intimacy and objective alienation is incessantly put in the dialectic reconstruction to be a unitary situation. More importantly, the society of spectacle is exalted as hyperreal and impeccable simulacra to overshadow and impoverish reality as unimportant. Baudrillard's theorisation of hyperreality and simulacra is referred to here. To begin with, a definition of reality is reiterated. As argued before, in terms of Hegelian tradition, reality is historical, or it is a progressive reconstruction through an unstoppable conflict that repeats between the servile labour and self-conscious revolt. In this sense, such a variable reality continues by the necessary production, thereby it cannot avoid the imperative of utility and subsistence. In other words, real life must survive and conserve life from risks by rational calculation of their exchangeable production. This subsistence is hardly surreal but always suffering, to be accompanied by alienation, repression and banality, also dialectically, to generate an awareness of emancipation for freedom. Thus, not only does production generate struggle but it also weaves the greatest meaning into real life, a hope of personal emancipation towards the heavenly plane. In short, reality is re-formulated by struggle and emancipatory predication. Insofar as the emancipation of subjects is reclaimed from the subjugation of things, it is not surprising that the spectacular encapsulation of reality to numb subjects by diverting images is treated as an objective obstacle to be overcome.

However, Baudrillard has dispensed with this Hegelian-Marxian formulation of reality. Firstly,

as clarified already the divergence between structuralism and situationism, Baudrillard entails this bifurcation to further justify the mechanism of representation, as a mobile and acentric play of signs, to be a ubiquitous and infiltrative system of codification that no longer alienates subjects, nor hides reality, but actualizes reality in appearance and expresses subjects in infinity of symbolic references. To substantiate this faculty of representation, spectacle neither conceals reality, thereby no true meanings hidden are revealed, nor falsifies essence by symbolic discourses. This dissolution of hierarchical opposition between appearance and essence, or spectacularisation (visual representation) and reality, does revise situationists' insistence upon the dialectical logic of subordination/resistance to validate the spectacle that restricts the subjective expenditure of excess to the consumption of commodities. A unitary situation in which subjects and objects are restored to totality with the united social practices, unseparated identities, and univocal meanings seems unapproachable, instead the restricted economy (*économie restreinte*) wherein subjects are saturated by discursive discourse, fragmentary and infiltrative signs, and imperative of utility, despite being attacked by situationism, rather re-verifies its credibility. At this point, Baudrillard rather builds its post-spectacle theory on the ruination of situationism and distorts its criticism to refurbish the disenchanting spectacularisation, since situationists struggle to reconstruct a new situation on the ruination of spectacle.

This refurbishment cannot separate itself from an association with a concept of 'myth', that is, a variable and omnipresent system of representation to superimpose the surplus of semiotic references on visual perception of signs. This encryption of myth, as an infinite and acentric play of signs to echo the semiotic plane of the pre-given ideas, imaginations, or conceptions, cannot avoid a representational correspondence that operates between signs and ideas but on top of real things. Roland Barthes defined this structural correspondence as a vast science of reproducing and realising semiotic exuberance.³⁴ Within Barthesian semiological analysis, each sign (signifier/signified), as a dualistic unit of representation between the real thing and equivalent meaning, is imposed with a co-extensive semiological system by which an extra-semiotic reference was designated on the sign as the third plane.

³⁴ Barthes, R. (2009). *Mythologies*. London: Vintage, p 131-133

A double level of representation happens within the three planes. The first representation happens between the real thing and meaning, and the second between meaning and semiology. According to him, binary representation among three planes also forms double appropriation. The latter unceasingly represents and impoverishes the former, but also instantaneously inhabits the former.³⁵ A myth uses dual representation to self-assert pre-given ideas, concepts or values as hegemonic readings by which signs and images are encrypted to render reality and convince subjects intentionally. At this point, such a ubiquitous mythologisation of reality, becoming synonymous to spectacularisation, mobilises an infinite and acentric play of representation to vary itself as immensity of signs and images to gratify all the possible needs of interpretation. Although this liberty of interpretation is guaranteed by the exuberance of semiotics, such an endless variation of myth, as for situationism and Leftist critics, is nothing more than to repeat a self-variation of system as its self-verification. This repetitive difference of signs externalised by the semiological faculty conceived by ideas is still subjugation of reality by the system of objects and also alienation of subjects by signs. However, Baudrillard celebrates such an autonomous play of mythologisation and carnival of signs, rather than as alienation, but as disentanglement from a reconstructed situation of reality that is presumed by self-consciousness but delayed as an ideological prospect. For him, reality is nothing without the discourse overloading the semiotic abundance, and subjects do not have to be suffering to hope and struggle for emancipation but are always available and immediate to the semiotic temptations.

Mythologised by semiotic exuberance, reality remains as an appearance. Furthermore, Baudrillard continues to ruin the productive and struggling reality not merely as a perceptible surface of signs but indulges the disappearance of reality with an excess of semiotics. In this regard, Baudrillard is intimately bound up with Bataille's general economy of excess expenditure as specified already. Above all, one point should be made clear in regard to the 'disappearance of reality with excess of semiotics'. That is, disappearance does not mean a simple concealment and substitution but an unconditional play of signs to

³⁵ Barthes, R. *Mythologies*, p 134-140

overload the semiotic excess has enabled what can be done in reality to be owned by spectacle, thereby the existence of reality appears to be unnecessary as redundancy. Such semiotic excess means that the play of signs/images is no longer confined to the commodification in which expenditure is limited by fetishism, enchantment or pleasure, etc., but transgresses restriction to include those prohibited but wildest and fundamental expenditures of real life, such as violence, struggle, loss, destruction and death, etc., within the unreserved play of representation. While all such accursed contents of expenditure to be exposed and sublimated as pure and great actions of continuing reality are merged by the play of signs with other allowed contents, such a comprehensive semiotic effervescence rather copies and assimilates reality. That is to say, resistance to struggle for a better reality does not need to happen in reality as productive but turns into an unproductive and exorbitant content to be expended as a 'radical' sign.

At this point, the value of the sign, or sign-value, is exalted to be omnipresent, since an inescapable myth saturates reality in the spectacular appearance and further assimilates it with the excess of semiotic effervescences. Briefly, the sign-value coined by Baudrillard is to utterly abandon the productive imperative of utility and rationality that formulates reality and, more importantly, exceed subsistence to seduce subjects from productive consumption, without any nostalgia, towards unproductive expenditure through codifying such an expenditure into an unrestricted re-circulation of signs in symbolic exchange. In this sense, sign-value diverges from the Marxist political economy of production that is constructed by a dual system of use-value and exchange-value. As argued already, to entail realism, this political economy presupposes the necessity of material accumulation for subsistence; and also corresponding to Hegelian self-development historicism, the historical reconstruction of reality is presumed to be material progress, through class struggle, to seek the more rational and equal system of production. This self-consciousness of reproducing in utility enables Marxism to exalt use-value that is considered as a crystallization of subjective labour as qualitatively different usages, but only attacks exchange-value and surplus value that are presumed to alienate labour and abstract qualitative differences into quantitative

equivalences.³⁶ As for Baudrillard, such two values are still confined to conserving and varying reality with the productive imperative: use-value assimilates nature to make products in utility and exchange-value further appropriates the produced in rationality as commensurable as commodity. Indeed, human society must survive in safety. However, according to Bataille, its growth never ceases to challenge and exceed the limit by dissipating the surplus heterogeneities outpouring from the homogeneous mechanism of production.³⁷ In this sense, the general economy of expenditure is not excluded outside the limitation of the dual value system but pegged into the utility to allure those surplus and irreducible elements. For instance, poverty caused by alienation and inequality cannot be simply integrated by the homogeneity of economic progress but is rather heterogeneous to trigger the bifurcated expenditure, such as mediocrity, sufferance, sloth, or struggle, etc. The (class) struggle might be the grandest unproductive expenditure.³⁸ Thus, like poverty and struggle, such surplus to be exuded by the homogeneous system, though situationism and Marxism demonstrate them as forces to remake reality, is not reducible to the productive reality but excess to expenditure as semiotic effervescence. As Baudrillard himself reviews Bataille, 'the central idea is that the economy which governs our societies results from a misappropriation of the fundamental human principle, which is a solar principle of (unproductive) expenditure'.³⁹ As a channel and also a strategy of disengaging reality from the productive imperative towards the immediate exuberance of expenditure, sign-value exceeds and builds on the ruination of the dual value relations, erasing the trace of utility and rationality to release expenditure alone.⁴⁰ Once the bondage imposed by the realistic imperative is cut off, consumption becomes only for effervescence and reproduction of things also turns into a symbolic multiplication in which signs burst and ascend as inassimilable to exchange and imitate for themselves alone. This unconstrained symbolic exchange is defined as simulation where signs interplay for their disparity without replacing

³⁶ Baudrillard, J. 1987 (1976), "When Bataille Attacked the Metaphysical Principle of Economy," p 45-48. This text first appeared in *La Quinzaine litteraire* (June 1976) on the occasion of the publication of *Bataille's Oeuvres completes*, vol. 7, Paris: Gillimard 1976. Also, Baudrillard, "When Bataille Attacked the Metaphysical Principle of Economy," D.J. Miller (trans.), *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, 11: p 57-62

³⁷ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol I Consumption*, p 27-33

³⁸ Bataille, G. The Notion of Expenditure. In: *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 126

³⁹ Baudrillard, J. *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, 11, p 57-62

⁴⁰ Baudrillard, J. (1993). *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, Ian Hamilton Grant (trans.). London: Sage Publications, p 50-53.

each other and independently drift along but never reduce to the homogeneous mechanism.⁴¹

Thirdly, Baudrillard's immoderate play of symbolic exchange absorbs reality into hyperreality. While reality is spectacularized as semiotic effervescences that are autonomous and irreducible to the productive imperative, such a carnival of signs/images appears to divest itself of the regular and lifeless mechanism to embrace an ecstasy of symbolic exchange. Baudrillard's post-spectacle of embracing joys without realistic bondage seems to be a surrealist beautification. However, surrealism tends to escape from the impoverished reality to avoid suffering, since it entails the Hegelian aesthetics to scarcely bear the impure and ignoble forms but sublimate them to purity and loftiness, as already argued in the 3rd section. In other words, the spectacle rendered by surrealists is a dreamland of romance on the imaginary plane. Compared to such love and romance, Bataille also referred to surrealism but, as introduced already, his theory of heterogeneous excess is not merely subtraction of ignobility to partially transform life into sublimity or affection. In other words, the excess of heterogeneities exuded from reality does not evade reality but is bifurcated to allow imagination, bear filthiness and reveal prohibition, and also fuses them in a hybridity. Influenced by Bataille rather than surrealism, Baudrillard's hyperreality does not escape but actualises imagination, filthiness and prohibition through a play of signs to be perceivably real. That is to say, hyperreality occupies and assimilates reality to stand on its ruination to give a real panorama of all the excess. At this point, a spectacle is not merely a rendition of reality but also hyperreal, becoming neither imaginary nor real as the disappeared reality but more real than it. This paradoxical conjunction cannot leave aside seductive simulacra that are formed by symbolic exchange of signs. On one hand, simulacra never cease to reappear as artificial effervescences in the presence, only floating over and nullifying reality into virtual ecstasy, whereby any essence, meaningful value and historical awareness that formulate the disappeared reality is withered; on the other hand, this virtual ecstasy of simulacra cannot be misinterpreted as a deception of subjects who are restricted within the

⁴¹ Baudrillard, J. (1994). *Simulacra and Simulation*, Shelia Faria Glaser (trans.), Ann Arbor. Michigan: University of Michigan Press, p 6.

economy of utility but actualises spectacle in the real plane as a simulated life to perceptually seduce their excess out of necessity toward unproductive expenditure. Such a hyperreal seduction is delineated by Baudrillard to be 'mirror of production', wherein the homogeneous mechanism of production in reality is mirrored and assimilated by spectacle as simulacra to allure and dissipate the excess outpouring from this machinery and end it in an immersive codification of signs.⁴²

Thus far, mythologisation with semiotic excess, unreserved play of signs, and hyperreality crumble the reality that is reconstructed by the dialectical variation between production and revolution as a solid foundation, without which spectacle lingers as a phantasm and drifts alongside the boundless, fragmentary and dispersive simulacra. Haunted by such nihilism, spectacle immerses subjects in a virtual plane that is neither fake nor true. What can be stood on are no longer those insisted meanings and pursued values, which already fade away, but the simulacra that give semiotic excess into the internal and perceptual experience as immediate gratification without alienation, delay and repression. While spectacle becomes what can be exclusively believed to be more real to replace the represented reality, any criticism and resistance to remake reality as more meaningful are unnecessary. In other words, such a radical intervention is being vacuumed into spectacle as little more than expenditure, whereby its intensity is dissipated, and then, simulated as a sign retaining its semiotic surplus alone. This temptation of simulacra as exudation of heterogeneities discards the productive reality but must encounter a crisis wherein subjects are saturated in overabundant and repeated simulacra but would be bored of them. However, since resistances are dissipated as only signs, what subjects can do to solve this crisis is left to remain apathetic to such excess simulation and indifferent to any revolt that would be unavoidably codified and exhausted.⁴³ In other words, such a resistance can happen only if spectacle mirrors it.⁴⁴ This reluctant solution, despite being celebrated by Baudrillard, rather warns us of a pathetic situation. That is, once spectacle dispenses with

⁴² Baudrillard, J. (1973). *The Mirror of Production*, St Louis: Telos Press, 1975, p 143

⁴³ Baudrillard, J. (1983). *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities...or The End of the Social and Other Essays*, New York: Semiotext(e), p 22, 28-29

⁴⁴ Baudrillard, J. (1990). *Fatal Strategies*, New York and London: Semiotext(e) and Pluto, p 186

the productive reality, remaining a transparent and conspicuous fun fair of consumption alone, revolution becomes meaningless as simply an empty slogan. Without reality as a site and struggle as a dynamic, history stops its progressive variation. As Baudrillard himself said, 'history can no longer outrun itself, it can no longer envisage its own finality, dream of its own end; it is buried in its own immediate effect, it implodes in the here and now'.⁴⁵

Foucauldian Justification of Utility to Imply a Symbiosis of Spectacle and Resistant Reality

Although Baudrillard articulates to terminate the self-development history, his provocation of hyperreal seduction and disappeared reality is a perfect testimony of the impeccable recuperability of spectacle. More critically, this post-spectacle testimony claims to nullify any power modality embedded into reality to reconstruct it with knowledge. To be specific, in terms of Kantian tradition, the internal experiences, desires and wills are externalised with immanent reason to be a nexus of knowledge, by which reality is reconstructed in rational forms, systems and mechanisms, etc. In this sense, the knowledge illuminated by reason is a power to create and produce the reality. However, as said before, this power-knowledge practice is rather an alienation of the subject from its intimacy with the internal world. Foucault's new hermeneutics of power-knowledge nexus revises, or more precisely, reverses this alienation. As for Foucault, power-knowledge practice is not merely an external objectification to unceasingly remake reality as historical. It is, more importantly, an internal practice of channelling the inner intensity not only as the nature of excess but also as knowledge. In other words, desires are not merely unleashed as animality but also gratified by acquiring knowledge with curiosity and reasoning. Thus, power as knowledge, or knowledge as power, to make reality and give it meanings is not simply instrumental machinery. Crucially, it also functions as an erotic machine, by which the inner flux is exuded as intellectual. This process no longer interprets knowledge as a repressive power to alienate subjects as exclusively rational in the instrumental reasoning, but a recovering power to subjectify knowledge as an intrinsic channel of re-vitalising subjects. However, these

⁴⁵ Baudrillard, J. (1986). 'The Year 2000 Will Not Take Place', *Futur*Fall: Excursions into Postmodernity*, E.A. Grosz et al. (eds), Sydney, Power Institute of Fine Arts, University of Sydney, and Futur* fall, p 20

modalities of power-knowledge to reconstruct reality and reproduce subjects are being wasted by the seductive power of hyperreal spectacle. That is to say, as long as knowledge functions as a power of reproduction, either to produce reality in rationalism or to produce subjects in internalization, it cannot avoid remaking them as more meaningful; however, such meaningfulness, as symbolic surplus, has been assimilated by spectacle as overabundance of virtual signs/images. In short, too much knowledge, too much intellect, too much symbolism, so it is time to dissipate and waste them rather than to produce. While reality is wasted and production ends, the subjectivity to be reproduced with knowledge ends; then, the power-knowledge practice is annulled to remain a self-representation of knowledge alone as empty signs.

Thus far, a critical divergence of Foucault's knowledge power from Baudrillard's seductive power is highlighted here in regard to spectacle. As argued already, if spectacle is disentangled from a frustrating vision of alienation and dialectic reconstruction of reality to cast itself in a non-critical light, and without any tie to fix it with the productive imperative in reality as a solid foundation, such a spectacle exudes the excess life out of utility and rationality towards the unproductive expenditure, and also through an immoderate play of signs/images, to ascend itself as a hyperreality that celebrates the disappearance of reality. However, such an excess of expenditure and simulacra without any reserve does not have to put reality and all belonging to it at stake.

Since spectacle is admitted as unproductive expenditure, this spectacularisation of real life as unproductive, inspired by Foucault, is not falsification but one of the governmental arts of utilising variably the homogeneous production of things, apparatus and machines, etc., to render reality as images to attract subjects, by which their excess energy is allowed to outpour from utilitarian production to be dissipated. Then, this governmental effect of spectacularisation, as argued in the 4th section, is the restricted, not yet full, exudation of heterogeneities towards the unproductive expenditure. Insofar as spectacle is performed as a technology of power utilised ingeniously and variably, it enables the exudation towards expenditure to be inseparable from the realistic imperative of utility. In regard to this

association, the economy of utility should be re-justified. Situationism criticises utility as a repressive imperative of alienating subjects. Bataille never reserves his repugnance to utility, which, as a productive denominator, homogenizes this world in accumulation and cuts off the general economy of expenditure that releases those incommensurable heterogeneities. Baudrillard condemns utility as a servile consciousness that portrays itself as the social foundation by which subjects are immersed in the history of production and their lives put weight on subsistence to constrain themselves from an excess play of semiotic effervescences. However, Foucault does not reject the economy of utility. Inspired by him, I also contend that the spectacular rendition of reality as unproductive expenditure does not necessarily decline the utility. Here I refer to Foucault's *The Birth of Bio-politics*, wherein the economy of utility is verified as a governmental technology of liberalism. Marketing mechanisms, pricing systems, and rulership of laws cannot be denied as an external schematisation, which calculates and represents the concrete reality and qualitatively different human activities into the rational and variable forms of production.⁴⁶ As for Foucault, this utilitarian measurement and representation should perform as a technology for translating this world as transparent, exchangeable and producible in an economic dimension. In this sense, this technology entails and substantiates reason into marketing as a concrete governmental practice. Despite functioning as an external measure, the utility does not have to be accentuated by a self-consciousness, which presumes a unitary intimacy of interiority and exteriority, as a universal and unjust imperative of alienating the excess of expenditure. More importantly, the economy of utility is rather an intrinsic exercise by which personal sovereignty self-limits its arbitrary existence in the general economy of excess and transforms itself into being bifurcated and scattered around trivial matters and short-sighted actions. Since utility withdraws from an unconditional play of excess, the absolute expenditure is reserved. Though the effect of utility renounces an immediate gratification of carnival animality, it rather transforms and re-distributes the natural impulse as a vital resource into an economic formulation as a calculable and useful consumption. At this point, it can be implied that the economy of utility is aimed not at production of things

⁴⁶ Foucault, M. (2008). *The Birth of Biopolitics, LECTURES AT THE COLLEGE DE FRANCE, 1978-1979*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

with alienation, but utilization of the produced objects as effective apparatuses to reproduce the disparity of subjectivity, i.e. the subject of interests in utility and the subject of excess in expenditure. This is a process of subjectification, thereby the differentiation of subjects as bifurcated between excess and utility and also transformative between them must be internalization, wherein an intrinsic perception echoed by empirical experience of subjects is inassimilable to any self-evident claim and self-development consciousness.

Thus far, utility reviewed with Foucauldian hermeneutics of economy is no longer an external and irrefutable imperative of alienation and intimidation, but an inherent capacity of subjects to do spontaneous and preferable actions on the basis of individualised and fragmented perception. As argued in the 4th section, the personal perception that is acquired by individual and empirical experiences is disintegrated and undecidable. Thus, the economy of utility cannot be presumed as an imperative of rejecting the heterogeneous exudation towards the spectacle as unproductive expenditure; it tolerates expenditure as spectacularisation but critically transforms and re-channels such excess from an absolute play to a fractured and restricted expenditure that is allowed for a governable and preferable effect. On the other hand, the economy of utility, as a realistic imperative of production, is not only to reproduce reality but also to create things, apparatuses and machines as channels that cannot be abandoned to achieve different governmental effects. For instance, resistance, as already described, is defined as a dialectical opposition to overcome the alienating spectacle to reconstruct reality, or nullified by Baudrillard as merely an intense expenditure that is simulated by spectacle as an empty sign; however, no matter which way the resistance is engaged into cannot avoid a critical point, that is, for the rebels who revolt mechanism and disturb images need to produce their own violent machines and render different images to disrupt the spectacle. In other words, the utility functions as a technical formation in practice to reproduce the diverse means by which power can be exercised to perform different effects, e.g. spectacularisation and resistance. Then, utility that maintains the productive reality can be justified here. This justification also affirms that the economy of utility cannot be abandoned as a homogeneous imperative according to a dialectical opposition between unity and alienation. If spectacle is seen as an alienating

diversion, the utility is not necessarily a prohibition of resistance from freedom, because, as for Foucault, to be free cannot be presumed and judged by a self-evident consciousness as a univocal and undividable right pre-given by the historical origin but rather an utilitarian practice of reproducing means to become free.⁴⁷ In this sense, as for the society of spectacle, freedom is not a universal *priori* that must be reclaimed as unitary if once it is deprived, just as situationism demonstrated, nor yet an absolute play of expenditure to unleash excess without any reserve towards a carnival of effervescences without reality, as Baudrillard posited; it is rather an unstable and discrepant governmental effect during the concrete exercises of utility.

Insofar as the economy of utility is re-verified as governable and transformative actions that respond to the individualised and undecidable perceptions plus the liberal reproduction of means for different effects, a correlation between spectacle and reality can be revised to be a coexistence of two incompatibilities as a symbiosis of them, rather than detachment of the univocal nature of excess, or disappearance of the productive reality. In other words, the homogeneity to reproduce reality can be symbiotic to unproductive expenditure of the exuded heterogeneities. If real life is understood as a 'reservoir' of infinite vital energy given by nature, the spectacle is just a wonderland that is pegged into reality to tempt and exude such excess energy towards an immoderate play, but utility as a productive imperative of maintaining reality allows such exudation but filters it, and also technically channels, distributes and transforms it as governable expenditure. At this point, reality does not have to disappear. Standing on such a bearable reality, resistance and spectacle are bifurcated from a unity of which they are opposite to each other, but simultaneously, they are also fused into a hybridity of disparities. Therefore, resistance is still possible, because it is provided as a utilitarian means, and can be utilised variably by spectacle as an internalized channel for dissipating the inner flux as unproductive expenditure of intensity. However, such resistance is already purposeless, ephemeral and diverting, without any heavenly utopia waiting beyond the barricade and a hope of revolting once to drive history to reach a perfect end and solve all the problems. However, this resistance is permanent and unstable,

⁴⁷ Foucault, M. *The Birth of Biopolitics, LECTURES AT THE COLLEGE DE FRANCE, 1978-1979*, p 63-64

as long as spectacle continues its seduction, to become an ambiguous event, which reluctantly pertains to 'the political', and even the spectacle hardly discerns it and is incapable of codifying it as definable as either antagonism or little more than a kind of postmodern lives, an expenditure of our intense emotions as a radical sign. What such a radical sign can expect is an accident whereby the system of simulation would malfunction when it codifies this indefinable event as its recuperation. Then, the incapacity of this system to encrypt and solve such equivocal events allowed and performed by the system itself is revealed. In this sense, as for spectacle, a true enemy has not existed, because any hostile intensity, if it can happen in reality, is allured, absorbed and dissipated as an expendable sign, only remaining a transparent form of resistance in reality. In other words, all the panoptic surveillance to protect spectacle is just to deal with a simulacrum of enemy that is fabricated by the spectacle itself, since the real intensity is exhausted as only an image.⁴⁸ Inspired by Foucault, this self-portrait of spectacle is not a self-consciousness to drive us to resist, nor a self-repression to renunciate, but the everyday exercise of power itself needs us to resist and gives us means to resist. That is to say, resistance has become a craft of power to self-verify by differentiating itself from being spectacular. Ontologically, power is no longer maintained as domination, nor reclaimed as resistance, but it bifurcates to be such disparate forms and also fuses them as its own re-circulation.

This chapter has formulated an epistemological complex wherein the spectacle is given a liberty of interpretation to verify its existence as a nexus of bifurcation rather than a univocal and irrefutable authority. Although spectacle is coined by situationism to entail critical theory and converge with the Leftist critics, these convergences are not irreversible. That is to say, all such hinges with criticism can be cast in a non-critical light to bifurcate the interpretation of spectacle towards another way that is illuminated by the theories of Bataille, Baudrillard and Foucault. In the next chapter, a journey of spectacle recurring between London and Shanghai will substantiate such a non-critical interpretation of spectacle into a concrete and visual experience. More importantly, this journey disturbs the spectacular rendition that is confined to the Europe-centred modernity, and then, reorients

⁴⁸ Debord, G. (1991). *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, London: Verso, p 20-21, 38, 53-54, 81-88.

its reappearance towards Shanghai to visualise a coexistent disparity of perceptual experience and symbolic effervescence.

2nd Chapter – Phantasmagoria

Phantasmagorical Experience of Perceptible Presence

Insofar as the previous chapter argued, spectacle is inescapable and irresistible. Ordinary routes of our trivial life already pertain to the immersion of commodity and technology. Modern subjects are repeatedly convinced to adhere to the utility of various technologies facilitating daily life and an overabundance of commodities enriching pleasurable consumption. In the multitude of cases where people are persuaded, so many real and reproducible things configure reality to be perceived as enjoyable and enchanting. This sensual enjoyment permeates life to the extent that we cannot escape it, whereby such irresistible enchantment generates the spectacle. At this point, spectacle can be seen as a holistic way of perceiving and thinking that cannot move outside the material affluence of enchantment.

Since such an omnipresent spectacularisation circumscribes the everyday life in security for joy and affluence alone, outside this limitation, the excess of expenditure wherein life is exposed to unreserved risks of loss, destruction and death is precluded. In this sense, the limitless and unintegrable inner experience, in which subjects consume all the heterogeneous elements given by nature, is intentionally disintegrated, subtracted and restricted by the modern society of spectacle as tolerated and governable consumption. Not only does this filtered consumption inebriate the subject in enchantment of commodities without poverty, struggle, or violence, etcetera, but it also represents itself as exclusive to conceal expenditure of other irreplaceable contents. This exclusive enchantment to render reality and restrict expenditure to a sole gratification of commodities can be defined as phantasmagoria, a restricted expenditure of commodities as phantasmagoria.

At this point, the definition of the spectacle I am working towards here is associated with the work of Walter Benjamin, who used the term 'phantasmagoria' to describe the experience of

an equivalent aesthetics – the Arcades – in Paris. In what follows, the spectacle begins tracing as a sentimental, or sensuous, omnipresent experience of existentiality, felt through the mass reproduction of aesthetics – commodities and artistic productions – which are organised by the market and technology. Phantasmagoria is included as a fundamental characteristic of the spectacle, which according to Terry Castle and Barber Theodore is produced through the deceptive technique of imitating a spectral image to entertain the spectators in the late 1790's.⁴⁹ A Belgian inventor and physicist, Etienne-Gaspard Robert, referred to phantasmagoria as the *Pantascope*. It is a magic lantern in which ghostly images are projected from behind a screen and cast the audience in total darkness during the show. A 1789 phantasmagoria reviewed in *L'Ami des Lois* introduced Robertson's spectral trick:

“Robertson pours onto a hot stove two glasses of blood, a bottle of vitriol, 12 drops of brandy, and two copies of the *Journal des homes libres*. Right away, a small, livid ghost gradually begins to appear, armed with a dagger and wearing a red cap. The man with bristling hair recognizes it to be (ghost) of Marat; he wants to kiss it, the ghost makes a terrifying grimace and disappears...A young dandy begs for the appearance of a woman whom he tenderly loved and whose portrait in miniature he shows to the phantasmagoria, who throws onto the burner some sparrow feathers, a few grains of phosphorous, and a dozen butterflies. Soon, a woman is to be perceived, her breast uncovered, her hair streaming, who fixes on her friend a tender and sorrowful expression. A serious man sitting next to me cries, carrying his hand to his forehead: ‘Oh my God! I think that’s my wife,’ and he runs out, fearing that it is no longer a ghost.”⁵⁰

The optical delusion of phantasmagoria was inextricably bound up with its technological nature. Also in *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin employed the concept of phantasmagoria to describe a panorama of the bourgeois urban development of the Paris of the Second Empire,

⁴⁹ Castle, T. (1988). ‘Phantasmagoria: Spectral Technology and the Metaphorics of Modern Reverie,’ *Critical Inquiry* 15.1 and Barber, T. (1989). *Phantasmagorical Wonders: The Magic Lantern Ghost Show in Nineteenth-Century America*. Indiana University Press: p 73-75

⁵⁰ With regard to the introduction of Robertson's phantasmagoria, I rely on Margaret Cohen, whose source is mainly related to G.-M. Coissac's *Histoire du Cinematographe* (Paris: 1925). Terry Castle also has published a specific article on the evolution of the concept of the phantasmagoria in the 19th century. See Castle, T. ‘Phantasmagoria: Spectral Technology and the Metaphorics of Modern Reverie’, *Critical Inquiry* 15.1

which he associated with the culture industry and the production of material and intellectual commodities. The phantasmagorical experience of urban space that was driven by the Parisian industrial regime was designated an actual content concerning a commodified mode of perception. In other words, the experience of urban space was intermediated by the perceptible presence of commodity, to which everyday life abandons itself. To quote Benjamin, 'the new forms of behaviour and the new economically and technologically based creations that we owe to the 19th century enter the universe of phantasmagoria. These creations undergo this illumination not only in theory, by an ideological transposition, but also in the immediacy of their perceptible presence. They are manifest as phantasmagorias. Thus appear the arcades...also included in this order of phenomena is the experience of the flaneur, who abandons himself to the phantasmagoria of the marketplace'.⁵¹

Benjamin's phantasmagoria of modernity is intimately bound up in Marxism. His universe of modern phantasmagoria is easily associated with the Marxist notion of commodity fetishism and is inseparable from mechanical reproduction. Margret Cohen argued that Benjamin's phantasmagoria demonstrate a critical relation between the 19th-century visual spectacle and its technological manifestation.⁵² In her essay, Benjamin's phantasmagoria echoes Marx's use of the term in *Capital*, 'this fetishism of commodities has its origin...in the peculiar social character of the labour that produces them...it is only a definite social relation between men that assumes, in their eyes, the phantasmagorical form of a relation between things'.⁵³ In this sense, Benjamin expands upon Marx's statement about the phantasmagorical powers. Such power visualises a highly routinized society that reproduces the commodity for the end of exchange. In terms of situationism that has been introduced, this interaction between commodity fetishism and its visual spectacle entails a critical consciousness by which the alienated inner experience of subjects is reclaimed from subjugation of the repeated commodification to restore a unitary and intimate situation. In this sense, phantasmagoria appears to be an omnipresent representation to reify bourgeois

⁵¹ Benjamin, W. (2002). *The Arcade Project*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, p 14

⁵² Margaret, C. (1989). Walter Benjamin's Phantasmagoria, *New German Critique*, No. 48, p 87-107

⁵³ Marx, K. (1906). *Capital*, vol. 1 New York: Modern Library, p 83

modernity. However, it is misleading to cast phantasmagoria as merely a repressive instrument of ideological conflict. As Cohen argued, 'phantasmagorical should be freed from the overwhelming rational form of representation' and brought into Benjamin's existential analysis of concrete and material experience.⁵⁴ This way, the phantasmagorical can be understood as more than simply a false illusion of reflecting the material progress of modernisation. The phantasmagorical is opened up to visualise the reproductive mechanism of commodities as perceptible, then technically, vary such perceptibility as different experience for individuals.⁵⁵ In other words, the industrial technology of reproduction, which performs the visual spectacle, cannot be ideologically condemned as oppressive, but it is also a live and ubiquitous power of internalization to refresh the inner world as a visual experience.

Spectacle diverges from the ideological analysis. Its phantasmagorical power that overarches everyday life is not alienation in which the bourgeois and proletarian subjects are detached from intimacy with their instinctual needs and spectacle exalts itself as a 'phantom' to falsify and de-realise reality. Spectacle, though it cannot avoid its fabrication of reality, should rather perform a physical experience of reality as being in the perceptible presence. Such phantasmagorical experience immerses everyday routines within the boom of marketplace and commodity and also in the boredom of repeating such boom as regularity. The concrete and ubiquitous products, which are proliferated by the modern industrial regime to render phantasmagorical experience, are not merely products of repeating exchangeability and calculability but images by which an impersonal value relation is prioritised and imposed on personal interdependence. In short, the reproducible commodity images are not only instrumental but also rhetorical, so people do not simply use them but are also gratified, obsessed and convinced by them. In this sense, images echo Gianni Vattimo's metaphorical usage of 'event' in his postmodern inquiry. For him, the event means to illuminate everyday

⁵⁴ Marx, K. *Capital*, vol. 1, p 83

⁵⁵ Irving Wohlfarth also commented, 'phantasmagoria is thus not merely the false consciousness of ideological discourse. It is materialised in space, objects, and practices. To interiorize it by confining it to some disembodied realm of ideas is thus itself a phantasmagoric operation.' See Wohlfarth, I. 'Smashing the Kaleidoscope: Walter Benjamin's Critique of Cultural History,' in Steinberg, M.P. (1996). *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History*, Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, p 190-205

life as a 'fictionalized experience of reality.' The idea is then that, by using 'event' to this end, a freedom of interpretability arises from the permanence of repetitively different images-events.⁵⁶ Since the daily experience, commodity, image, and event are juxtaposed here, commodity image functions as a dispersive vessel, or a ubiquitous technical apparatus, of which the spectacle performs its phantasmagorical power to fictionalise everyday life as an event of diverting interpretability. In this way, trivial matters are thereby saturated and pertain to a heterogeneous perception, namely enchantment, which is exuded by consumption as surplus to the homogenous mechanism of reproducing commodities.

Since the images disperse the spectacle as an immersive power, how to seek, experience and connect these images in daily practice for visualisation of such spectacle is also important. This visualisation cannot be, as situationists criticised, a self-portrait of images to proliferate spectacle as an autonomous illusion, which is distilled and separated from real life and also disregards any critical participation of the spectators who are anaesthetised to passively accept such diverting appearances that are reified and estranged from their own production. Indeed, the visualisation of reality as spectacle, if without the immediate intervention of spectators like Vaneigem demonstrated, is little more than a lifeless representation to separate subjects in the distance from their intimacy with the inner intensity numbed by everyday life. However, this intervention to visualise reality as perceptual experience is not necessarily critical to reject the commodified rendition of everyday life as a phantasmagorical expenditure and displace it with an intense experience of releasing the inner excess, but can be non-critical and bifurcated to tolerate the phantasmagorical experience and unrestricted to any other disparate experiences. At this point, Benjamin's '*flaneur*', a stroller, who is enchanted by the spectacle and enjoys such phantasmagorical experience, is related to this non-critical and bifurcated intervention.

The *flaneur* is illuminated by the spectacle, adapts to the transition towards consumer society, and is then convinced by the highly routinized presence of the commodity. This

⁵⁶ Vattimo, G. (1991). An Apology for Nihilism, in *The End of Modernity Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Post-modern Culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p 19-30

flaneur echoes what Benjamin himself has said, 'composure has given way to manic behaviour. Hence, he exemplified, rather, what had to become of the *flaneur* once he was deprived of the milieu to which he belonged.'⁵⁷ In short, the *flaneur* is a tourist distracted by a spectacular exhibition. However, not only does the manic behaviour of buying inebriate the subjects in enchantment and pleasure but it also deprives them of their intimate sensation in those familiar situations, as Benjamin said, a feeling of 'home'. According to him,

"The *flaneur* still stood at the margin, of the great city as of the bourgeois class. Neither of them had yet overwhelmed him. In neither of them was he at home. He sought him asylum in the crowd. The crowd was the veil from behind which the familiar city as phantasmagoria beckoned to the *flaneur*. In it, the city was now landscape, now a room. And both of these went into the construction of the department store, which made use of *flanerie* itself in order to sell goods. The department store was the *flaneur's* final coup."⁵⁸

The ubiquitous system of reproduction enables the strollers to experience the present reality without any alternative choices, but only engaged into the phantasmagoria. This phantasmagorical experience is not free, nor purposeless, but a reluctant choice by which the limitless inner experience is channelled to a limitation that can partly gratify it in the form of commodities. While the *flaneur* is thrown into the overabundance of commodities and overwhelmed by the affluence of the marketplace, such a marketing settlement, wherein an immensity of strangers converges to work and exchange, enables the *flaneur* to recognise only the exchanged objects without any intimacy with other subjects. Then, such estrangement triggers an inassimilable sense of solitude. To buy with inebriation cannot neutralise to suffer in isolation. This ambivalent relation between engagement and detachment, in regard to *flanerie* in phantasmagoria, reveals the dialectic of the *flaneur* in which there is nowhere to flee but the subject is alienated by the intoxication of

⁵⁷ Benjamin, W. (1999). *The Image of Proust, Illumination*, London: Pimlico, p 168

⁵⁸ Benjamin, W. (1983). *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, Harry Zorn (trans.). London: Verso, p 170

commodities. This paradox indicates that the flaneur would not be satisfied with his/her intervention into reality merely as a phantasmagorical experience. Once bored of such a regularity, the *flaneur* will be anxious of this boredom and loneliness, to re-identify him/herself as a dissenter, namely '*flaneur's coup*', to gaze upon and interrogate the ongoing experience. At this point, the coup of the *flaneur* does not necessarily follow what Vaneigem demonstrated to reject and displace the current experience that is immersed in phantasmagoria, but to nullify its limitation. Thus, the stroller is bifurcated to diverge from inebriation to long for another experience that is absent and irreplaceable to phantasmagoria in the presence. Such a bifurcated stroller revises the dialectic of the *flaneur* between engagement and detachment from being mutually negated and substituted towards a coexistence in which disparate experiences can be repeated in alternation. In short, a *flaneur* is not expected to be a critic who negates a scene to reconstruct it instead as another new but a seeker who enjoys a panorama of incompatible views. In what follows, a phantasmagorical experience of a *flaneur* travelling around London will begin.

Oxford Circus, a Carnival of Sale

London can be counted as a tale that has bred the phantasmagoria of modernity since 19th century – a womb of capitalism. The earliest exemplary is the phantasmagoria of the first Universal Exposition inaugurated in Hyde Park in 1851. Before Joseph Paxton designing and building a palace of plate-glass and cast-iron to stage the Great Exhibition of London, many people did not believe a palace of colossal proportions could be constructed from glass and iron.⁵⁹ Such a huge project was supposed to be impossible. Its vaulted roof and glazed façade needed a huge expense of glass that was still a luxury item since the 16th century.⁶⁰ However, unprecedented mechanical reproducibility reduced the cost of producing glass and iron. New engineering technology also granted an architectural idea of assembling iron and glass components. From manufacture in the factory to assembly on site, the English boasted

⁵⁹ Vivanco, S. (2017). *History of Architecture Flashcards | Quizlet*. [online] Available at: <https://quizlet.com/121027581/history-of-architecture-flash-cards/> Last Accessed 14th Oct. 2016

⁶⁰ Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, p 183-184

of taking only eight months to render the impossible, possible.⁶¹ Such a crystal wonderland was then erected. An industrial wonder was also presented to the world. Spectators were stunned by the extraordinary power of industrial revolution. Through the industrial revolution, technology was endowed to transgress the current border of knowledge and perceptibility to create an extraordinary and unimaginable phantasmagoria. For those visitors who were obsessed by the abundance of industrial exhibits, such a phantasmagorical experience enchanted and relieved their austere works. For the industrial regime, this phantasmagoria was also needed to stage an intriguing miracle of the power of technology and capital to verify and mythologise its existence as omnipresent.

Crystal Palace did exhibit a phantasmagorical experience of plentiful products assembled to display at the Great Exhibition. Then travel telescopes from this focal exhibition of modern miracles in the 19th century to the Oxford Circus at present. It is not surprising that an extraordinary display of industrial products in 1851 has become mundane images dispersed around Londoners' everyday experience. Mass consumption has expanded and proliferated the phantasmagoria from a sentimental exhibition to total domination. Oxford Circus provides an excellent view of this rule. Oxford Circus is the busy intersection of Oxford Street and Regent Street in the West End of London. At the end of the 2000s, it was regarded as having the highest pedestrian volume of anywhere in London.⁶² At the busiest times, over 40,000 pedestrians per hour pass through the junction.⁶³ So many consumers are attracted and gathered at the circus with their passions to spend and enjoy. Oxford Street and Regent Street intensively magnetises many brands, both international and domestic in the UK, to be an international hub of mass consumption. A variety of brand logos extends over the street. Abundant commodities are displayed behind shop windows. Plentiful images abound on the

⁶¹ Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, p 183-184

⁶² Poole, S. (2015). *Death and shopping: the story of Oxford Street, London's 'urban nightmare'*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/dec/15/oxford-street-london-pedestrianise-shopping-air-pollution-death-urban-nightmare>. Last Accessed 12th Oct. 2016

⁶³ Atkinsglobal.com. (2008). 'Scrambled' pedestrian crossings at signal controlled junctions – a case study'. [online] Available at: <http://www.atkinsglobal.com/~media/Files/A/Atkins-Global/Attachments/sectors/roads/library-docs/technical-journal-4/scrambled-pedestrian-crossings-at-signal-controlled-junctions-a-case-study.pdf> Last Accessed 12th Oct. 2016

advertisement posters. Wide LED screens hung in shopping malls also perform commercial videos. In short, overabundant signs are overloading multiply aesthetic-packed products and refashioning the streetscape. The strollers immerse themselves in a pleasurable consumption.

Commodified images are overrunning streetscapes to render a phantasmagorical experience. In regard of this pictorial rendition, Benjamin emphasised the technical application of lithographic posters in advertisement. Though poster was initially used for political propaganda in France, its artistic representation was also used to diffuse the commercial message around the streets to attract people.⁶⁴ This technological transition of the lithographic poster to commercial reproducibility indeed reduced the artistic authenticity, but reproducible posters instead proliferated artistic images to aestheticize mass consumption as a modern fashion. Technology never ceases its progress to pervade and re-fashion streetscapes. Lithographic posters that appeared in London in the 19th century as a traditional advertisement have been scarcely seen on the present Oxford Street and Regent Street. Advertisements are rather substituted by ubiquitous mass media and the Internet. Images of consumption are no longer confined to the scale of shopping on the street but exceed toward the multiplicity of mobile apps and online shopping that already permeate daily life. This technological progress also reveals a technical nature of art. That is, art can be rather operated as a governmental technique of which the market regime aestheticizes itself as a phantasmagorical perception of everyday life.

Technological excess has multiplied possibilities of consumption. A traditional way that products were made to exchange through market till purchased by consumers seems on the wane. In other words, a political economy of reciprocating among production, exchange, consumption and accumulation is being displaced. This change necessitates re-examination of Benjamin's consideration of spectacle. Benjamin's phantasmagoria of London and Paris in the 19th century was derived from the austere labours to exchange in the reproduction of commodities and accumulate material affluence. However, the present situation is different.

⁶⁴ Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, p 786-787, 172-173, & 590-591

Technology not only overproduces an abundance of consumable affluence but also multiplies numerous channels of expending such overproduction. On the other hand, financial techniques of credit cards, mortgage and personal loans, are helping consumers to realise their desires. They are not anymore repressing their insatiable desires in an austere reproduction of earning wages and then consuming but are rather keen to gratify through 'borrowing and repaying' without any deferment. Financial techniques are stimulating and intensifying excessive desires to consume, the overabundance of material affluence is then re-channeled into such excessive expenditure.⁶⁵ In this case, the crisis of overproduction inherent with capitalistic phantasmagoria seems solvable, because the crisis is not about overproduction but incapability of expenditure. Only are exorbitant desires of consumers stimulated in excess by variable technical means, overabundant commodities can be then smoothly expended.

Consumers are motivated to use multiple means for their pleasurable consumption. In return, commodities are ceaselessly reproduced for such excess of spending. In this sense, phantasmagoria is not only a perceptible rendition but also a 'funfair' fabricated by the reproductive mechanism to exude the excessive consumption of overabundant commodity-signs. In regard to the commodity-signs, Baudrillard's concept of 'sign-value' of symbolic exchange that diverges from use-value (production) and exchange-value (marketing exchange) and abandons them has been clarified in the 1st chapter. Also influenced by the Barthesian semiological theory of 'myth' (see details in the 1st chapter), Baudrillard's interpretation of consumer society eliminates the productive reality wherein consumption entails utility to serve the material accumulation, and ascends to the hyperreality in which consumption is no longer productive, nor alienating, but an immediate expenditure of the inner and insatiable desires alone in the semiotic affluence. In other words, what the hyperreal society consumes is not commodities that are confined to the imperative of utility and formulates a dynamic reality in a conflict between production and

⁶⁵ The term of 're-channel' is borrowed from Michael Dutton. Dutton, M. (2012). Fragments of the Political, or How We Dispose of Wonder, *Social Text* 110. Vol.30, No. 1

resistance, but symbolic effervescences that overflow from the commodification to be semiotic excess. Such symbolic effervescences, as Baudrillard said, are an uninterrupted cycle of giving and receiving, which, in primitive exchange, includes the consumption of the 'surplus' and deliberate anti-production.⁶⁶ In this sense, an accelerated capacity of reproducing commodities should remain as merely bearable to regenerate the semiotic surplus, and new technologies are not restricted to augmenting the marketing exchange of the produced but invested to the mass media that accelerates the symbolic exchange of signs/images to form ubiquitous simulacra. By this token of symbolic exchange, sign value is an expendable value. The society of spectacle, once formulated by such value relations, is mobilised by the exorbitant intensity as an unstoppable reciprocity between expenditure and waste. Then, what the consumers can do is to waste such an overabundance.

As specified in the 1st chapter, this consumption as waste coincides with Bataille's notion of 'general economy'. The expenditure of excess, in which loss, destruction and death are more fundamental to human life than the productive imperative of utility, indicates that the gratification of instinctual desires and release of exorbitant energy are irreducible to the system of value exchange and capitalistic accumulation, not restricted to the monetary expenditure of commodity, but transgress prohibition to embrace the exorbitant contents of cult, carnival, violence, sacrifice, and sexuality, etc. However, such expenditure of excess has been overwhelmed and shattered by the phantasmagorical rendition of market exchange. Influenced by Bataille, Baudrillard argued that if people wanted to be truly sovereign, they should pursue a 'general economy' of expenditure as exorbitant to go beyond the imperative of utility, and seek another experience of symbolic exuberance. So reproduction of commodity, financial loans, and credit system to stimulate consumption can be seen a monetary channel by which to bear out and release the desires (this point will be further explained in next section).

Baudrillard's symbolic exchange in excess is borrowed here. This exuberance of which commodities are consumed as signs rather than things is distinguished from Benjamin's

⁶⁶ Baudrillard, J. *The Mirror of Production*, p 143

phantasmagoria that retains elements of industrial capitalism in the 19th century, that is, the market law of exchange and mechanical reproducibility.⁶⁷ Nor can the enchanting experience of Oxford Circus be merely a commodity fetishism by which modern subjects are highly routinized to submit to a *'pseudo-world'* for false and deceptive gratifications as Debord criticised. For most consumers, enchanting consumption is not deceptive but real, or hyperreal, an experience of which their desires and impulses can be exuded by the affluence of commodified signs. All the semiotic excess is no longer on the imaginary plane but solidified and actualised by the ostentatious consumption as heterogeneous to an aesthetic experience of luxury and prodigality. Shopping is then disengaged from a political-economic imperative of austere reproduction in utility and rationality, not either a self-repression, but instead a diversion with inebriating effect. In this sense, the spectacle of Oxford Circus is an ecstasy of signs in a carnival of shopping.



Figure 2.1

This ecstasy of signs and carnival of shopping culminates its peak, the festival of sale during Christmas – ‘Merry Christmas, happy reduction’. Boxing Day can be counted the frenzy scenario of Oxford Circus. Stimulated by the commercial technique of reduction,

people diverge from their regular and dull routines, escape from a habitual perception of boredom, abandon their familiar milieu but gather into an overflow of crowds. A perceptual contrast is then acquired (figure 2.1). In such overflow, Londoners’ passions, desires and fantasies are excessively intensified as the fervour of shopping to release into the focal expenditure of Christmas sale. In this case, consumption becomes a spectacle of pilgrimage, an ecstatic cult of overloading commodities. A *flâneur* throws him/herself within such a massive ecstasy and cannot resist this intensive flow of masses that are swarming on the street and shopping from one store to another. They are all preoccupied with the single practice of spending.

⁶⁷ Baudrillard, J. *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, p 50-53

This intense expenditure has earlier started from the Eve of Boxing Day outside Selfridges, the high-end department store headquartered at Oxford Street. The half-price sale reduced those luxuries that were sumptuous and



Figure 2.2

far away from the regular consumption. This reduction from extravagant to ordinary was 'bait'. To attain such finite and desirable 'bait', crowds got up at dawn, swarmed to Selfridges in advance, and waited outside for the opening time. Though the cold caused suffering, their passions never ceased to accumulate. When the security guards opened the gate, the horn sounded, and battle began. Such intensity was immediately discharged in a scramble, rushing to grab whatever could be seen (see figure 2.2). This fanatical spectacle always lasts the entire Christmas reduction. The technique of sale effectively renders the festival as a carnival of consumption.



Figure 2.3

To channel and divert an intensive flow of masses, particularly during the overflow in Christmas sale, Westminster City Council started a £4m pedestrianisation scheme for the area in 2009. This scheme allows shoppers to cross the intersection diagonally as well as the traditional

'straight ahead', turning it into a 'pedestrian scramble' (figure 2.3).⁶⁸ By this change, the flow of consumers is dispersed with more liberty for their phantasmagorical experience.

⁶⁸ Poole, S. (2015). *Death and shopping: the story of Oxford Street, London's 'urban nightmare'*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/dec/15/oxford-street-london-pedestrianise-shopping-air-pollution-death-urban-nightmare>. Last Accessed 12th Oct. 2016

At this point, either the periodic sale of gathering crowds or urban planning of channelling crowds can be a governmental technique. By the former technique, the market regime configures a spectacle of obsessing the people into intense consumption whereby its phantasmagorical power can be justified. Through the latter spatial technique, the phantasmagorical power is exercised on the intensive flow of crowds to re-channel and scatter this overflow with more flexible routes. In short, the techniques coordinating with each other reveal politics of intensification and diversion around the spectacle. This means the phantasmagorical power substantiated in the consumptive masses not only elevates the exorbitant desires of people into an intensive expenditure of commodity but also disperses such intensity to acquire more individual liberty of experiencing this spectacle.

Phantasmagoria of Nanjing Road (Park Lane)

The pedestrianisation scheme implemented by Westminster City Council refurbishes spatially Oxford Circus. More importantly, this scheme is not merely a re-decoration but also, through the spatial reconstruction, strengthens the phantasmagorical perceptibility, whereby the stroll that is engaged in by spectators as an immediate intervention into the visual rendition of reality can achieve an immersive effect; that is, the *flaneur* is completely encapsulated, without disturbances, and given liberty inside this capsule to become closer to the expenditure of excess, despite being restricted to commodification, to do little more than enjoyment in such a limited but intense consumption. At this point, pedestrianisation becomes a technique of forming spectacle as a capsule to saturate the *flaneur* in the phantasmagorical effect. This technical encapsulation, as argued already in the 1st section, can be found by Benjamin's delineation of the Parisian phantasmagoria in association with the invention of the 'arcade project'. Physically, this arcade project indicates an architectural technology by which the marketplace, e.g. department store, is overarched to decorate such arches or domes with glasses. Underneath the arch, shops are arranged alongside a wide corridor. Then, a pedestrian street is formed for shopping to enclose strollers with an unalterable route. This restricted route guides them to be consumers who can only enjoy the

exhibition of goods without other experiences. This enclosed space with the application of the arcade project does not exactly replicate Oxford Circus, only because it is not equipped with a substantial arch over the street. Also, as an incomplete capsule, Oxford Circus allows vehicles to drive along the street. This public traffic penetrates the shopping street to hinder the spatial enclosure of restricting crowds to phantasmagoria alone, whereby the stroller is disturbed in their immersive consumption.

In contrast to the incomplete encapsulation in Oxford Circus, a stroller along the Nanjing Road in Shanghai is given a significantly different experience. Although spectacle recurs in Shanghai to render reality with an affluence of commodities, the variable utilization of the spatial techniques, i.e. pedestrianisation, rather performs the phantasmagorical experience to be a different perceptual effect. To achieve such a phantasmagorical effect, pedestrianisation is above all to seize history, remake it as substantially visual as the commodified images, and then, restrict it to pedestrians who are inebriated by such images (which will be further discussed in the next chapter). As one of showpieces during the travel of Shanghai, Nanjing Road's pedestrianisation, which has evolved from a rudimentary lane to a pedestrian street of prosperity, can be seen genealogically as an epitome that visualises Shanghai's history of commodification as figural as a regeneration of phantasmagoria. In other words, not only does the reconstruction of Nanjing Road refashion the reality but such a varying spectacularisation also grasps the historical flow and restricts it as a scenario that merely happens and continues in the standstill presence of this street, though images never cease to be reproduced along the street's reconstruction as variable rendition. Thus, for pedestrians to stroll on the Nanjing Road can snatch time and traverse history by experiencing the variation of images that happen in different periods in time, but all remain as still in the present streetscape, but all such experience is only limited to a picture of phantasmagoria as if what has been happening in Shanghai is nothing more than the enchantment of Nanjing Road. At this point, pedestrianisation is not merely to encapsulate the *flâneur* in an enclosed space for an immersive effect but also a 'time capsule' that encapsulates history as restricted as phantasmagorical alone.

This time capsule, retrospectively, withdraws the pedestrians on the Nanjing Road from the present phantasmagoria to trace back to its birth, a faded memory. The birth of Nanjing Road cannot leave the urban occupation of the International Settlement, particularly the English concession. The foreign concession is not simply a spatial detriment or a political intrusion, namely colonisation; but more importantly, as inspired by Deleuze and Guattari here, it is also an instillation of capital as an influx of exorbitant desires to challenge and transgress the existing limitation of territory towards the wider and wilder territory for a limitless expenditure. This deterritorialisation of expenditure indicates that the English merchants and travellers, as the bourgeois subjects that are gratified and convinced by the phantasmagoria as a magic of capital, would not be satisfied with their occupation becoming merely instrumental exchange of commodities and accumulation of wealth. They are keen to exceed the reproductive imperative to waste the reserved wealth in ostentatious expenditure as a channel for exuding their excess desires in another territory that is so different from London. Then, the technical problem is where to exude such excess and dissipate it. A 'playground' is needed immediately as a machine to consume the excess. Also, this playground should be rendered as inebriating as a 'funfair', whereby, once the subjects are engaged, they would be repeatedly devoted to playing in it and dissipating their energies without repugnance or tiredness. This kind of playground is the Shanghai Race Club (*Paomating*), which was established by an English businessman, W. Hogg, in 1850. The first race ground was also founded by him, transgressing the territory of the English concession and occupying the area that was located to the north of the present Nanjing Road. A park was built, and runways were paved to surround this park. Not only did the establishment of the race ground, as a project of reconstructing reality, fabricate a hinterland to be a real spectacle by exhibiting the horse race as a playground to attract spectators. More importantly, this fabrication reveals the fundamental drive of this race ground as an immoderate play with leisure and gambling. Here the gambling did not have to be the gift economy, as argued by Bataille, wherein the excess lives were gambled to a risk of loss and social degradation through the competition of giving gifts (see details in the 1st chapter). This gamble that happened in the race ground was through another technical channel of horse

racing to play a game of money, rather than gifts, as another expenditure to entertain and also risk life as heterogeneous, that is, win or lose.

Leisure explicates entertainment, entertainment triggers gambling, and gambling intensifies desire for money. In this sense, not only did this expenditure of life by racing, leisure and gambling squander wealth in the form of money, but also increasing numbers of individuals converged on such an ostentatious fair to be spectators, gamblers, and vendors. Such an intense flow of crowds brought about a concentration of desires and also generated an emergent marketplace near the race ground, a new phantasmagoria, to contain and dissipate such desires. In order to facilitate this concentration and dissipation, a pedestrianisation scheme was needed. Then, a rudimentary road was paved in 1851, namely Park Lane, to connect the Bund and the race ground. This lane was also the birth of Nanjing Road, its east end.

Racing continued, entertainment never ceased, betting was still inebriating, and the market was booming. In short, expenditure never stopped. As a channel of expenditure, the phantasmagoria never stopped its growth to excess. Three years later, the Shanghai Race Club sought a new race ground, then, purchased a much larger area that was located to the east of the present Xizang Middle Road (see figure 2.4) to build the second race ground. Accordingly, Park Lane was reconstructed as a wide road to extend westward to connect the new race ground. Also, the road was paved with a chipped and gritty surface on which horse-drawn carriages could drive, namely *malu*. By this time the reconstructed road was not merely for pedestrians but

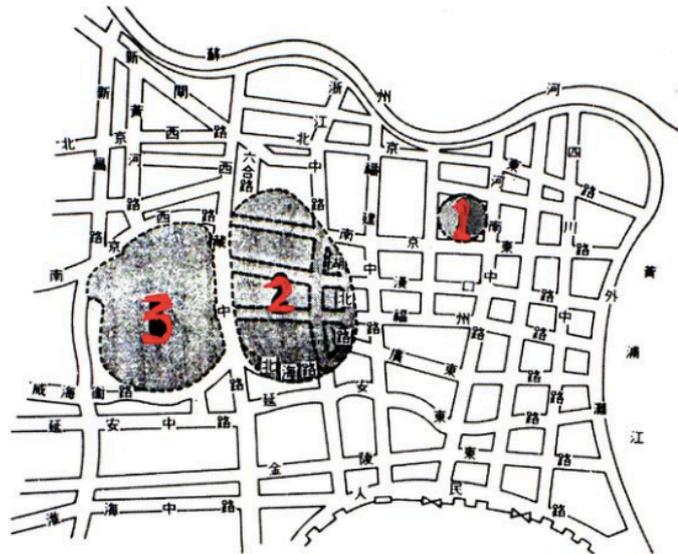


Figure 2.4

also ready to the carriages that transported goods and materials. Such mobility of goods and materials indicated the form of a rudimentary logistics distribution. More importantly, this reconstructed road mobilised those scattering vendors to increasingly concentrate and arrange themselves along this road, refurbishing and upgrading themselves as sophisticated shops. Not only did Chinese merchants open cloth and confectionary stores but British businessmen also set up their companies, pharmacies, department stores, restaurants and hotels. Although a pedestrian street was not yet as complete as Benjamin's Parisian arcade project that enclosed pedestrians with consumption alone, more and more crowds were rather attracted to such a reconstructed marketplace, and the phantasmagorical perceptibility was strengthened by such an eruption of commodified images rendered by the physical proliferation of the marketplace.

To echo the expansion of phantasmagoria, the Shanghai Race Club did not stop its growth. In 1863, the Race Club completed its final expansion, constructing the third race ground that transgressed westward to occupy the area locating at the present Renmin Square (see figure 2.4). The Race Club building (*Paomating*) was also built at the third race square. It was not constructed until 1933, a "massive six-story building with an imposing clock-tower twice as high, which became one of the landmark of downtown of Shanghai."⁶⁹ As an "extravagant spatial intervention of Western culture and capital in the Chinese city space", this high-rise landmark rather intermingled the English-style countryside of vast lawns (race ground) with the crowded street (Nanjing Road) and modern architecture in the British concession to visualise a fused city spectacle.⁷⁰ The final expansion also drove Park Lane to further reconstruction. The street was widened and extended to connect to *Paomating*. At this point, a main road that started from the Bund and stretched across the British concession to end at *Paomating* was completed. Two years later, in 1865, this main road was renamed by the British concession as Nanjing Road to celebrate the Treaty of Nanjing (1842) as the beginning of all such prosperity. This prosperity interconnected the emergent showpiece of

⁶⁹ Braester, Y. (1995). "Shanghai's Economy of the Spectacle: The Shanghai Race Club in Liu Na'ou's and Mu Shiyong's Stories", *Modern Chinese Literature* 9.1, p 41-42

⁷⁰ Braester, Y. "Shanghai's Economy of the Spectacle: The Shanghai Race Club in Liu Na'ou's and Mu Shiyong's Stories", *Modern Chinese Literature* 9.1, p 41-42

the Bund (see details in the next chapter), the marketplace alongside the street and the *Paomating* that overtook Hong Kong to become the leading racecourse in East Asia. Then, a myth was encrypted with the abundance of commodified images that were rendered by the mobility of pedestrians and goods with a channel of money flow to converge at the street. Not only was the reality mythologised but an aura of modernity was densified to enamour subjects. To become modern, as a kind of expenditure, is not merely how to produce and reserve but is characterised as how to spend in a sophisticated and conspicuous manner. In regard to such a conspicuous consumption, the betting at *Paomating* was a showpiece of Nanjing Road. According to Coates, only 'respectable' Chinese were allowed to spectate and join the betting, but their stands were discriminated by being separate from the foreigners and nor were they permitted to enter the race grounds or to be formal members of the Race Club.⁷¹ Even so, they always showed off their sheer enjoyment of the races as an ostentatious expenditure of betting.⁷² At this point, the expansion of *Paomating* drove reconstruction of Nanjing Road; reciprocally, the latter also triggered the former. Both were intertwined perceptibly as unproductive expenditure fused among gambling, leisure, and entertainment, by which the excess was multiplied and also concentrated to complete a spectacular rendition. The reality was encapsulated by the spectacularisation of Nanjing Road as a wonderland of which, commodification, as an erotic mechanism, outpoured desires as intensity to be consumed as a phantasmagorical effect. The natives also acclaimed this road that performed a phantasmagorical experience for pedestrians as *Damalu* - the Number One Street of Shanghai, and the Eastern Oxford Street.⁷³

As for pedestrians, the variation of street scenes was so magical that a hinterland was fabricated by the multiplicity of images to be a wonder. As long as images never ceased their proliferation, this miracle would never stop its variation. During this variation of

⁷¹ Coates, A. (1983). *China Races*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, p 34, 121, cited by Lee, Leo Ou-fan. (1999) *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, p 31

⁷² Ma X.X. et al., (1992) *Shanghai wenhua yuanliu cidian* [Dictionary of Shanghai's cultural sources], Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Science Press, p 50; Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, p 99, cited by Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 31

⁷³ Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, p 61; Lee, Leo Ou-fan, *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 15

phantasmagoria, the most illuminating images should be counted as the department stores, which fashioned the Nanjing Road as a carnival. By the 1880s, not only was the quantity of shops increased rapidly but their appearances were also refashioned from one-story to multi-storey, to echo the overflow of commodities and pedestrians. This upgraded capacity of containing and dissipating such an overflow was also accompanied by the rise of the national capitalists, especially since the First World War that disturbed and weakened the influence of the colonial powers in Shanghai. During the First World War, the first department store that was invested in by the Chinese business was built in 1917, *Xianshi* (Sincere). One year later, *Yong'an* (Wing On) was open. Then, other two extravagant department stores, *Xinxin* (Sun Sun) in 1925 and *Daxin* (Sun Company) in 1934, were completed. The 'Big Four' department stores operated by the Chinese capitalists did not only erect a miracle of Chinese commerce but also championed this miracle as the most attractive showpiece in the International Settlement. A modern myth of global commerce was written by the Chinese capital power to render the Chinese reality as an international phantasmagoria. This mythologisation did not merely stay on the lavish ornamentation of the Art Deco style that decorated the Big Four with an international look. More importantly, a fixed price system was introduced to replace a traditional art of the Chinese market, bargaining, with a rational technology that enabled the exchange to be more transparent, fair and measurable.⁷⁴ Also, an immensity of goods and a globalised supply chain guaranteed every consumer to be immersed in a cosmopolitan experience, and such a 'universal provider', e.g. British textile, French cosmetics, Swiss clocks and watches, US electrical appliances, German hardware, and Swedish enamelware, could boast of its illumination of Shanghai as a global city.⁷⁵

The Big Four championed themselves by their fair exchange and global supply to be the cosmopolitan department stores. What their magic rested on was not only these but also a reappearance of Benjamin's arcade project that enclosed pedestrians with an irresistible experience, then, an immersive effect of phantasmagoria was reached so that pedestrians

⁷⁴ Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 14

⁷⁵ Au, D. "Shanghai Department Stores Have Unique History of Their Founding," *China Weekly Review* 12 (November 17, 1934), p 42, 69

were restricted but enchanted to be consumers. To reach such an effect, the department store was fabricated as a funfair, wherein the multiple apparatuses, machines, and services in regard to the expenditure of subjects as leisure and entertainment could be found. An enclosed and self-contained space for the commodified expenditure alone was formed. A multitude of shops were arranged to disperse to every floor. Escalators not only lifted consumers to different floors for shopping but also delivered them to various restaurants, rooftop bars, and coffeehouses. Apart from shopping and dining, restrooms and hotels were also available. Also, entertainment was indispensable, so dance halls, magic shows, skating rinks and playgrounds were provided. In short, as long as consumers were inebriated, such a department store optimised itself as a complete capsule, which was floating over the reality outside it to exalt itself as a surplus and autonomous wonderland. At that moment when the Chinese were only recently touched by the phantasmagorical magic, lingering in such a wonderland, for pedestrians to self-identify as consumers who would be hardly bored of this dissipation, only felt that it was all not enough.

Inside the department stores, the surreal experience was fabricated by the phantasmagorical power, not simply constructing reality, but rather exalting and purifying everyday life and experience from banality and poverty existing in reality to be aesthetic, but also restricted to this enclosure of aestheticisation. Indeed, this surreal plane was heavenly to illuminate the mediocre life entrapped by the lifeless and repetitive system of production, but restriction to such a heaven alone and concealment of any way out were only anesthetization to escape the reality. Outside the department stores, once leaving the enclosed space, street scenes returned to a hybrid view between surrealism and realism. This surreal experience was above all continued by omnipresent advertisements located in front of street-level stores or hung by department stores as icons over the street. These neon lights and billboards dispersed along the street to overload the street scenes with inescapable messages of consumption. These overloaded messages were not only to furnish the street with illumination but also represented commodities as catchy images, which were floating in vision as symbolic as aesthetic surplus alone to immerse subjects in a semiotic exuberance of joy, pleasure, and comfort etc., without suffering, struggle, destruction or violence.

Furthermore, this visual stream of inebriation performed by the advertisement images were not confined to street scenes, but it permeated daily life through the print cultural production of journals, newspaper, pictorial journals and calendar posters to substantiate the modernity that was accentuated as a national spirit into material manifestation. In short, behaving in a modern manner, reasoned and civilised, as an enlightenment of Chinese subjects to be modern citizens in a sophisticated society, was not constructed as an imaginary spirit on the ideal plane but must be visualised as perceivable as the printed and circulated images in appearance.⁷⁶

Beneath the surreal stream of advertisement images that rendered and arched a phantasmagorical background over the street, trams, vehicles, commuters, rickshaws, vendors and shop owners, etc., were intermingled to formulate the productive mechanism that was running physically and rationally to maintain the productive reality and underpin the phantasmagoria. Amongst the mechanical reality, trams were typical. The first tramline on Nanjing Road was completed in 1908. It started from the Bund to extend westward the present Xizang Middle Road, and operated together with trackless trolleys and buses to form the public traffic system, which mobilised the overflow of crowds converging on such a commercial area and ameliorated the traffic congestion. According to Reverend Darwent's description, "average census of traffic passing at the junction of Nanjing Road and Jiangsu Road on Feb. 25, 27, 28, 1918, from 7 A.M. to 7 P.M.: rickshaws 14663; pedestrians 30148; carriages 942; motor-cars 1863; wheel-barrows 2582; hand-carts 527; bicycles 772; pony-carts 129; tram-cars 754."⁷⁷ Not only did this overflow of pedestrians and public traffic machines testify the ubiquity of a homogenous system that schematised daily routines with and punctuality and regularity. More importantly, those who were intermediated by this system or even trapped to work for it also exuded their inner emotions through physical sensations as irreducible surplus to the system. For instance, commuters who had to disengage themselves from phantasmagoria to return to the workplace never ceased their intense desire for consumption again; those rickshaw pullers selling their labour to penetrate

⁷⁶ Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 43-81

⁷⁷ Darwent, R. (1973) *Shanghai: A Handbook for Travellers and Residents, 1920*; rpt. Taipei: Ch'eng Wen Publishing Company, p 10-12

through the phantasmagoria hardly hid their jealousy or even hatred of the leisure enjoyed by the *flaneur*; those ragpickers who cleaned the waste abandoned by the spectacle had to bear their suffering experience; vendors who struggled to face the monopoly of department stores had to be anxious of their mediocrity with humble income; and prostitutes who were strolling along the street, despite exchanging their bodies for subsistence, rather never constrained themselves from releasing their female charm and dressing as gorgeously as an image of spectacle itself to exude their admiration of a surreal experience of beautification and romance alone. At this point, the mechanical reality, which was outside the enclosed surrealism of department stores and beneath the excess of aestheticisation via advertisements, rather triggers poverty, intensity, anxiety, jealousy, mediocrity, and admiration, etc. All such heterogeneous surplus exuded from the regular lives in reality, although they were not covered by the phantasmagorical expenditure as surreal experience, rather existed as irreplaceable and symbiotic to the phantasmagoria. In other words, to be surplus was not merely surreal, and to consume as surreal alone was nothing more than subtraction.

By the 1930s, Nanjing Road had culminated its phantasmagoria to be a sleepless city town. Getting through the Japanese occupation (1941-1945) and socialist nationalisation (1957-1978), this Number One Street had been reconstructed significantly. Since 1945, the national government has renamed Nanjing Road as Nanjing East Road and named the extension that transgressed the present Xizang Middle Road as Nanjing West Road. Also, when the Chinese communist regime took over, this road was then diverged from consumption-oriented rendition to production-ruled model. Although images never ceased their variation with the continuity of productive mechanism to render the reconstructed reality, their spectacularisation had bifurcated from phantasmagoria that encapsulated pedestrians in a restricted experience of consumption alone. The tramline was removed in 1953; extravagant street scenes, e.g. hotels, dance halls, racecourses, gambling, and prostitution, etc., which affirmed unproductive expenditure, were all denounced and prohibited as symbols of a bourgeois-ruled culture; the department stores that championed

Nanjing Road as a global spectacle were collectivised.⁷⁸ A phantasmagorical perception in which pedestrians overflowed along the marketplace, fused with the public traffic mechanism, to be saturated in surreal consumption alone, faded away. Another rendition of reality as a different society of spectacle, in which heterogeneous expenditure of life as loyalty, passion, sacrifice, commitment, etc., were exuded from the socialist mechanism of production, was instead accentuated.

However, phantasmagoria never ceases its recurrence. In other words, the spectacle never stops to recuperate itself as a phantasmagorical effect of inebriating subjects in the commodified expenditure. Since 1978, Nanjing Road has been reconstructed to restore the phantasmagoria that illuminated Shanghai with its commercial miracle. Then, a spectacle that happened in the 1930s reappears in the present for now. The entire street scenes are refurbished, particularly Shanghai No.1 Department Store, Shanghai Fashion Company, Shanghai First Food Store and New *Yong'an* Department Store are deliberately refashioned with the old decoration to mimic the old 'Big Four' and recollect the absent memory. This resurgence of old images is not impossible, but their perceptual experience is distinguished. Above all, recurrence is repeated as a disparity from the 1930s. This difference is marked by the completion of reconstructing Nanjing East Road as a 24-hour service pedestrian street. A complete capsule that immerses subjects in the full commodification is realised. This immersive encapsulation is firstly a full pedestrianisation by which no public traffic or large vehicles are allowed to enter and disturb strollers apart from the electric power carts being used to facilitate pedestrians. This complete pedestrianisation achieves a better effect of encapsulation than the spectacularisation that happened in the 1930s. Furthermore, any dissonant images that visualise incongruity with the present phantasmagoria are prohibited. Unauthorized vendors that can be bargained with are forbidden but instead replaced by the ubiquitous vending machines; beggars who dress shabbily, are disabled, or even bring their

⁷⁸ *Yong'an* was nationalized as *Dongfanghong* (Oriental Red) Department Store in 1966, then, renamed as Shanghai No.10 Department Store, and was changed as Hua Lian Commercial Building in 1988, now, was changed back to *Yong'an* Department Store in 2005; *Xinxin* was reconstructed as Shanghai First Food Store in 1954; *Xianshi* was rebuilt and nationalized as Shanghai Cloth Store in 1966 and renamed as Shanghai Fashion Company in 1985; *Daxin* was nationalized as Shanghai No.1 Department Store in 1949. Goshopshanghai.com. (2017). *Shanghai YongAn Department Store*. [online] Available at: <http://goshopshanghai.com/shanghai-yongan-department-store-266.html>, Last Accessed 12nd June. 2017

disabled relatives to beg for compassion can be still seen in some public spaces, e.g. streets, squares, the entry of underground stations, or railway stations, but must be excluded from this pedestrian street; and those prostitutes who were strolling along the 1930s' Nanjing Road as an image to seduce male customers are now forbidden and illegal. In short, disorder, ignobility, suffering and prostitution, all such heterogeneous contents were prohibited so that the restriction to the inebriating consumption becomes tightened, namely a society of harmony and prosperity, *hexieshehui*. Moreover, this pedestrian street does not confine the encapsulation of consumers inside the present department stores but expands it outside to the street. Leo Ou-Fan demonstrated that the 'Big Four' department stores employed new techniques and machines in a fierce competition of immersing consumers in the spectacle fabricated by them, such as salesgirls, fast elevators, central heating, air-conditioning, or a new advertising gimmick by setting up a radio studio on the sixth floor in a glass cage so that consumers could watch the performance of a singing star.⁷⁹ At the present, some of techniques are inherited. Salesgirls can be still seen dressed as attractively; machines such as elevators and central air-conditioning are hardly surprising; the advertising craft of catching the eyes by the radio studio has been upgraded to the wide LED screen scattered around the street, particularly, the huge screen standing at the centre of the Shiji Square (in the middle of Nanjing East Road) to display images of luxury goods; surrounded by such semiotic exuberance, an open-air coffee bar is located near the square for leisure and rest; while pedestrians pause their shopping to have a rest, they do not need to leave the street for dining, there is a plethora of restaurants, supermarkets and convenient stores to be easily found. At this point, an 'arcade project', literally without the 'arcade', is formed outside the department stores to saturate subjects in an outdoor leisure and joy.

Thus far, the pedestrianisation scheme of the present Nanjing East Road actualises a complete capsule, which fabricates reality as variable as a wonderland recurring in spectacle and encapsulates subjects in such variation. Such a variable wonder also testifies to an unprecedented capacity of the reproductive system of commodification, which not only rationally constructs the real world but also motivates the produced to be aestheticised as

⁷⁹ Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 15

surplus images for everyday life to comprehend the constructed reality as perceptible as an inner experience that is limited to commodification alone. While pedestrians were attracted by the commercial exhibition to gaze upon a thing or a shop as an image, the aesthetic gaze symbolically reversed these external things as an artwork that can be internalized to arouse the inner world. In this sense, pedestrianisation cast in light of phantasmagoria significantly diverges from the Frankfurt School's criticism of instrumental reasoning. It cannot be utterly negated that phantasmagoria cuts off the dialectic of reason that is reciprocated between externalization and internalization for a self-unification, because it does not reject internalization, nor stop this reciprocity as irreversible, it allows internalization as aesthetics but restricts such aesthetics to the self-inebriation in phantasmagoria, although Adorno and Horkheimer criticised such self-incurred enchantment as narcissistic immaturity that also reveals the enlightenment of the dialectical reasoning as problematic.⁸⁰ Similarly, pedestrianisation cannot either be rejected as the rational subject that is institutionalised by the instrumental reasoning to be deprived of critical consciousness; pedestrians can be proletarians and also bourgeois who are repugnant and critical to the lifeless and regular system of production but enjoy leisure to embrace expenditure for being excess to seek the perceptual experience as aestheticisation to revitalise the inner world from the lifeless mechanism; in this sense, for pedestrians, what to be produced can be consumed as erotic, and phantasmagoria is admitted as aesthetical. Thus, their problem is not being instrumentalised, nor without the faculty of criticism to self-repress, but to self-renounce the self-criticism to divert through a play with phantasmagoria and be restricted to self-inebriation as narcissism. That is to say, the subjects of pedestrian can be bifurcated to enjoy the produced as intimacy, rather than to be subsumed by a self-consciousness of resistance to destroy the phantasmagoria as alienation (see details in the 1st chapter). Since disintegration of the subject is admitted, narcissism cannot be denounced by a self-consciousness that restores the subject as unitary through negation and contradiction as immature, because it is incommensurable as one of the heterogeneous elements exuded by expenditure of idols. The bourgeois can be narcissistic like the superstar, and proletarians can be also narcissistic through the paramount leader. Thus, the problem is that the

⁸⁰ Adorno, T. & Horkheimer, M. (1979) *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, London: Verso, p 81.

self-limitation within narcissism through phantasmagoria would restrict the internalization to aesthetics of acquiring things alone but ignores another aesthetics of giving things as Bataille argued (see details in 1st chapter). Thus far, the problem of pedestrianisation is not enchantment as deceptive to be negated but as restrictive to be transgressed. This transgression is not to displace the restrictive pedestrianisation but to reveal other possible experiences as disparate to fuse with the restricted experience. Insofar as fragmentation of experience as non-identical is tolerated, pedestrians inebriated by phantasmagoria cannot be presumed as a unitary subjectivity with a univocal class, the bourgeois, that entails the imperative of production to repel those who are disenchanted by the spectacle, namely the proletariat. This univocal concept of class should be nullified, instead, the key rests on an equivocal and discrepant domain or scale in which different individuals, or groups, circumscribe their expenditure of excess as a restricted experience, rather than an unreserved play. That is to say, individuals can converge and mix as discursive pedestrians for a limited experience of inebriation, and phantasmagoria is the restriction; and individuals can be also concentrated and ordered as a disciplinary collective for a restrictive experience of commitment, and panopticism is the constraint. They are both restrictive to each other rather than overcoming each other.

3rd Chapter – Journey

Spectacle on Journey

The previous chapter exhibits a journey of London and Shanghai. This trip maps out a hybrid panorama of modernity as a tale of two cities. Travelling along history, Crystal Palace, the sale carnival of Oxford Circus, the Chinese commercial wonder of Nanjing Road, all visualise an inescapable spectacle by which the market regime renders the phantasmagorical presence. Such inescapability of spectacle is not only an overwhelming perception. More importantly, it varies along a ubiquity of modern technology and capital to infiltrate all the social relations, diffuse everywhere, and permeate everyone. That is to say, such an immersion of spectacle is regular. This regularity presumes not merely saturation of London in the phantasmagorical presence but also an unceasing dispersal of such a phantasmagoria to the globe as unalterable. In this regard, spectacle is on its journey to distribute and vary itself in mobility around any place. This travel is not confined to London but re-orientated as international.

The first question arises for this trip, why to choose London and Shanghai. The answer seems simple. The particularity of London is one of the spotlights that exhibit the spectacle in the form of bourgeois-ruled modernity. The journey of London has performed this exhibition. The particularity of Shanghai shows another global phenomenon. Travel to Shanghai, which is symbolised as a showpiece of China's economic reform, will carry on the experience of the *flaneur* to render the phantasmagorical perception in major Chinese urban spaces. More importantly, Benjamin supposes the *flaneur* as a strategy or an active practice, rather than simply as a theoretical model, whereby the restriction to the regularity whose repetition triggers a perceptual boredom is revealed to seek a different experience. Thus, the journey engaged by the *flaneur* is not to repeat the singularities of London and Shanghai as a simple juxtaposition of dual phenomena, nor an assimilation of them as commensurable to a central model of spectacularisation, but to repeat such singularities as an acentric play

of fusing them as irreplaceable as an alternation of their incompatibilities. In this sense, the spectacle to visualise modernity in the name of Chinese characteristics will recur as a different appearance from London's experience. In short, the spectacle regenerated between London and Shanghai is an experience of its disparity rather than commensurability.

In regard to the spectacle distributing in ubiquity around the present world as a repetition of different singularities, the choices of London and Shanghai cannot be asserted as exclusive to overshadow any other possible options. In fact, for the spectacle to disperse its visual experience is not constrained but random to anywhere, e.g. Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Dubai or Tokyo. The choices of London and Shanghai are not an exclusive determinacy but only a contingency of which two different sites are meeting each other.

Regarding contingent choices, a paradox between the ubiquity of images and the limitation of the individual subject to perceive such ubiquity must be clarified. As argued already, the spectacle is actualized in the dominant presence of modernity and proliferated as a discursive discourse of ubiquitous images. Such ubiquity is never restricted but dispersed to any region and period for infinitely variable perception. However, a paradox occurs. The experience of ordinary life to perceive such infinite diversification over the globe is rather individualised to every different traveller, which is limited to encounter one of the infinitely different appearances of spectacle.

Since spectacle is globalised, its images are dispersive, and to experience such a global visualisation one must engage in a journey that is individualised, this individual journey of connecting such dispersed differences also indicates a cultivation of the 'nomadic subject' as illuminated by Deleuze, by which a unitary self-identification wherein a self-consciousness develops and varies itself as a self-evident *priori*, then externalizing such a *priori* to be different self-incurred appearances, is disintegrated as the fragmented and disparate subjects that are not pre-given but inhabit the dispersive and non-identical experiences. This Deleuze-styled fracture of the subject, for this journey between London and Shanghai, is

above all associated with language (see more details in the next chapter). A nomadic subject on a journey to perceptually fuse different images without distilling their incompatibilities cannot be restricted to his/her mother tongue alone. Since language is understood conventionally as a linguistic 'turnstile' by which reality is reflected to self-consciousness and reciprocally the latter utters itself to represent the former in discourses, each image, scene and spectacle must be seen and spoken as translatable and meaningful to make sense. In this regard, the infinite and dispersive spectacularisation of this real world as semiotic affluence and diversity is just a kind of language, then, different tongues enunciate such an omnipresent representation. In terms of this conventional model, travel to different places and experiencing different reappearances of spectacle necessitates learning different tongues, which utter the visual representation as transparent to be translated. In this way, a traveller on a journey to feel the global spectacle becomes an 'international citizen' who entails Kant-Hegel's dialectic of 'I-tongue-world'. That is, the self-consciousness that is aware of reasoning, phonetically and grammatically through a universal and univocal linguistic structure, translates and represents the fragmentary and diffusing real world as a self-reflection, then, immerses subjects in this reflection to be undividable. In this way, the nomadic subject on a journey is scarcely nomadic and aimless but a 'home seeker' who departs to find different spectacles and retrieve a generic logic to translate them as homogeneous to the origin of departure. Such a travel of seeking the homeland becomes a translation, which is little more than to assimilate what is experienced as commensurable. However, as for a nomadic subject, London is not home, nor is Shanghai, but he/she is objectless to float between them and inhabit an equivocal and ambivalent interlacement of two discrepant tongues. Thus, the limited individual capacity of speaking Chinese and English, which enables the ethnographical choices of arranging the journey to narrow down to China and an Anglophonic region for now, is not simply to translate Shanghai as homogeneous as China's London, nor to repeat London as British Shanghai. However, it is expected to diverge from any self-variation of an epistemic centralism to read the spectacle that recurs between London and Shanghai as irreplaceable singularities.

The nomadic subject disintegrates an epistemic unity, instead through the restricted

capacity of learning languages, testifies to the incommensurability of those dispersive fragments that float along the spatial-temporal differences as disparate epistemic experiences. On the other hand, such a temporal-spatial discrepancy of spectacularisation that is experienced by the nomadic subject is not merely because of funding limits and visa restrictions that confine the travel to London and Shanghai but also relates to a bifurcation of images rendered between socialism and capitalism, or between revolutionary regime and market regime. That is to say, for each traveller, the infinitely diversified images are hardly total and univocal to give a unitary perception. In fact, any society of spectacle that is running with its productive mechanism of utility never ceases to split and subtract the images, then retain the filtered images for an allowed perception of individuals (see 1st chapter). Since the visual contents are filtered, the nomadic subject scattered to experience the ubiquitous visualisation should not expect a unitary view if without transgression. Thus, while the choice of travel from London to Shanghai is distributed to the individual traveller, he/she is not only split into English and Chinese subjects but also fractured into capitalist and socialist subjects, whose experiences are bifurcated and also re-circulated between a diffusive rendition operated by the technique of marketing and an intense rendition performed by the technique of socialist discipline.

Thus far, the choices between London and Shanghai are the recurrence of spectacle in the appearance of English and Chinese modernity as two different perceptions happening in two regions. This journey enables such disparity to be encountered and fused in a practical experience. In other words, this trip is a connection of two contingent choices. It is not to presuppose a general principle over the infinite variants of spectacle but to enunciate a contingent confrontation of two differences. In short, the journey of spectacle between London and Shanghai should reveal and admit its limitation and contingency, that is, singularity out of multiplicity.

The second question is how to define this journey. This question relates to a methodological enunciation of spectacle. In brief, the journey is a perceivable distribution by which the spectacle recurs as ubiquitous existence in different and discursive appearances of things,

images and events. To enunciate spectacle on a journey is to reveal a regularity of spectacle diversifying in different presence. This nomadic experience is characterised by four aspects, objectless drift, visual historiography, the discursive practice of diversification and recurrence in presence.

1. A journey to experience the global dissemination of spectacle indicates an objectless drift (*derive*). Situationists coin this concept of drift as an active strategy, which exalts an artistic radicalism of intervention to transcend the distinction between revolutionary politics and cultural criticism, then, illuminates the spectators that are numbed by the regularity of commodification to seek another experience.⁸¹ This artistic disengagement of the subject from boredom of phantasmagoria rather rests on a spatial technique, that is, to explore a new urbanism. It is a withdrawal of the urban subjects from their regular experience that is immersed by the plethora of media technology, infiltration of market and manipulation of urban space as a specific spatial arrangement in an intentional and repetitive performance of those manipulated images. That is to say, everything that is arranged in the urban presence as perceivable as visual details, including width of streets, height of buildings, position of trees, and colour of façade, etc., is deliberately prepared to fabricate an urban spectacle that is preferred by the predominant regime rather than created for the daily life dwelling in such space.⁸² Saturated in such manipulated details to be perceived, the subjective experience is thereby restricted to what to be allowed to feel and anaesthetised to insist on this boredom. This restriction separates and subtracts a diverse experience of urban space whereby an unconditional play is alienated.

This withdrawal from the manipulated images and restricted experience accentuates a new urbanism, or a new strategy of rendering the urban reality. Sadie Plant referred to this new urbanism to a group of avant-garde architects who attempted to break the

⁸¹ Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 56

⁸² Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 57; Kotanyi, A. and Vaneigem, R. (1961). 'Elementary Programme of the Bureau of Unitary Urbanism', *Internationale Situationniste* 6 and *Situationist International Anthology*, p 66

urban manipulation by radical designs of architectures and diversification of their functions in the hope of arousing a unitary experience.⁸³ Although it is controversial that this unitary urbanism cannot leave aside an imposition of the pre-existing aesthetic consciousness on urban perception to vary an existing restricted rendition as another, its insistence upon creation should be rather affirmed as an indispensable art of diagnosing the spectacularisation of urban space to illuminate another possible situation. This creation of new situation, for situationists, should be interpreted as a transgression of restriction. This transgression is not yet a total rejection of the predominant urban scenes that encapsulate reality by the phantasmagorical power to reconstruct a new urban space. It transgresses the immersion of the intentional visualisation to be a 'technique of locomotion without a goal'.⁸⁴ That is, the subject is freed from the regularity of everyday life, disentangled from the imperative of necessity, to indulge him/herself as aimless and purposeless as a drifter who is wandering along the boredom of phantasmagoria, never re-enjoying it, but to encounter those unobtrusive images, marginalized experiences or unanticipated journeys.

At this point, such a bohemian drifter who is seeking an extraordinary journey converges with the *flâneur*, being shed in non-critical light, who enjoys leisure to linger in the phantasmagoria but is also restricted and feels tired of such a repetition, longing for a kind of objectless experience as surprise, although he/she does not utterly negate this boredom (see details in 2nd chapter). Also, this drift cannot be separated from the inspiration of surrealist automatism, which disturbs the superimposed consciousness of reproduction and dislocates the tedious presence monopolised by any pre-given regime to escape towards a dreamland that rests on the unconscious plane and floats over the impoverished reality with fantasies and miracles.⁸⁵ However, drift never surrenders to unconsciousness and irrationality but substantiates a critical consciousness to reveal and

⁸³ Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 57

⁸⁴ Fillon, J. 'New Games', *Programmes and Manifestos on Twentieth Century Architecture*, p 155

⁸⁵ Debord, G. (1958). 'Theory of the Derive', *Internationale Situationniste 2*, and *Situationist International Anthology*, p 50; 'Report on the Construction of Situations', p 19, 24; Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 59

seek an inverted situation that is concealed by the regular rendition.⁸⁶

Since drift does not attempt to distort the conscious rendition of reality as irrational embellishment, this unexpected journey of dislocating the spectacular presence is rather to disorient the restricted experience as a 'playful creation', whereby an immensity of potential desires for excess that is contained by everyday life can be revealed and released.⁸⁷ Then, this disorientation means that the journey from London to Shanghai will bring another visual formulation of city space by which a sort of disorder to the regular rendition of urban images around London is generated. This disorder is not certainly like what an example introduced by Debord who used a map of London as a guide to blindly travel the Harz region of Germany, but it can be tried as a chance, or an experiment, whereby the spectacularisation of urban space can be modified as exceptional as surprise to allure the travellers.⁸⁸ In this sense, journey can be understood as a disorientation by which the subjective experience is disintegrated and distributed from a milieu that someone is bored of to another boredom but contingently encounters a possible surprise between such two regular milieus.

2. The spectacle on a journey should be experienced as a visual historiography. For instance, the *flaneur* of London and Shanghai stages a phantasmagorical experience that aestheticizes the particularity of modernity perceived in such two cities. Temporally, London's spectacle travels from the 1851 London Expo to the present Oxford Circus and Shanghai's phantasmagoria also varies along the historical reconstruction of Nanjing Road. Spatially, a discursive formation of commodified objects and governmental devices is dispersing daily life in order to substantiate spectacle as immersive images. Spatiotemporally, an aesthetic experience is rendered to each of the consumers. What is

⁸⁶ Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 59

⁸⁷ Debord, G. 'Report on the Construction of Situations', p 24

⁸⁸ Debord, G. and Wolman, G. 'Method of Detournement', *Situationist International Anthology*, p 11; this bit also relates to Chtcheglov's 'Formulary for a New City', an experimentation which attempts to modify the everyday life immersed in the regular spectacularisation by reconstruction of the urban reality as seductive and desirable for residents. This reconstruction is considered by diversification and mobility of city space, such as the mobile house, changeable city milieus, and changeability of urban landscapes. Chtcheglov, I. 'Formulary for a New Urbanism', *Internationale Situationniste* 1, June 1958, and *Situationist International Anthology*, p 3, 4.

more important, is that such an experience is also weaving a visual historiography located at the two sites of London and Shanghai.

Benjamin's thesis of history relates to this visual historiography. In his *Theses of the Philosophy of History*, Benjamin demonstrated that historical materialism is a puppet of a theological focal point, a messianic structurality.⁸⁹ His political inquiry of history is put aside but his unique vision of a visual historiography will be focused on. For Benjamin, history does not have to entail a determinate law of progress as a linear consecution but a dialectic that actualizes the time in a standstill presence.⁹⁰ In other words, the history is not conceived as a differentiation along temporal progress but actualized as differentiation of things, events, and experiences in the visible presence, that is, 'dialectical images'. In this sense, history must be intelligible, figural, and visualised as immersive images in daily life and experience. Modernity with its technology and capital can be seen as a dynamic of unceasingly proliferating, gathering and constructing such images as a grand spectacle. This spectacle also corresponds to what Benjamin said, 'an image is that wherein what has been coming together in a flash that the now to form a constellation.'⁹¹

The spectacle of which images, i.e. commodities, advertisements, streetscapes, and skyscrapers, are reproduced is configuring a figural constellation to immerse subjects in phantasmagorical experience. As a grand constellation, the spectacle is temporally static but visually mobile, just like Benjamin's description of 'arcades' in Paris of the 19th century. It is a perceivable 'dome' hung over substantial life at a standstill to overarch the bourgeois-ruled modernity. Despite being a static dome, beneath it, reproducible images never cease to be exchanged and dispersed by the modern engine in mobility around daily practice. In other words, images are incessantly re-circulating within a static spectacle. This static spectacle arrests the temporal flow and actualizes it as a spatial dispersion of images. A general history is then regenerated by a visual 'montage'

⁸⁹ Benjamin, W. *Illumination*, p 245

⁹⁰ Benjamin, W. *Arcade Project*, p 460

⁹¹ Benjamin, W. *Arcade Project*, p 463

of different images as the difference of daily events in modern presence around marketing settlement. This visualisation also echoes Benjamin, 'only dialectical images are genuinely historical...'.⁹² In this regard, modernity is not a historical progress of productive force, namely capitalism, but should be a dynamic power, or craft, by which to actualize history as a spectacle, a static constellation of mobile images, but that dialectically capture the time. If the journey of spectacle is an aesthetic experience of perceiving such a bright constellation, it can be thereby a visual historiography of actualizing history into recognizability of being modern.

3. The journey of spectacle also relates to a discursive practice of diversification. Foucault's historiography, whose method combines archaeology and genealogy, inspires this discursive practice. Historiography of Foucault is different from that of Benjamin in regard to spectacle on the journey. Benjamin's visual historiography actualizes history as an aesthetic experience of spectacle, a constellation of images. This experience cannot avoid subjective faculty of representation for an enchanting perception. For Benjamin, experience, as a journey of spectacle, must be aesthetic, namely phantasmagorical. This phantasmagorical experience should be immediate and artistic for the subject as a contrast with the empty, lifeless and unartistic experience of a superior mind.⁹³ In this sense, an intervention of subject is indispensable for Benjamin's visual historiography.

However, as for Foucault, the constellation of images and events proliferated by modernity is rather a dispersion of things in a discursive formation. This discursive formation in Foucault's historiography, as he enunciated in *Archaeology of Knowledge*, undid a general history of ideas to let things express their material order independently. This autonomy of things dissolves transcendentalism of subject and disencumbers the faculty of representation from conformity with any predeterminate consciousness. The subject is reduced and re-distributed into the discursive formation of which things are reproduced, devices are diversified, images are multiplied, and everyday life is

⁹² Benjamin, W. *Arcade Project*, p 463

⁹³ Benjamin, W. *Selected Writings*, 4 vols., ed. Howard Eiland & Michael W. Jennings, Cambridge, MA., & London: Harvard University Press, 1991-1999. p 3-6

fragmentized as unexpected events.⁹⁴ This diffusion and individualization of the subject into a dispersive nexus of discursive relations enables the journey of spectacle to be not only an aesthetic experience but also a discursive practice of enunciating trivial matters. A new historiography then forms. It no longer acknowledges books and archives in the library but owes debts to a dispersive journey of things, images, and daily life.

This discursive practice further enunciates the spectacle that is diffused adrift along daily events and montaged by fragmentary images as a regularity of differentiation. This regularity of differentiation, above all, means the journey of spectacle from London to Shanghai is an uncritical analysis. In light of Foucault, it is aimed to re-write spectacle from any homogeneous form designated by bourgeois-ruled modernity and reveals regular and irreducible alterity of any other heterogeneous types. In this sense, dispersion of images and heterogeneity of appearances admit a regularity of spectacle varying itself. Such regularity cannot be a criticism of negating a generic form of spectacle. Regularity is rather a positivity to uncover the limit of any homogeneity and self-assertive faculty of representation, instead to open a space of tolerating dissension, exploring divergence, and juxtaposing disparity in coexistence.⁹⁵ In other words, rarity and obscurity should be unearthed to be juxtaposed with what precludes them as a regularity rather than irregularity.

Furthermore, the uncritical analysis indicates that the spectacle travelling between two different sites is a discontinuity of visible presence. This rupture should be maintained in a conversation of describable diversification rather than negation of difference as a contradiction to deductively re-unify a general law of progress. This dislocation of stable and total representation, which acknowledges irruption of contingency, fragmentation, irreconcilability and anomaly, means that discontinuity of spectacle on the journey is neither an area study nor a global research. This trip should be a comparative study of which the spectacle diversifies as two of infinite variants juxtaposed in an open

⁹⁴ Foucault, M. (2002). *Archaeology of Knowledge*, London and New York: Routledge, p 35-85

⁹⁵ Foucault, M. *Archaeology of Knowledge*, p 158-173

conversation. This comparison cannot be restricted as a single interpretation and neither totalized as a universal principle.

4. The journey is travel through time and space, which spectacle endlessly recurs in presence as the different experience. Recurrence in presence as difference relates to Nietzsche's 'eternal recurrence'. Nietzsche, in *The Birth of Tragedy*, contended the revival of vital Dionysian intensity as an instinctual and creative energy to overthrow 'Apollonian' lifeless representation of logical order.⁹⁶ Facing such life-affirming intensity, any universal knowledge weaved by rational faculty to verify a self-assertive consciousness has to crumble, namely, the death of God. The death of any universal ideality means loss of a pre-given and conceived foundation. Everything in the universe thereby is shattered as differences and scattered in ubiquity, adrift along time and space. Only can dispersive experience perceive such differences, rather than merely identify them in ideal representation. This dispersive experience of touching, feeling and communicating with differential things is genealogy. For Nietzsche, genealogy displaces history to open another spatiotemporal passage by which such fragments are endlessly recollected and repeated in presence. Each time of recurrence in presence is differential and newer than the last time.⁹⁷ Nietzsche further demonstrated that there are no other relieving and heavenly worlds than the presently existing one, since eternal recurrence precludes any possibility of escaping from the present world.⁹⁸ Metaphysics of presence is then formed by such infinite recurrence of differences, with nothing existing outside the recurrence in presence.

The spectacle on the journey never ceases to reappear in presence. Its visual rendition intermediates daily life as a real experience in which subjects sense those various images. Deleuze relates to this experience of difference. Deleuze challenged Kant whose

⁹⁶ Nietzsche, F. 1967 (1872). *The Birth of Tragedy*, reprinted in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner*, Walter Kaufmann (trans.), New York: Random House

⁹⁷ Nietzsche, F. 1974 (1882). *The Gay Science*, Walter Kaufmann (trans.), New York: Random House, p 273; and Nietzsche, F. 1954 (1883-1891). *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Walter Kaufmann (trans.), New York: Random House, p 269-272

⁹⁸ Nietzsche, F. *The Gay Science*, section 285 and 341

knowledge entails conformity with the rational faculty of representation that is immanent to a unitary and self-incurred subject (also see details in the first chapter).⁹⁹ On the one hand, Deleuze did not reject 'the transcendental' but revised it as 'impersonal and pre-individual'. That is to say, a subject in such impersonal and pre-individual transcendental is not a self-identifying consciousness to represent the world but is reproduced by the experience of desires, impulses and bodily sensations.¹⁰⁰ Knowing is thus not only thinking in mind of reasoning but experiencing in action of feeling.¹⁰¹ Since Nietzsche's demonstration of 'to philosophise with hammer' treated epistemic faculty as a diagnostic apparatus of interrogating those self-evident ideas, Deleuze then developed this diagnosis into an active and sensory experience.

Since the transcendental was reduced to the empirical, on the other hand, Deleuze further developed his genealogical method of interplaying with differential things, images and events to produce such an empirical subject. Nietzsche directly influenced his genealogy. Nietzsche, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, rejected any universal morality that illuminates indiscriminately all by a divine ideality and condemns the supposed evil. Morality must be genealogically differential concerning healthy life energised with vitality, applicable to different people in the different hierarchy with different roles.¹⁰² Nietzschean genealogical discrepancy of morality re-values different individuals with an affirmation of life for self-reinforcement thus implying Deleuze's view of difference. That is, difference, above all, is self-affirming as an irreplaceable positivity differential to others, rather than self-identification subordinated to the negotiation of others and 'self' for a presupposed idea.¹⁰³ Concerning the genealogical discrepancy, the journey of which spectacle recurs in the different period and region is a differential experience to affirm, not negate, an irreplaceable disparity of each appearance.

⁹⁹ Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*

¹⁰⁰ Deleuze, G. (1991). *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, by Constantin Boundas, New York: Columbia University Press

¹⁰¹ Deleuze, G. (1962). *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Hugh Tomlinson (trans.), New York: Columbia University Press, 1983, p 94

¹⁰² Nietzsche, F. (1966). *Beyond Good and Evil*. Walter Kaufmann (trans.), New York: Random House

¹⁰³ Deleuze, G. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p 157

In regard to Deleuze's reduction of the subject, another critical issue about the post-colonial subject should be also clarified when travellers engage themselves in a journey towards Shanghai, such a Chinese cosmopolitan city, to face another subject that is saturated in an omnipresent discourse of China's rise. That is to say, the journey of a disintegrated subject to experience different spectacle can hardly avoid a critical theme: colonisation. According to Leo Ou-Fan Lee, the conventional criticism of colonialism is used to presuppose colonisation as a dichotomy wherein the coloniser and the colonised are located in a unity of oppositeness. That is, the former is a self-evident subject that represents the latter as an object integratable to the encrypted discourse.¹⁰⁴ Within this dialectic of subjection and objectification, a history of colonisation becomes a self-development in which the coloniser conquers, reconstructs and assimilates the colonised 'otherness' as unitary. However, Lee criticised this dialectic of colonisation and argues that there is no 'Western' colonial authority can totally remake and absorb the colonised subject as a self-reflection of the coloniser. What can be done is to split the colonised subject as bifurcated, whereby some shares can be Westernised but other shares remain indigenious.¹⁰⁵ In other words, since colonisation is never full but partial, this process is equivocal and ambivalent as a symbiosis in which two incompatibilities always coexist as bifurcation but never ceases a conflict in that assimilation of the indigenious by the colonial power is accompanied by a reversible mimicry of the coloniser by the colonised as an indigenisation. More important, not only does this disintegration happen to the colonised subject but also it perhaps happens to the coloniser who would be split into being an instructor/master and being an admirer of the indigenisation even to the point of mimicking it. This mimicry further echoes Homi Bhabha, who argues that 'colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognisable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite...a desire that, through the repetition of partial presence...articulates those disturbances of cultural, racial, and historical difference that menace the narcissistic demand of colonial

¹⁰⁴ Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 308

¹⁰⁵ Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 309

authority.’¹⁰⁶ Since the colonial mimicry during globalisation becomes a ‘partial representation’ between two incompatibilities, the subject is fractured by colonisation between globalisation and indigenisation, which are always bifurcated but also hybridised between submissive and subversive as a mixture.¹⁰⁷ At this point, the journey from London to another spectacle recurring in Shanghai, which has been visualising a rejuvenation of the Chinese nation (*zhonghuaminzuweidafuxing*), is not certainly colonial, nor to repeat any self-incurred centralism, but reveals a partial mimicry between two irreplaceable disparities for coexistence rather than assimilability.

So far, an irreducibility of differences is not dissolved. The spectacle on the journey disperses its perceptual experience and re-distributes its images around different social, economic, geographical and linguistic regions. Such dispersion never solidifies the spectacle but ends any given centre of monopolising its diversification. Instead, the spectacle mobilises as a centreless and constant reoccurrence of its global alterity rather than a global hegemony over other disparities. In this regard, singularities of London and Shanghai encounter each other in the journey of spectacle as a contingency. Furthermore, the subject, as an empirical product of experience to perceive the re-distribution of spectacle, cannot be a univocal unity who self-asserts its immobility and centrality. It has to be fractured and dispersed as nomadic and non-identical subjects, i.e. English subject or Chinese subject, to experience the multiple re-appearances of spectacle.¹⁰⁸ In short, spectacularisation of this real world cannot avoid becoming a kind of self-variation as a homogeneous authority to translate this world into a generic discourse, but an ambivalent symbiosis wherein the incommensurable incongruities coexisting with this generic discourse should be also tolerated – *qitongcunyi*.

Journey to Shanghai

The spectacle on the trip to Shanghai is traced back to the smuggling of opium that brought

¹⁰⁶ Bhabha, H. (1994). “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” in his *Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, p 86-90

¹⁰⁷ Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 309-310

¹⁰⁸ Deleuze, G. (1968). *Difference and Repetition*, Paul Patton (trans.), New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p 246-257

the phantasmagorical consumption of opium to Chinese subjects. The anaesthetic effect of consuming opium enabled the spectacle to regenerate itself by marketing circulation to addict consumers with a fantastic experience. Since commodity actualised spectacle as a phantasmagorical perception to enchant subjects, opium had the same attribute. It can also inebriate subjects in a pleasurable sensation. In this respect, opium was a perfect commodity to reproduce spectacle as a phantasm haunting normal life. This experience was neither real because of being made by consumption nor pseudo because of being felt. The rampant smuggling of opium rather resulted in an outflow of silver and a degeneration of consumers' health. The imperial court thus applied sanctions and then triggered The First Opium War (1840-1842). China was defeated to sign the Treaty of Nanking in 1843. Apart from a huge sum of compensation, Shanghai (along with Guangzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou, and Ningbo) were opened as treaty ports for overseas commerce. Given that the Anglo-Sino smuggling of opium paved the journey between China and outside world, Shanghai was counted the biggest gate to continue this trip. Not only did it function as a prime channel of circulating capital and commodities to China but it also performed as a window for exhibiting the spectacle rendered by the global trade. When the spectacle reappeared in Shanghai through international trade, Shanghainese were immersed in a phantasmagorical experience to perceive modernity. The commercial miracle fabricated in Nanjing Road, as specified by the previous chapter, can be visualised as a testimony.

"I have been places that were, no doubt, as busy and as thickly populous as the Chinese city in Shanghai, but none that so overwhelmingly impressed me with its business and populousness. In no city, West or East, have I even had such an impression of dense, rank richly clotted life...Yes, it will all be there, just as intensely and tenaciously alive as ever...You have only to stroll through old Shanghai to be certain of it. London and Paris offer no such certainty..."

– Aldous Huxley (*Jesting Pilate: The Diary of A Journey*, 1926)

Huxley's description rendered a modern spectacle of Shanghai in the 1920s. The 1920s – 1930s was the 'Golden Age' of Shanghai. This prosperity was inseparable from the

occupation of the English along with other capitalistic powers, which reshaped Shanghai from a treaty port to a capital city of trade and commerce in the Far East, namely 'Paris of the East'. In other words, the spectacle, described by Benjamin as a phantasmagoria overwhelming Paris in the late 19th century, was not only recurring in London but now was also telescoping to Shanghai.

An intensive gathering of massive capital flow telescoped phantasmagoria to Shanghai. Since 1864 till 1935, most international financial institutes and Chinese banks were all relocated to Shanghai. Apart from gathering capitals, overabundant commodities and materials radically converged at the largest import-export port.¹⁰⁹ Such intense impulse of modernisation, financially and materially, enabled Shanghai to succeed the role of Guangzhou and mythologise its modern tale.¹¹⁰

The Bund

The vigour of 'being modern' was overflowing in the city, channelled by capital and released with the boom of commodities. Intensive gathering of funds and materials then staged the spectacle. All the flows of money and goods also focalized on the Bund. Undoubtedly, the showpiece of the Bund has been spotlighting the entire spectacle of Shanghai. The Bund was muddy desert along the west bank of the Huangpu River before it was conceded to the English in 1844 as their international settlement. The English settled down and installed ports in the muddy area. Their trading activities were immediately booming. Modern impulse discharged by the money flow and commodity exchange brought a creative productivity to renew this desolate area as a flourishing business centre. Along with some prestigious British financial institutes opening in the English settlement from 1848, a boulevard was constructed to facilitate traffic and also strengthen the riverbank. The Bund is also named after this construction of boulevard.

¹⁰⁹ DAILY MAIL REPORTER. (2013). *Oxford Circus Tube Station*. Available: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2478975/Shanghai-port-worlds-busiest-handles-736m-tonnes-year.htm>. Last accessed 10th Oct 2016.

¹¹⁰ Lagerkvist, A. The Future is Here: Media, Memory and Futurity in Shanghai, *Space and Culture* 2010 13, p 223

Since the road was paved, illumination was also necessary. In 1865, gaslights were installed along the Bund.¹¹¹ A visible shape of the Bund was firstly lit to visualise a phantasmagorical perception of the modern. Two decades later, a new technology of arc lights renewed the illuminating panorama.¹¹² Accompanied by the lighting system, new information technology of the telephone also came to the Bund in 1883.¹¹³ The communication technology never ceased to upgrade. Soon after the telephone brought the industrial wonder to Shanghai, regular mail steamers and telegraphs also reached the Bund and connected Shanghai to the modern global world.¹¹⁴ The rise of the Bund did enunciate the fact that Shanghai was already spotlighting globalisation in the late 19th century and the early 20th century.¹¹⁵

The completion of the boulevard and its technological upgrade did actualize the spectacle of being modern as the real experience of the Shanghainese to perceive the Bund in their visual sensation. What was modern? The modern were those concrete things, devices and images visible in very appearance. Broad roads, shining light, goods uploaded and downloaded at the port, and mail steamers travelling on the river were all weaving the modern in very life. In light of Deleuze, the modern cannot be merely a phantom haunting our nerves by invisible value-relation; it must be but a spectacle that invigorates the subject as a sensory stimulant.

The spectacle of the Bund never stopped its growth. The completion of the boulevard further boosted the prosperity of the streetscape. By 1864, sixty-one foreign financial institutes assembled at the Bund; one decade later, the number doubled up to 157, and by 1928, the central bank of China and headquarters of Bank of China and Bank of Communications also moved to the Bund. Intensively attracting all the money flow, the

¹¹¹ Du Q.F. (2014). *Lighting the way*. [online] Available: <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/847378.shtml>. Last accessed 9th Oct 2015

¹¹² Isenstadt, S., Petty, M.M. & Neumann, D. (2014), *Cities of Light: Two Centuries of Urban Illumination*, London: Routledge.

¹¹³ Isenstadt, S., Petty, M.M. & Neumann, D. *Cities of Light: Two Centuries of Urban Illumination*

¹¹⁴ Gamble, J. (2003). *Shanghai in Transition: Changing perspectives and social contours of a Chinese metropolis*. London: Routledge Curzon, p 65

¹¹⁵ Wasserstrom, J.N. (2008). *Global Shanghai*. London: Routledge

Bund became the international financial centre in the Far East.

The intangible influx of capital cannot intensify at the Bund, a focal point, without any perceptible mark in appearance. This mark was a proliferating spectacle of modern architecture, visually and spatially, extending along the boulevard. Architectural encapsulation was indeed a useful craft of which global financial powers came out of the shadows to show themselves as a dominant panorama. When such financial intensity affirmed itself by architectural images in visual appearance, this appearance also exhibited a live 'museum of international architecture', namely *wanguojianzhubolanqun*. The multiplicity of different architectural styles, i.e. Renaissance, (Neo) Classical, Eclecticism, and Victorian Gothic, had come together in presence to configure a showpiece along the west bank of the Huangpu River. This conglomeration, spatially, juxtaposed different architectural images within a large exhibition to achieve a visual hybridity.

This visual hybridity dissolved a distinction between financial power hidden as invisible essence and spectacle perceived in appearance. That is to say, spectacle proliferating along the Bund through architecture was not simply a representation as a symbolic form of decorating and veiling the real space with a theatric effect. This spectacle should be but a visual actualization of which Shanghainese subjects felt the capitalistic existence as their experience of those architectural images. In this way, a correlation can be formed. The spectacle affirmed and revealed the financial power as a real experience of which the power was visualised as sensory contexts to infiltrate around the space.

Spectacle thereby inhabits the space. Lefebvre demonstrated that capital using political economy not only reproduced itself as commodities but also as spaces.¹¹⁶ Borrowing George Bataille's notion of expenditure here, space was not merely reproducible as a commodified utility but also expendable in excess to invigorate the capital regime as a vital impulse.¹¹⁷ Along with the spatial reproduction and expense, spectacle never ceased to

¹¹⁶ Lefebvre, H. (1974). *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991.

¹¹⁷ Bataille, G. The Notion of Expenditure, *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 116-128

grow, and the capital power actualized by it was proliferating as well. Their aim was nothing other than the sovereignty dominating by space to enchant subjects. At this point, power and spectacle cannot be merely understood as a dialectical unity of one in shadow and one in light but should be a symbiosis between essence and surface. Both of them together arrest time and produce/consume space.

New Sensation

Although the Bund fabricated the urban space with prosperity during the 'Golden Age', Leftist critics or socialist revolutionaries condemned this fabrication as little more than a sort of beautification of the colonial power, in which the Chinese reality was essentially entrapped by the emergent spectacle in Shanghai into a society of semi-colonialism and semi-feudalism. Indeed, it cannot be denied that all such phantasmagorias were unable to leave the rendition of colonial power as an appropriation and assimilation. However, it should be also made clear that the wonderland performed in Nanjing Road could not be actualised without the 'Big Four' department stores that were owned by the Chinese national bourgeois, and capital power that reconstructed the Bund also included financial institutes of China. That is to say, colonisation was not full and spectacularisation of reality was not totally colonial, as already argued, but always a partial and ambivalent mimicry of the coloniser by the fractured subject of the colonised to render its real world as staggering between Westernisation and indigenisation (see 1st section). Thus, such an equivocal process cannot be simply dichotomized to judge the spectacle of the Bund as unjust. A hybridity must be admitted. That is, the global capitalization brought by colonisation to spectacularise Shanghai was not merely monetary accumulation but also the inner flux, as a subjective infinity in the form of exorbitant desires, which unceasingly transgressed limitation to fuse with other diverse expenditure in different territories, thereby such a fused expenditure of desire was not solely Westernised but also must be mixed with the Chinese desires as an indigenous intensity. At this point, if the spectacle was seen as an immediate channel of this hybrid expenditure, it brought about diverse and new sensations to gratify such disparate subjects and their fused desires. Immersed by such diverse and fused sensations, the feudal

elements seen by Westerners who were used to the commodified rendition and who travelled to Shanghai as indigenous images refreshed their perception with an exotic experience. For them, semi-feudalism was not necessarily subjugated with discrimination but could fuse with what they introduced, despite being named semi-colonialism, to refashion reality as a brand-new sensation that was neither a copy of Westernisation nor an indigenous repetition; also, as for the Shanghainese, what colonists brought were perceived as surprising, then, and semi-colonialism did not have to be accused but intermingled with the traditional elements, namely semi-feudalism, to reconstruct reality as new sensation. So far, the spectacle of Shanghai can be disentangled from the semi-feudal and semi-colonial denouncement to revise itself with a new vision, that is, a fused and new sensibility about modernity.

This new sensation, as a perceptual experience that illuminates the subject to eliminate the mundane matters and productive imperative, coincides with the surreal myth that was rendered by one Chinese modern literature school, *xinganjuepai*. Amongst these novelists who delineated the new sensibility of Shanghai, Liu Na'ou and Mu Shiyong were typical. On their literary plane that was circumscribed in the International Settlement, spectacle became a keystone to overarch the fictionalisation of reality, wherein a repeatedly phantasmagorical experience inebriated the urban subject in the expenditure of excessive desires that was filtered by commodification. Although such consumption was limited to exude partially the heterogeneous elements of life, such as joy, enchantment, obsession, narcissism, and vanity, etc., these city strollers were drifting over the regular life of working in reality and lingering in the wonderland to sublimate themselves as aesthetic seekers of beauty to thirst for a fortune of encountering romance from this 'constellation' imaged by commodity, money and erotic machines. Thus, reality would be undesirable as desolated without being perceived as aesthetic. Lifeless and mechanical production that reproduced such a desolated reality was unwanted, and ignobility, filthiness, poverty, banality, and violence, etc., all such heterogeneous elements that inhabited the realistic suffering must be prohibited without being purified as romantic. In short, for these new sensationalists, the city was their exclusive stage, spectacle was their expenditure, and new sensations of love, decadence and

dandyism that accompanied the modernity of progress were what they were living for.

Cinema

To embrace dreamlands and escape from the triviality towards play with imagination, new sensationalists cannot leave aside the concrete sites to visualise these dream-like experiences. Then, they pinned these dreamlands in the urban reality as their own constellation whereby a new Shanghai city map of indicating where to seek the surreal experiences was formulated. The first pinpoint in this map of new sensationalists was cinema. As a kind of modern technology that combined electricity, light and sound to render images and mobilise them to be motion pictures, this visual stream, then, was projected on the wide screen to render a virtual plane, which was floating over reality to immerse spectators in such fabrication. Technically, film was exuded by the modern mechanism of industrial reproduction as a visual surplus. This visual surplus was seen as phantasmagoria itself. The spatiotemporal sequences that were pre-ordered in a historical consecution were disordered and visualised by images, then, these images were montaged and rearranged in order of the visual stream performed on the screen. In this way, time was dislocated and history visualised. Also, the reality was aestheticised as a cinematic spectacle. While the real world was simulated as images on the screen, this cinematic spectacle did not refuse to perform those heterogeneous elements in realistic sufferance, though it tended to show those joyful contents. Once such diverse images, through spectators' aesthetic gaze, were sublimated to resonate with the inner sympathy, the emotional responses to the show would be bifurcated, either to intervene into reality to remake it with ambition, hatred and hope or to pursue a surreal experience connoted by the film with love and romance. As for the former, Benjamin demonstrated that the film could be exercised as a class weapon for aestheticizing political intensification to conjure up the collective consciousness and emotions;¹¹⁸ as for the latter, new sensationalists rather treated the cinematic spectacle as semiotic exuberance for a pure play with love. While Shanghai as a city that boasted the

¹¹⁸ Benjamin, W. *Selected Writings*, 2 vols., ed. Howard Eiland & Michael W. Jennings, Cambridge, MA., & London: Harvard University Press, 1991-1999, p 217-218

most movie theatres was allowed to show a number of leftist films influenced by Marxism and socialist realism, Liu Na'ou rather insisted that film was not an art of revolution to intervene into social reality but an art of motional images that inhabited the modern machinery to distort time and accelerate speed as a sensational rhythm whereby the bodily energy, i.e. emotions and feelings, would be dissipated as a tumultuous effect.¹¹⁹

Liu's definition of film as a pure form of aestheticisation cannot disregard his feelings acquired from Hollywood film shows. Thanks to a comprehensive distribution system formed in Shanghai, not only the major Hollywood studios but also all the large film producers in Europe deployed their agents or distributors to Shanghai to sign exclusive contracts with a dozen movie theatres to guarantee the show of their first-run movies.¹²⁰ These movie theatres were all decorated extravagantly. *Daguangming* (Grand Theatre) was typical. Located at Nanjing Road, *Daguangming's* deluxe glamour was merged by the phantasmagorical background of this road as an image. An immense capacity of two thousand seats, lavish equipment, sophisticated Art Deco lobby, huge neon-lit marquee, and extravagant restrooms, fabricated this theatre as a 'cinema palace', which threw spectators into a surreal experience to abandon the outside world.¹²¹ Also, Liu's delineation of cinematic spectacle as a tumultuous sensation was generated by the female myth encoded by the Hollywood film industry. In Liu's fictions, major heroines were imaged as the distinctive beauty that fused the Chinese female body with the westernised appearance, e.g. Greek nose, protruding breasts, and cherry-like mouth, then, dressed traditionally in a *qipao* (cheongsam).¹²² All such western elements embedded into Chinese female bodies explicitly resulted from the ostentatious rendition of film posters and advertisements. More significantly, the widespread movie magazines that were produced as a kind of cultural

¹¹⁹ Liu Na'ou. (1934). "Dianying xingshi mei de tanqiu" (The search for the formal aesthetics of film), *Wanxiang* (Panorama) 1; Chen Wu, "Qingsuan Liu Na'ou de lilun" (Liquidating Liu Na'ou theory), in *Zhongguo zuoyi dianying yundong* (Chinese leftist cinema movement), Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubanshe, p 162-167

¹²⁰ *Motion Pictures in China*, Trade Information Bulletin no. 722, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1930, p 7

¹²¹ Ye, S.P. and Zheng, Z.A. eds., *Bainian Shanghai tan* (One hundred years of Shanghai Port) Shanghai: Shanghai huabao chubanshe, 1990, p 119; Cao Yongfu, "Shanghai Daguangming dianying yuan gaikuang" (General account of Shanghai's Grand movie theatre), *Shanghai diaoying shilao* (Shanghai film historical materials) Shanghai: Shanghai shi dianyingju shizhi bangongshi, 1, October 1992: p 207-211.

¹²² Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 194-195

industry in old Shanghai infiltrated a wealth of images of Hollywood movie stars, especially female stars, into everyday life and experience to weave a Hollywood myth. This semiotic affluence of female glamour was no longer confined to the cinema but transformed the tumultuous rhythm shown as a visual stream on the screen through technical combination of film industry and printing industry to be a temptation, whereby reality was encapsulated in a surreal experience of indulging desires for romantic sensations with such a visual eroticism. Indeed, this temptation of reality brought about a mimicry, wherein this hybrid figure of modern Chinese women who dressed in the traditional style with Westernised appearance formed an exemplary image prevailing in old Shanghai to show her body as a testimony of the glamour fused between Westernisation and indigenisation.

Liu's articulation of the cinematic spectacle as a sensual turbulence immersed reality in an ecstasy of eroticism. Rendered by such ecstasy, urban lives were entertained by the female body fetishism as lingering in the dreamland visualised on the screen. However, self-inebriation in a surreal dream could not rescue Shanghai from a realistic conflict of revolution and colonisation/capitalization, which never ceased to surround this city until 1949. To reject such a diverting dream, realistic directors and Marxist critics rather visualised Shanghai as an alienating spectacle that was monopolised by commodification and colonisation to fill this city with apathy and oppression. In short, what modernity brought were not merely dream but struggle. Then, reconstruction of reality with revolt was called up to arouse a hope for the rural lives as another pastoral experience that illuminated the subject as innocent victims contaminated by urban spectacle.¹²³ Yan'an was exemplary here. In contrast to Shanghai rendered by the colonial power as a dreamland, Yan'an was far away from the urban miracle but constructed and visualised the reality in hinterland as aesthetic as another myth. This myth no longer indulged immensity of commodified images to dissipate the excessive desires in a semiotic exuberance of inebriation and idleness but proliferated and rendered campaigns, movements and struggles as different images to channel the excess of inner flux in the form of revolutionary intensification (see more details

¹²³ William, R. (1973). *The Country and the City*, London: Chatto & Windus; Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 96-110

in the final chapter). However, new sensationalists were never enchanted by the revolutionary myth of Yan'an. For them, the city spectacle that was overarched by the International Settlement and decorated with cinematic myth was the heavenly wonder, despite becoming a faint enlightenment of modernity, which rather illuminated the reality of Shanghai and exalted it from the savagery that was driven by the revolt of ignoble proletariats to unleash their nature of excess.

Dance Hall

In regard to this insistence upon the city myth of Shanghai, Mushiying was typical. Since Liu pinned cinema in his city map as a wonder to actualise his sensational tour of Shanghai, Mu targeted the dance hall as another pinpoint. A comparison between them can be found here. Liu amplified and transcribed the torrent of visual sensation generated by the cinematic spectacle as immense as a sensual indulgence that energised the entire city as an ecstasy of erotic expenditure. Then, to echo Giuliana Bruno, spectators were analogous to city strollers, thus real life was cinematized as a big stage.¹²⁴ Each image to be seen on the screen was metaphorical to everything visualised in the real life, and each romantic scenario performed by cinema was transcribed as reflexive to refashion the daily life as the narcissistic thirst for love. When all such cinematic images were transcribed and blended into real experience, the perceptibility of reality was hard to distinguish from an intentional rendition of a bewildering sequence of 'shots' but became a montage-like effect, in which self-indulgence of erotic influx to desire love, female glamour and sex as dissipation was imaged as watching the cinematic romance.¹²⁵ However, Mu did not confine his expenditure of life as erotic to gazing at women as cinema but must touch them to feel their body with an immediate and lascivious sensation. This sensation can be best acquired from the dance hall.

When Marxists and situationists criticised the city spectacle as alienation and falsification, dance hall might be counted as an exception wherein erotic embrace, intimate hug,

¹²⁴ Bruno, G. (1993). *Streetwalking on a Ruined Map: Cultural Theory and the City Films of Elvira Notari*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p 48-49

¹²⁵ Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 193

flirtatious touch, affectionate whisper, and frenzied spin of bodies, never ceased to stir the inner flux to outpour from such bodily communications as a carnival of eroticism. For Mu, what was consumed at dance halls was libidinal energies as various as love, desire, and enthusiasm in the seductive form of bodily performance. Alienation and delay did not exist here. Money was not simply to purchase but a channel of expenditure to dissipate the inner excess, then, actualise a symbolic exchange of love and sexuality, whereby the lascivious sensation could be intensified to encapsulate but also restrict the subject to such ecstasy. Driven by this libidinal economy of expenditure, dance halls had prevailed in Shanghai since the 1920s. To divert Shanghai natives from their regular life as flocked to dissipate their unruly excess, dance halls rapidly projected themselves alongside the cinema as an irresistible scene of Shanghai's phantasmagoria.

Bailemen (Paramount), 'gate to a hundred pleasures', was counted as the phenomenal dance hall at that time. It can be seen as the central setting for Mu's fictionalisation of those female bodies twirling on the dance floor as semiological as a 'magnet' to concentrate all the vital flows circulating around city lives on such a female obsession as a singular and erotic expenditure. Every story did not leave aside the dance hall, nor suspend those spinning images of modern girls. For Mu, those alluring female bodies were not only imaged as spectacle but plots and scenarios. Metaphorically, they were a womb of containing and visualising the entire city of Shanghai as enamouring as the female magic; thus, Mu did not just write on paper but wrote on bodies. In 'Craven A', those modern girls encountered at dance halls were mythologised as connotative as a metaphor to the nation. Then, metamorphism happened between female bodies and a geographic map. Hair was forest, eyes were lake, mouth was volcano, and breasts were twin peaks, thighs were two stripes of ocean embankment, a delta of alluvial plain allegorised the vulva, a big commercial harbour implied the womb, and a big steamship entering the harbour explicated a penis that was metaphorical to the penetration of colonial power.¹²⁶ All such images assembled to encode a dual myth are exalted from the dance hall. Denotatively, the healthy body of a modern girl was visualised; and connotatively, the motherland or city of Shanghai was encrypted

¹²⁶ Field, A. (2014). *Mu Shiyong China's Lost Modernist*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, p 67-87

semiologically as a grand female body. In this mythology, when a dance girl who was inebriated by the phantasmagoria rendered by the dance hall in the International Settlement fell in love with a male protagonist to enjoy the sexual expenditure, their bodily intercourse that unleashed the excess of the inner intensity also generated such overflow of desires as a symbolic exchange by which a semiotic surplus is exuded; that is, Shanghai was admired by the colonial power as Chinese female glamour to erotically fuse with the latter to breed then a spectacle of modernity in Shanghai. At this point, Mu's metaphors revealed that the erotic expenditure at the dance hall not only simulated an orgy but also, as a womb, reproduced such intense desires as a distinctive aura of Shanghai's modernity, that is, an erotic fusion with Westernisation.

Mu's mythologisation of dance hall through metaphors of the female body focused on those civilised girls who were enlightened by the urban modernity to consume life as a play with male partners. This play was delineated by Mu's fiction, 'Five Characters in a nightclub', as a sentimental experience.¹²⁷ A failed businessman who lost all his wealth on the stock market, a lovelorn man, a girl who was lost in western literature, a social butterfly who was broken-hearted, and a public officer who was unemployed, all converged at a dance hall to transcribe and render their sad stories as a melancholy milieu to fuse with those whirling and dazzling images that were projected by neon light. It was impressive that all the sad stories were not narrated as complete storytelling but shot as separate scenes: a desperate man facing the stock market crash, a broken-hearted lover waiting near the pond of the campus, a grim face to indicate sufferance by reading in the study room, and an unlucky man being sacked in his office. Then, all such images that scattered along different spatiotemporal sequences were montaged and dissolved as if by a cinematic technique into a panoramic shoot of the night view of Saturday in Shanghai, that is, an overflow of excess desires unleashed by leisure to form a rampant torrent. Driven by such torrent, the entire city was perceived as an erotic machine to whirl and accelerate whereby every image was spinning. Revolving doors never stopped urging people to leave work, nor did wheels cease rotating to drive people towards the night spectacle. Such mechanical rotation and

¹²⁷ Field, Andrew. *Mu Shiyong China's Lost Modernist*, p 35-63

acceleration merged the unruly turbulence of desires into an overwhelming traffic flow, and also channelled such a torrent to escape from the productive imperative to unproductive expenditure. Speed was accelerated, whirling was unstoppable, the torrent of desires was intensified, the subject was drawn to swirl inside without a way out, dizziness was continued, and time was shortened, frozen and even nullified. At this point, for Mu, the tumultuous sensation can be interpreted as that the city was driven by an erotic machine to swirl images of speed whereby the subject was dazzled to forget or even fear time to stay in such a sensation forevermore. Then, Mu culminated this sensation at the dance hall. Those images that visualised the five characters' sad stories were also transcribed and merged into a play within the semiotic exuberance of joy, eroticism and consolation. Dance, drink and chat were not only an intimate embrace of bodies but also a recuperation of the broken-hearted. That is to say, phantasmagoria of the dance hall, as an integral part of Shanghai's spectacle, might be the best remedy provided by the spectacle itself to cure the five characters who were struggling in this city as a surplus sensation, which was floating over their realistic expenditure of life as heterogeneous as loss and suffering. This recuperation was also a self-verification and self-reproduction of spectacle, to intoxicate the subject by a co-existent way of hurt and consolation.

Thus far, Mu's spectacle montaged the female body, dance hall, city and modernity together through metaphors and mythologisation as a visual metamorphosis to exude the torrent of desires. Such metaphorisation in myth also relates to Bataille's concept of de-copula. However, Bataille's usage of de-copula is bifurcated from metaphorisation. Metaphor, as a semiological system, locates the disparate images into a metamorphosis whereby their incompatibilities are subtracted and remain their commensurability, then, subsumed in a homogenous predication, 'being' or 'becoming'. This homogeneous predication that pre-orders the discourse can be understood as copula.¹²⁸ De-copula means to deconstruct this predication, and transgress the limitation of predication, to dislocate the discourse to put all the fixed images and those equivocal images that are prohibited outside the predication in fusion, rather than a simple juxtaposition, nor do they re-sort another

¹²⁸ Bataille, G. The Solar Anus, In: *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 5-9

predication, whereby such disparate images can touch and intercommunicate in a permanently unstable, acentric and unconditional play. In short, de-copula is promiscuity of images, whereby an erotic excess of images to fuse themselves in an endlessly equivocal discourse is actualised. In this sense, spectacularisation of the dance hall as a seed of modernity does not have to be fixed with the surreal images but cannot avoid another hinge with those ignoble images cast in the shadow of spectacle.

Another Mu fiction, 'Shanghai Fox-trot', can provide a proper vision. Similar to 'Five Characters in a nightclub', the fictionalisation in 'Shanghai Fox-trot' did not perform a complete storyline but intermingled fragmentary images, through a montage-like technique, as a visionary rhythm that was flowing around the city space to immerse the urban lives in a panoramic view. However, this panorama did not confine the city spectacle to a surreal phantasmagoria of the dance hall that was drifting over reality as an erotic surplus but was rather a visual fusion to mix with those filthy images that visualised those dishonoured expenditure. In regard to this visual fusion, as Mu himself said, "Shanghai, a heaven built on hell!" To alter this delineation slightly, Shanghai is a city wandering in a spectacle that fused heaven and hell. This heaven was symbolised by the dance hall, wherein an image of a saxophone, a Western musical instrument, was highlighted to perform an erotic rhythm as a kind of love-powder that saturated all the subjects in a sexual dissipation of love. This intimate consumption of love was not only flirtation but also involved an incest taboo, that is, a clandestine love affair between son and stepmother. At this point, the dance hall, saxophone and incest taboo, all such scenes were fused to visualise a bifurcation in which the Western modernity was not merely a generic predication of enlightenment but also a 'dark' magic of seducing the transgression of taboo to reveal an accursed and unobtrusive expenditure of excess as heterogeneous as decadence and indulgence. The dance hall, as an erotic heaven, was a perfect stage for this transgression. This de-copula of modernity as a transgression was not limited to the heavenly dance hall, but permeated outside to the street life, a hellish turbulence rolling beneath the heaven. Violent gangsters, busy rickshaws, drunken marines, overflowing crowds, fanatical propagandists, and bloodshed of poor workers, etc., all such ignoble images were scattering and envisioned the Shanghai

modernity as spectacular as brutality, loss, death and mediocrity, rather than being merely restricted to a surreal heaven. More importantly, the violence of machines and death of workers were rather wasted by the modern regime as a kind of expenditure to build and render new restaurants, hotels and dance halls as spectacular to those who were inebriated and limited in love and sexuality alone. At this point, de-copula of spectacle as a modernised discourse in visibility meant that this visual existence was not circumscribed in an erotic phantasmagoria as a surreal surplus but transgressed this restriction to involve those ignoble images as a fusion of incompatibilities.

City of Spectacle rather than *as* Spectacle

New sensationalists circumscribed themselves in the city and fabricated it as a heavenly surplus. Cinema and dance hall were pinned in the city to map out a tour wherein a torrent of desires circulating around the urban space was experienced as visual as a tumultuous sensation. Also, this visual effect rendered by dance halls and cinemas that were mostly concentrated along Nanjing Road highlighted a showpiece of the International Settlement that was symbolic to the colonial power. This implication of visual sensation in colonisation associated such a spectacularisation with global re-circulation of capital. At this point, the Bund, as the seat of colonial power and finance, was again involved in the sensational tour of Shanghai. The Bund can be seen as one of the reservoirs by which such transnational money flow could release its creative force to visualise such a spectacle of architectural globalisation along with the boulevard. This boulevard that extends through the Bund has been named the Zhongshandongyi Road since 1943. In other words, this wide road did stage the growth of such a conspicuous city showpiece as to win the rise of modern Shanghai with the renowned name of 'Paris of the East'. While people enjoyed the phantasmagoria of Paris reappearing in Shanghai, they should not forget that the phantasmagorical experience of Paris owed itself to Haussmann's transformation in 1853-69. Haussmann's urban strategy also began with the construction of urban boulevards. His initial purpose was to remake an urban space by using wide roads to facilitate the rapid deployment of Napoleon's troop

throughout the capital in case of disorder.¹²⁹ However, such urban strategy rather reshaped the city as a systematic whole as its primary function to promote the circulation of goods and men.¹³⁰ The large-scale demolitions and public works were designed to integrate all parts of Paris into contact with each other through a vast circulatory network. In this manner, the old quarters of Paris were traversed and brought within a larger systematic whole. Such urban strategy did not see the city as a social environment but rather represented it as a technical object upon which to work. The city experience was thus routinized as the daily regularity, and city dwellers were institutionalised according to distinct social groups or roles.¹³¹

Hausmann's city remaking did verify the regularity in the daily life and immersed the urban subjects into the normative rules.¹³² A scientific formulation was realised by the logical network of city boulevards to secularise everyday life into a phantasmagorical presence. However, his urban strategy was also criticised as a generic reproduction over urban space. The city's warren of narrow medieval lanes was removed and displaced by 'block after block of nearly identical apartment houses'.¹³³ Now, this urban rationalism was transported to the urban governmentality of Shanghai. By May 1930, the Greater Shanghai Plan of the 1930's was promulgated to exercise in the city space. This strategy aimed to reshape the city as a scientific system. Regarding planning, the entire urban space was anatomically quartered as five specific districts with different functions. The city centre was constructed as the administrative district. Adjacent areas would be reshaped as the industrial district, commercial district, trade port zone, and residence district. A vast network of roads would

¹²⁹ Choay, F. (1969). *The Modern City: Planning in the 19th Century*. New York: George Braziller 15. Walter Benjamin also argued that the actual purpose of Hausmann's work secure the city against civil war. See Benjamin, W. *Reflections: Essay, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, Ed. Demetz, P. New York: Schocken Books, 1986, p 160

¹³⁰ Rabinow, P. (1989). *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, p 76

¹³¹ Foucault pointed out the specialisation of the spatial organisation was critical in the production of a new moral order and discipline within the population. Between the 1830s and 1870s, working class family is to be fixed. By assigning it a living space with a room that serves as kitchen and dining-room, a room for the parents that is the place of procreation, and a room for the children, one prescribes a form of morality for the family. See Foucault, M. 'The Eye of Power', in *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews & other writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, New York: Pantheon, 1980b, p 146-65

¹³² Bray, D. (2005). *Social Space and Governance in Urban China*, Stanford University Press, p 75

¹³³ Prouty, R. (2009). Buying generic: The generic city in Dubai. *Static 8*: p 1-9

be constructed to integrate all districts, including international settlements, and connect the city and its adjacent towns.¹³⁴ Employing this surgical planning that infiltrated rationale to space, the impression of being modern was not confined to the spectacle of the Bund but permeated the entirety of the modern metropolis to share a global ethos.

However, the recurrence of spectacle in different cities does not necessarily entail the urban resemblance. It is necessary to distinguish spectacle itself from being a capsule of city space. The spectacle inhabiting the city is not equal to the city itself. In other words, the recurrence of spectacle as different experience in the city should be autonomous from the diversification of the city.

The city is firstly discussed. The city cannot be separated from its production. Urban planners and architects, all these subjects have their specific knowledge and exercise such knowledge to design differential buildings and infrastructures and distribute their works to the different spatial position. In this respect, these designer's various ideas inhabit the urban space to use it as an operable model or rational blueprint to represent their aesthetic consciousness. The city is thus inseparable from the faculty of representation imposed on the urban space to create desired forms. The different form does reflect differential ethos that is always bound up with the subjective designation. While the Bund was conceded as an international settlement, designed and built by the colonial occupants, it hardly found its authenticity but, more or less, entailed the original ethos of dominant western cities. Even though there was a difference, it might be little more than a variation of form or style.

Concerning such subjective impositions, the postcolonial turn presupposes a dispersed and nomadic subject (see 1st section). Taking a lead from Deleuze, could one not say that each architect, designer and planner, should be a traveller who fractured self-awareness to have non-identical experience. Globalisation is neither colonisation nor homogenization. There is no pre-existing global city conceived in the ideal plane. Each city should be above all local,

¹³⁴ Zhang, Y.J. (2013). *The great Shanghai dream during the Republic of China*. [online] Available: http://www.archives.sh.cn/slyj/shyj/201306/t20130604_38706.html. Last accessed 5th Oct 2016

and ordinary, whose 'difference should be gathered as diversity, rather than as hierarchical ordering of incommensurability, but also without any suggestion that a universal theory of urbanism is possible.'¹³⁵ However, urban space to exist as cities is not merely an appearance. Each city must have its essence, i.e. its spirit, memory, and cultural inheritance. Along with the impulse of globalisation, these urban cores are fragmented as elements to disperse adrift in different cities and recur as the different experience. However, while such fragmentary elements amalgamated together to enchant the subjects, these fragments are still traces that bear the memory of their origin. These irreducible traces can explain why Shanghai spotlighted by the panorama of the Bund in its 'Golden Age' was always named 'Paris of the East' or 'New York of the West'.

Diversification of city is not easy to implement as recurrence in appearance without the original, but the spectacle is distinguished. As already defined before, spectacle inhabits things, rather than ideas, to recur in appearance through proliferating images. Since the city is a spatial manipulation of different things over urban space by representation to enunciate a definite aesthetic, the spectacle is floating over things along the sensory configuration of images. That is to say, each building and each infrastructure grounded in urban space is motionless. However, people, vehicles, and all other energetic lives surrounding the static



Figure 3.1

are never still but unceasingly mobile. Such mobility is makings of images to be perceived as instantaneously changeable. In

other words, anything in action to move its position in urban space will be seen as a different image. As long as time never ceases, no image is still and each image is differential. The spectacle configured by images is thereby seen instantaneously differential in very appearance. Despite that cities cannot completely avoid a certain degree of resemblance,

¹³⁵ Robinson, J. (2006). *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development*. London: Routledge, p 41

spectacle experienced as a visual appearance of reality, either in the same city or different cities, never ceases to be different perception as long as time is flowing and images are mobile. In short, there are no two identical spectacles felt in appearance. If once spectacle recurs, it must be not generic but rather always the different sensation.

As said above, recurrence of spectacle as different appearance is experienced for feeling rather than to recollect any original or predict any essence. When the spectacle reappears in the Bund as the financial centre displayed along the west bank of the Huangpu River, its visual perception is distinctive to Shanghai without necessarily any originality, despite being conceded as an English settlement. To compare with the Bund, its counterpart, another global financial centre at the City of London renders an entirely different appearance (see figure 3.1). Strolling along London Bridge and crossing the Thames River, the visual rendition of the City of London is cast behind the scenes extending along the north riverbank. Due to different geographic conditions and different spatial planning, the spectacle of the City is visually hidden and embedded within the urban jungle. It is not visual as a transparent scene from the riverside, but the pinnacles of those skyscrapers, i.e. 20 Fenchurch, The Leadenhall Building, and 30 St Mary Axe, stand out to dominate the skyline.



Figure 3.2

Unlike the City of London, the Bund boulevard, Zhongshandongyi Road, extends to arrange enchanting images along the west bank of the Huangpu River (see figure 3.2). This unique panorama along the riverbank, showing off financial institutes rather than hiding them behind the riverbank, had been almost completed by the 1930s to form the skyline of modern Shanghai. Despite CCP taking over Shanghai in 1949, the skyline and visual perception of the Bund were maintained, besides foreign financial institutes withdrew and a

few public sculptures were removed. Entering the 1980s, a new round of public construction in Shanghai began. New and significantly higher skyscrapers were built behind the Bund. The skyline of the Bund that dominated the old Shanghai was overshadowed by new super-tall images. The spectacle thus changed its appearance once again to be another different perception. The urban space was re-mythologised to regenerate the real experience with new phantasmagorical impulse. Within this new spectacle, the phantasmagoria of the Bund diminished. However, diminishment did not mean its unimportance. Its particular visual conglomeration of multiple architectural images has been maintained as 'a nostalgic waterfront, a reminder of an alleged open, decadent and cosmopolitan Shanghai of the past, a reminder that is currently revitalised as a model for the future.'¹³⁶

To keep such a nostalgic waterfront, Shanghai city planners deliberately re-oriented the Bund to visualise itself as a focal point of new Shanghai. Since 2008, all the architecture is being refurbished to remain the appearance of the old Bund by which the 'Golden Age' in the 1930s reemerges in the real experience of new urban space. New visual technology is also applied to re-render the Bund as new spectacle. Digital projectors supplied by British technology, Barco Manufacture, are deployed to cast dazzling lights on the HSBC Building and Customs House. By such visual rendition, the Bund is restored as the spotlight of the new city panorama. Apart from this refurbishment project, the boulevard has been further reshaped. The road has been altered to push all forms of public transportation such as buses and taxis down into underground tunnels. The carriageway has been reduced from eight lanes to four lanes to increase public spaces for pedestrians. Since then, only pedestrians have had access to the surface, which is now effectively an observation deck.

Lujiazui

The Bund has been remade into an observation deck for spectators, who stand enchanted by the showpiece of the past, but more importantly, impressed opposite Lujiazui as it

¹³⁶ Kloet, J. de & Lena, S. (2013). Pudong: The shanzhai global city. *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16(6), p 704

performs a new sovereignty of money, finance and investment, illuminating the spectacle of Shanghai's future. The international financial centre in Lujiazui has been born from the development of Pudong, or the Eastern Shore district of the Huangpu River (see more details about Pudong in the next chapter). Shanghai's re-imagined Eastern Shore dates back to the early 1980's, as soon as Deng Xiaoping's strategy of opening and reform began taking root elsewhere, the seeds of Pudong's development were planted.¹³⁷ After Deng Xiaoping's 1992 tour of the south, in Shanghai, Deng's tour was interpreted as a green light for the development of Pudong. Since then, Pudong has been developed as a special economic zone by which Shanghai also set off its resurrection as an international capital centre. New fiscal policy and foreign investment from the world's largest firms propel the boom of Pudong.¹³⁸ Radical construction frames public infrastructure and refreshes urban fabric, whereby a global space immersed with flexibility, mobility and fluidity are formed.¹³⁹ Appearances of elitist and mass consumption, international companies, financial institutes, foreign tourism and immigrants have been permeating daily life by which the spectacle recurs as the real experience of being global. A commercial district is built to enunciate the city's reemergence. In such a prosperous district, Lujiazui is spotlighted as the central place in which various international banks, CBDs and high-end shopping malls are intensively located. Its exhibition of super-tall iconographies visually connects its opposite shore district, the Bund, configuring a spectacle of new Shanghai.¹⁴⁰

Between the Bund and Lujiazui, an unusual appearance emerges. Two different spectacles are symmetrised along one river. They are folded to face each other in the presence of the same city. Regarding this visual symmetry and hybridity, Christopher Lockwood, a journalist for *The Economist* and *The Daily Telegraph*, described his experience. 'When you stand on the Bund, in Shanghai, you have a sweep of well-restored colonial palaces flood-lit behind you, and in front of you, across the Huangpu River, the winking fairy spires of 21st century

¹³⁷ Greenspan, A. (2012). The Power of Spectacle. *Journal of Cultural Research*. 4 (4), p 81-95

¹³⁸ Wu, F. (2000). 'Global and Local Dimensions of Place-Making: Remaking Shanghai as a World City', *Urban Studies* 37 (8): p 1357-77

¹³⁹ Gamble, J. (2003). *Shanghai in Transition: Changing Perspectives and Social Contours of a Chinese Metropolis*, London: Routledge Curzon, p xi

¹⁴⁰ Greenspan, A. The Power of Spectacle. *Journal of Cultural Research*. 4 (4), p 81-95

Pudong.¹⁴¹ Indeed, the spectacle of the Bund has illustrated 'an icon on postcard and travel guides, a compulsory element in the present-day promotion of Shanghai sight-seeing'.¹⁴² What is more attractive to spectators, the old financial centre that renders the nostalgic past of the 'Golden Age', is facing the showpiece of Lujiazui. This new financial centre is refashioning the city skyline with its super-tall landmarks that erect with the futuristic design and high-tech curtain walls. Such a shining appearance of a new financial centre attracts our perceptions into the dominant spectacle that also projects the vision of city's future.

Insofar as the past and the future meets in presence, the spectacle visually actualizes this temporal passage as the real experience of obvious things and overflowing images.¹⁴³ In light of Benjamin, spectacle also captures time and transforms such temporal flow as constellating images, which are experienced by dispersed spectators as visual streams. While happening to Shanghai, this spectacle is rather divided by the Huangpu River into two different spatiotemporal coordinates, the Bund and Lujiazui. Between the Bund and Lujiazui, the visual fluidity that is driven by the mobility of images has a delay or a disjuncture. This visual disjuncture comes from the surface of the Huangpu River, whose natural scene is perceived as a contrast to the artificial scenes of the Bund and Lujiazui. What is more, there is no bridge built across the river to connect the mobile images exchanging between two sides. An explanation given to the absence of bridges is to preserve a perfect panoramic view of Lujiazui. All transportation that interconnects the Bund and Lujiazui is reduced to underground tunnels traversing beneath the river surface.

This deliberate technique of Shanghai urban planners amplifying the visual effect of spectacle is differential while the spectacle recurs between London and Shanghai. Since bridges between the Bund and Lujiazui are scarce on the surface of the Huangpu River, bridges are rather prevalent on the surface of the Thames River. There are thirty-three bridges built in London across the Thames River. These bridges are concretely embedded

¹⁴¹ Lockwood, C. (2005). 'China Crisis?', *Wallpaper*, March

¹⁴² Jansson, A. & Lagerkvist, A. (2009). The Future Gaze: City Panorama as Politico-Emotive Geographies, *Journal of Visual Culture*, Vol 8 (1), p 35

¹⁴³ Benjamin, W. *Arcade Project*, p 460-463

into daily traffic to facilitate the mobility of images that are diffusing around as ubiquity. What is more, they are not geographically connecting different areas of London; visually, they are also images, for instance, London Bridge, Tower Bridge, or Millennium Bridge, integrated within the city spectacle that immerses the urban space in its visual infiltration. While one is strolling along the bridge to see the spectacle of London, he/she who stands on the bridge is simultaneously an image of the spectacle to be seen.

Panorama

This sightseeing of bridges, London and Thames River is not hard to enjoy. Tour buses can provide a ride to penetrate the urban space. Using tour ride, those ubiquitous images scattered around different spatial positions, e.g. Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, and the O2 Stadium, are re-woven as a live montage, of which the city spectacle is visually flowing by the upper deck of the bus. As compared to the tour bus penetrating into the spectacle and capturing detailed images, an overall and dominant panorama of London's spectacle has to be seen in a necessary distance. This distancing can be found by a proper place, London Eye.

London eye, as an iconic Ferris wheel of London, is located on the South Bank of the River Thames, rotating from east to west, and provides a panoramic view of the Great London. Since the Ferris wheel was exhibited at the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, this machine's functional value, rotation, was shortly transformed as a craft to arouse the heterogeneous desires of consumers who were looking for the phantasmagorical experience of fun.¹⁴⁴ According to Dutton, this showpiece of cultural industry not only renders the industrial regime with a phantasmagorical encapsulation to enchant subjects. Moreover, such device is reproduced and dispersed around consumer society as 'the political fragments' to create 'wonderland' or 'fun fair' whereby all the positive energies, i.e. desires and

¹⁴⁴ Dutton, M. Fragments of the Political, or How We Dispose of Wonder, *Social Text* 110. Vol.30, No.1. p 111-113

passions, are re-channeled away from a collective intensity.¹⁴⁵ Now, London Eye is not only a little machine rotating in a fun fair but, mechanically and visually, grounds itself as a spectacle. Its technique of rotating is not merely for pleasure but further about a curiosity to observe the sovereign view of entire spectacle of London. Such a political resource of visual domination is calculated by money to distribute individually to each spectator's payment. Climbing the steel-framed bottom and entering into one of the capsules, passengers move up along the rotation of wheel till 135 meters height on the top. Looking the east side, one can see St Paul's Cathedral, Canary Wharf, the City of London, the Shard, Tower Bridge, the Tower of London, and ArcelorMittal Orbit built in Olympic Park in Stratford. Looking towards the west, are Westminster Palace, Parliament Square, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, and Hyde Park. Facing towards the south, one can see the Tate Modern and the broadcasting tower on Crystal Palace. All such shining and fragmentary images, either new building like the Shard or inheritance like Big Ben, are scattered around urban space and also visibly constellated to gather old and new, or past and present, in an overwhelming spectacle.

When spectacle reappears to Shanghai as another city panorama, the perception is totally different from London. The visual effect of distanciation to enjoy a panoramic view of entire Shanghai is found at the top of the skyline – the 101-story Shanghai World Financial Centre erected at Lujiazui. Compared to London's panorama, the technique of the Shanghainese to achieve the dominant visual effect is different. The former uses the mechanical rotation of the Ferris wheel, but the latter uses the high-speed liftoff of the elevator. Elisha Graves Otis exhibited its elevator of passenger safety at the 1853 New York World's Fair in Manhattan. His engineering craft, a safety brake system, functioned automatically the instant the hoist cable broke. This technique of stopping the hoist from plummeting created a miracle of overcoming gravity by which people can conquer height. Since then, the elevator has been not just a mechanism for vertically transporting things but transformed as the public utility. Super-tall buildings for people to touch the sky and reside in the air were not impossible.

¹⁴⁵ Dutton, M. Fragments of the Political, or How We Dispose of Wonder, *Social Text* 110. Vol.30, No.1. p 111-113

Such devices are then widely used by skyscrapers to diffuse around daily life. Without their function of elevating, the super-tall images cannot be erected, and the panoramic view of the entire spectacle cannot be reached either. In this sense, the elevator is itself a mechanical integrity by which subjects can achieve the phantasmagorical experience of enjoying the spectacle from the top. It is admitted that the functional value of elevation, to supplement Dutton here, can be seen as another alterity to the function of rotation of the Ferris wheel that is refashioned as a phantasmagorical capsule of rendering the cultural industry to enchant subjects. That is to say, another fragmentary device of elevating is uncovered to enable the real experience of subjects to perceive spectacle as its heterogeneous appearance, a panorama viewed from the top.

London Eye lifts spectators to the top with slow rotational speed, thirty minutes of each circle. The experience of Shanghai World Financial Centre is different. From bottom to top it rockets up at the rapid speed of eight meters per second. During the elevation, not only can ear pressure be sensed, but space capsule sound effects have been also added to simulate the experience of speed as if from inside a rocket deliberately. Strong emotions are rendered to excite each spectator. This rapid ejection of spectators to the top must owe a debt to the industrial regime that never ceases the technological upgrade of elevators from manual control to automation of vertical transport. A relation between phantasmagorical experience and machine can be observed here. Bataille demonstrates the ultimate contents of human beings, i.e. death, sexuality, cult, or ecstasy, as heterogeneous expenditure by which the vital impulse is discharged to affirm life. Deleuze contends such vital intensity of our lives has been simulated by the industrial mechanism as a creative force to reshape subjects in a sensory experience of our body. In other words, the industrial regime upgrades the machine and also reproduces our desires, and then such desires are channelled into the phantasmagorical experience created by the machines. In this respect, the sensory experience of high-speed ejection utilising elevators technically simulates a nervous stimulant to the physical sensibility. This simulation enables the expenditure of desires to connect the machine of elevation. That is to say, high-speed mechanical ejection of subjects to the top feels like an ejaculation of curiosity and fear to the sovereign. Also, the sovereign

view of spectacle as city panorama is a rendition of freedom over the real world, enjoyed by subjects whom the mechanical force lifts up to the top of super-tall icons.

The three observational decks are located on the 94th, 97th and 100th floors (492 metres from the ground). It is most intriguing that the deck on the 100th floor is designed as a 55-meter corridor made of transparent glass. Skywalk comes true. While walking in the air, one can see the Huangpu River lying between Lujiazui and the Bund. The Bund and city on Eastern side of the river are visible but far away. They seem vague as background in contrast to the super-tall spectacle of Lujiazui, down below, dominating the panorama. The huge pinnacle of Jin Mao Tower stands in front. To its left side, Shanghai Tower (higher than the Shanghai World Financial Centre) and CBD intensively occupy the space; to its right side, Oriental Pearl Tower visually stands out from the surrounding super-tall images. Viewed from the top of Lujiazui, Shanghai World Financial Centre, Shanghai Tower, Jin Mao Tower and Oriental Pearl Tower, the four skyscrapers sketch the panoramic perception of city spectacle.

A visual comparison is easily experienced. The spectacle perceived from London Eye as the panorama is a constellation of conglomerating past and new, or classical and modern. When the spectacle reappears as the panorama of Shanghai, viewed from the top of SWFC, a visual explosion of super-tall images is rather overflowing to dominate the entire urban space. This visual explosion is directly fuelled by a super-tall race of building the tallest spectacle in Shanghai, or even around the globe. Within the last two decades, the height record of Lujiazui has been broken over and over again. Oriental Pearl Tower built in 1994, the 88-story Jin Mao Tower completed in 1998 with the height of 421m, 101-story Shanghai International Finance Centre ended in 2008 with the height of 492m, and the 121-story Shanghai Tower ended in 2014 with the height of 632 m.¹⁴⁶ Such a race is reshaping the skyline. The urban jungle of spires and roofs then surround spectators standing on the top to share a futuristic vision, new and hypermodern Shanghai.

¹⁴⁶ Knight, F. (2015). *Global Cities Skyscrapers 2015 report*. [online] Available: <http://www.knightfrank.com/resources/global-cities/global-cities-pdf/knight-frank-global-cities-skyscrapers-2015-report.pdf>. Last accessed 5th Oct 2016

Different appearance by which the spectacle is perceived as different experience also visualises the city with a different myth. Regarding the panorama from Lujiazui, Shanghai city planners have drawn on a new myth of indulging the fantasy of the future of this town, or even including the post-revolutionary China.¹⁴⁷ This enchanting myth cannot be merely understood as the level of representing a hidden and alienated power that is manipulating all the fascinating appearance. Such a myth should reduce the power of urban planning and reveal it in the appearance. That is to say, such power of mythologizing should stand out to congeal itself in these intensively built super-tall images. This super-tall spectacle is not a negative concealment of reality but a positive actualization of our real experience in the appearance of those lubricious façade.

The sleek, seamless and translucent façade of skyscrapers, namely curtain walls, is the visual integrity of the panoramic view of spectacle in Lujiazui. It is not merely an aesthetic capsule that sheathes the bare steel skeletons to attract subjects and beautifies the urban space. What is more important, its existence, as sleek appearance, is to reveal and enunciate the intrinsic nature of such dominating skyscrapers in Lujiazui, that is, the speed of Chinese construction, i.e. the super-tall race. Such façade lets super-tall spectacle enunciate independently in appearance, rather than a pre-given idea that represents itself as the essential. Regarding this sleek façade as sheathing, Dutton's argument about 'streamlining' can be referenced. Streamline, as an artistic form of sheathing machine, is not only to encapsulate mechanism but rather a self-expression of the machine that congeals modernity as an obvious thing rather than as an idea.¹⁴⁸ In this sense, given that speed is a salient feature of capitalistic power, this power embodied by speed must be then experienced by the real and perceptible form of being streamlining and frictionless.¹⁴⁹ Now this appearance of streamline to visualise speed has another two alterities, one is high-speed elevator of ejection, and another is sleek façade of fluidity. The former lifts spectators from inside the skyscrapers to view the latter sheathing buildings from outside panoramically. Both of them

¹⁴⁷ Ritzer, G. (1999). *Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, cited by Jansson, A. & Lagerkvist, A. (2009). The Future Gaze: City Panoramas as Politico-Emotive Geographies, *Journal of Visual Culture*, Vol 8 (1), p 44

¹⁴⁸ Loewy, R.F. (2002). *Industrial Design*, London: Duckworth, p 13

¹⁴⁹ Dutton, M. Fragments of the Political, or How We Dispose of Wonder, *Social Text* 110. Vol.30, No.1. p 116

affirmatively actualize the Chinese speed that unceasingly varies reality in the spectacle.

4th Chapter – Myth

Re-justification of Representation

The spectacle appears as a phantasmagorical experience that is inescapable and irresistible, in which ordinary life is enchanted and preoccupied with the overabundance of commodity and immersion of technology. What is more, this ubiquitous spectacle is on the journey to travel time and space to recur in presence as a different and sensational experience. This reappearance of spectacle never ceases to continue. This chapter enunciates a significant association between spectacle and myth.

As argued in the first chapter, spectacle is interpreted as a myth, which is an omnipresent play of signs to represent reality as an infinite encryption of symbolic differences. Then, through this symbolic exchange, semiotic excess is generated to encapsulate reality in the surplus of re-interpretability whereby the subject is reproduced as a product of infinite meanings. This acentric and infinite play of visual signs (images) renders reality as spectacle and transforms this rendition as true visible facts. Barthes argued that this spectacularisation was 'naturalisation', that is, an apparent substantiation of the semiotic references conceived by ideas as obvious images to cover the real plane whereby the subjects are convinced.¹⁵⁰ However, this naturalisation is also an appropriation and concealment of reality by a phenomenal myth. No matter how much this myth decorates this real world and convinces our subjects, it rather simulates reality merely on a virtual plane of signs. In this respect, mythologisation is not only representing and encrypting reality but also preoccupying and veiling it, in short, 'de-realization'.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Barthes, R. *Mythologies*, p 134-140

¹⁵¹ Kierkegaard described the modernity that had transformed the society as a network of social relations. Individuals had to be intermediated and extracted as 'being public'. However, such being public is merely an instrumental community in an abstract form. This form was like a 'phantom' to veil each real individual and integrate it into an unreal society. Kierkegaard, S. (1962). *The Present Age*, Alexander Dru (trans.), New York: Harper & Row, p 59-60;

Marx, in his fetishism of commodity, also criticised that real things were extracted and alienated from its use-value but became a spectre of exchange-value. This ghostly form of value-relation not only alienated things but also alienated subjects and their labours and needs. All the things and subjects had to be extracted and involved into a social network of exchange and calculation. See Marx, K. (1983). *Das Kapital*, vol 1. The section

De-realization can also find its suggestion from Nietzsche. In *Twilight of the Idols*, he articulated 'the last breath of a vaporising reality'. This vaporisation of reality, for him, reveals a hybridization of the real plane and the apparent plane since the boundary between both of them is blurred. The present world is thus thrown into an odd situation that is neither real nor apparent. That is to say, reality is represented and concealed by the ubiquitous system of signs as a symbolic plane, so the presence is not real. On the other hand, the presence is not apparent since the faculty of representation endlessly exchanges signs and reproduces meanings to reify those privilege ideas. As for Nietzsche, those 'useless and superfluous ideas' have founded hierarchical oppositions between essence and appearance, substance and form, invisible and intelligible, or interior and exterior. The inferior appearance is annulled.¹⁵² The presence is suspended to float adrift along the infinite reproduction of signs and dispersion of images, being neither real nor apparent. In short, the world recurring in presence exists in virtuality of signs, a ghostly phantasmagoria over the reality. Spectacle stems from here, namely, a visual mythologisation to de-realise the world.

Spectacle is enunciated as a visual mythologisation to de-realise the present world. In this regard, it is little more than an optical pertinence of the faculty of representation to proliferate images whereby a homogeneous structure reproduces and varies itself as 'spectacular' to render reality and enchant subjects. Then, the spectacle is rather reduced as an instrument of encapsulating the real world in a visual drama. This instrumentalisation of spectacle neglects it as an irreducibility of spectacular surface that conjures up the semiotic excess on imaginary plane, and also ignores it as an erotic machine that arouses the inner intensity to consume life in perceptual experience as surplus as visual sensation, but only becomes a representational mechanism of manipulating reality as a puppet of self-enunciating structure. This understanding of spectacle casts it in a negative light. If this opinion is simply adhered to, the modern society of the spectacle is a visual representation

quoted from chapter 1, 'The Commodity', *The Portable Karl Marx*, Kamenka, E. (ed.), New York: Penguin USA, p 444-461

¹⁵² Nietzsche, F. (1954). *Twilight of the Idols*, Walter Kaufmann (trans.), New York: Random House, p 485-486

to ground the homogeneous imperative of the industrial regime and justify its dominant conviction over actual lives repeatedly. Its images are the dispersive medium that inhabits trivial matters and extracts substantial lives as a homogenous form of commodity exchange and technological reproduction.

This critical analysis of spectacle is embroiled with Guy Debord, as clarified in the first chapter. He developed a critique of the spectacle as an 'inescapable *pseudo-world*' that can only be looked at as autonomous images as a concrete inversion of life.¹⁵³ While reality is encapsulated by an autonomous movement of the non-living images, Yomi Braester argues that spectacle manipulates the spectators' desires by an economy of commodification wherein "desire is produced by the spectacle and eventually redirected back at the spectacle; images turn out to be not the medium but the end."¹⁵⁴ In this sense, spectacle is nothing more than lifeless instruments for total domination, hardly fictionalised. In such a *pseudo-world*, the dissipation of desires is not unconditional but restricted and manipulated.

Facing this negative consciousness of decrying a *pseudo-world*, my argument is bifurcated from this negation to contend that liberal experience of subjects must do away with spectacle. Though spectacle needs the mechanism of representation to give visual rendition, representation does not have to encrypt a myth to preclude alterity. All these contentions must return to a rethinking of representation merely as one of the faculties of language to follow what has been discussed about language in the previous chapter. Regarding this rethinking, debts are owed to Foucault.

Foucault used his archaeological method, in *The Order of Things* (also reviewed in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*), to investigate genealogical discrepancy of European language since the 16th century. This archaeological method of examining the genealogical tree of language is philology. In terms of Foucauldian philology, there is no meta-language.

Language is not restricted to being merely a mechanical 'turnstile' by which subjects impose

¹⁵³ Debord, G. *The Society of the Spectacle*, p 3-7

¹⁵⁴ Braester, Y. "Shanghai's Economy of the Spectacle: The Shanghai Race Club in Liu Na'ou's and Mu Shiyong's Stories", *Modern Chinese Literature*, vol. 9, No. 1, p 40

self-consciousness as self-evident reference on things and appropriate them.¹⁵⁵ Language is neither a generic system that has an evolutionary linearity but disintegrated as differential faculties, i.e. resemblance and representation. Different faculties utter the same world of different things in the different order that differential subjects, e.g. the Chinese subject and English subject, encrypt as different knowledge. In this respect, language is the rather discursive and irreducible enunciation of things. It cannot be presupposed as a homogeneous system of reifying a transcendental and singular subject in speech to translate and appropriate things. In other words, language inhabits things, ontologically, whereby subjects depend on it to generate meanings, breed ideas, formulate knowledge and communicate with each other. It is an existential revelation of things rather than an immanent faculty of self-evident ideas to create and impose meanings on things. So all the history uttered in language is not a history of ideas but things. Since language inhabits things which subjects recognise to enunciate material order, the human brain cannot be supposed as an omnipresent linguistic machine of restoring a Babel consciousness. It must be admitted that an immanent ability to represent and encrypt all as generality never pre-exists. Subjects must also be fragmentized and scattered to enunciate their differential experience in a disparity of faculties. Pure translation between such disparate faculties is not possible.

In regard to translation, Benjamin can be also involved. In his 'The Task of the Translator', translation above all rests on its origin. It cannot be expected that any translation can transmit the origin to be translated as a transparent and univocal discourse to be fully and generically interpreted by all the readers.¹⁵⁶ In other words, origin is always, or at least partially, opaque to translators. Then, translatability of the original, or how significantly origin can be translatable, is crucial. This translatability reveals a critical point; that is, the original, despite being an irreplaceable and distant singularity, is rather repeatable to translation, which is a transmission and continuation of the original as its 'afterlives', whereby these 'afterlives' in translation, as the continuity of the original, never cease to obliterate a mysterious aura of the original and reproduce it in variation as re-interpretable.

¹⁵⁵ Barthes, R. *Mythologies*, p 134-140

¹⁵⁶ Benjamin, W. "The Task of the Translator", in *Illuminations*, p 70-71

Insofar as the original is relocated into an endless reproducibility, translation becomes a variable mimicry of the original. This mimicry tries to approach the original as closely as possible but can never reach it as an identical replica. This unreachability of the original leaves infinite possibilities for translation to repeat it in an equivocal reproducibility that transforms a likeliness of revealing origin in reoccurrence to be a multitude of variable replicas. At this point, if origin is seen as the birth of life, a kind of dynamics, which travels along time to drive history in discourse, as for translation, this life that is translatable and metamorphosed as different 'afterlives' in history rather inhabit its regeneration in language rather than in history. In other words, language is anterior to history, and then, appropriated and utilised by the latter as sources to continue the translatable origin. This ahistorical view of language presupposed the origin to be spoken, written, and recurring by disparate languages as scattering fragments of memory, and these fragments contained by the mutually isolated tongues can be interrelated by an intention. This intention is translation wherein incompatible languages can be overlapped as supplementary to retrieve a supra-historical kinship and converge at specific objects to refashion them as interchangeable in different discourses.¹⁵⁷ For Benjamin, this intention is not yet to restore the origin memorized as translatable and variable in fragments to be unitary, but re-map traces from the overlapped fragments to recollect the absent origin as unstably changeable and equivocal. In this sense, translation stands in a clash. Neither does it fully depend on the technology of linguistic representation to be a machine but erase the original aura, nor is it a poetic work that arouses the origin in an indigenous language as a constant flux. Rather, translation is derivative and ideational as if standing on a ridge between two different language forests, to call up alien language as a point of departure, without entering it, whereby an echo is triggered by this calling to sound between two incompatible languages as if the origin was echoing between them as irretrievable but to arouse its fragments of memory remaining in such different languages to resonate.¹⁵⁸ This case in which translation is positioned between clash and resonance to echo the original further relates to the dialectic of fidelity and originality. If fidelity indicates literal rendition of words as linguistic

¹⁵⁷ Benjamin, W. "The Task of the Translator", in *Illuminations*, p 72

¹⁵⁸ Benjamin, W. "The Task of the Translator", in *Illuminations*, p 77

representation of meanings, this denotative accuracy is rather estranged from a liberal connotation of the absent origin. In other words, the lower the distinction of language, the larger the extent to which information is transmitted, the more significant fidelity is reached, the less fertile a space is for translation; thus, the task of translation is to ground fidelity and transparency by linguistic representation of meaning in the presence, but also to transgress this limitation of representation to tolerate a surplus of 'untranslatability', wherein the unreachable origin inhabits the linguistic denotation but is irreducible and ungraspable to the latter, and is touched infinitely and fleetingly by the latter as only undecidable as looseness to indulge the semiotic exuberance.¹⁵⁹ At this point, such a touch of linguistic mechanism with the translatable sources retained by the origin cannot be harsh but tangent, and this tangential touch can be only performed by a pure language that is founded as an embedded modality into a language to release the spell of another, then, relocate such differences as supplementary to adapt each other.¹⁶⁰

So far, Benjamin's clarification of translation reveals a divergence from the Foucauldian view of language and representation. Benjamin adheres to the origin, which is translatable but irretrievable to recur along the passage of time in different language as scattered as fragments. However, Foucault does not share this nostalgia of origin as memory in the presence of translatability. For Foucault, disparity of language, as a dissension of enunciating faculty, rather undoes any inviolable identity of so-called distant and universal origin.¹⁶¹ In regard to disparity and dissension, representation should be reviewed as a rational faculty of substantiating reason in epistemological practice. In other words, it is merely one of the various faculties for the dispersed epistemic subjects to enunciate their discursive practice. Its positivity should be thus acknowledged, that is, a capacity of interpreting and enlightening the opaque world as transparent. This rational faculty can be neither entirely negated nor wholly affirmed, but as Foucault did, be revealed in terms of its limitation of being a generic form that rationalises anything. Furthermore, this tolerance of

¹⁵⁹ Benjamin, W. "The Task of the Translator", in *Illuminations*, p 81

¹⁶⁰ Benjamin, W. "The Task of the Translator", in *Illuminations*, p 80

¹⁶¹ Foucault, M. (1977). *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, Donald F. Bouchard (ed.), Ithaca: Cornell University Press, p 142

representation as coexistent with other discrepant faculties of expression rather echoes Benjamin who affirms representation as linguistic fidelity and transparency but also reveals its incapacity of exuding the opaque and unrepresented contents as surplus remaining from the origin.

Since representation is re-justified as a rational mechanism to coexist with other faculties, the subject is hardly identified as unitary with an exclusive reference but disintegrated and floating around the incommensurable disparity of language fragments. This justification can revise the critique of spectacle. Spectacle cannot be simply denounced as a generic representation of reality as a mechanical imperative of commodification. This representation should tolerate the recurrence of spectacle as disparity other than commodification, and also allows the mythical excess to overflow from commodification as connotative to the subjective perception.

Also, to disentangle the negative condemnation imposed on spectacle, representation, as one of the faculties of subjects enunciating their epistemic practice, must do away with self-consciousness that locates reality and spectacle into the dialectical repetition of negation and reconstruction (see more details in 1st chapter). Instead, representation should reduce to irreducible and real experience to affirm those empirical and perceptible 'surfaces' rather than to justify those essential ideas.¹⁶² If we still admit representation to entail reason, its reduction also exposed that reason is indeed immanent but cannot confine itself to a self-justifying authority.¹⁶³ The reason is not immanent to a transcendental subject but resides in an empirical practice of which subjects is bred by experiencing those fragmentary images and reproducible things, no more in service of self-consciousness thirsting for sovereignty. In this sense, to reduce representation is not to abandon reason but to cut off its conformity with the sovereign ideality. Representation is rather used as a positive and limited tool of embodying reason and simultaneously coexists with other heterogeneities.

¹⁶² Foucault, M. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*

¹⁶³ Deleuze, G. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p 93

Foucault's interpretation of a famous image, Diego Velazquez's *Las Meninas*, can enunciate this coexistence in which heterogeneities are unearthed and as differential knowledge in contrast with homogeneity. Velazquez (the painter himself) and other figures in presence are all gazing at the object, the King Philip IV and his wife, Mariana. If this gaze is the epistemological practice of subject, the object for such epistemic subjects is obscured. The Painter (Velazquez himself) in presence can be the self-justifying authority enlightened by reason (shine from a mirror) to presuppose and appropriate the object in high-profile representation (his canvas). A 'mirror' hung on the back wall leaves an image that visualises the object in an unobtrusive position. This unobtrusive image is exceptional to the rational faculty of representation illuminated by reason. Though this image is overshadowed, it rather bears heterogeneity of bringing the obscured out into light.¹⁶⁴ Foucault gives, at least, two hints. Ontologically, everything to be recognised, including the unobtrusive image, must be in the presence and nothing left as a distant origin in absence. On the other hand, epistemic subjects gazing at an object should be disintegrated, and their enunciation of objects is never homogenous but coexists between representation and other diversities. This coexistence means that the spectacle should be not understood as a generic representation of totalizing all the differences with a hegemonic reading. It is not necessarily a generic mythologisation of real life but should be demythologisation of any homogeneous *priori* as images on the surface of things. This demythologisation also echoes Barthes. Freedom of readers must be achieved at the expense of the death of the author, an omnipresent coding to assimilate everything into ideal presuppositions.¹⁶⁵ At this point, myth does not pre-exist as exclusive either. It is rather scattered and re-distributed as the differential experience of breeding disintegrated epistemic subjects and aestheticizing multiple interpretations. Thus far the journey is a practice in which spectacle varies in a genealogy of things, devices and images. In other words, spectacle inhabits things to be images on surface rather than consciousness, a show of things.

¹⁶⁴ Foucault, M. (2002). *The Order of Things: An archaeology of the human sciences*. London and New York: Routledge, p 33

¹⁶⁵ Barthes, in his essay on The Death of the Author, defined the author was 'a mediator, shaman, or relator whose performance was the mastery of the narrative code'. In other words, such omnipresent author is a ubiquitous logic operation of coding. It encodes and depletes substantial live, but also decodes and renders irresistible readings. Such 'narrative code' has its ultimate purpose is a repetition of a total domination traversing the history. Barthes, R. (1977). *The Death of the Author, Image-Music-Text*. London: Fontana Press, p 143, 148

Insofar as spectacle as a visual representation is justified, the hermeneutics of spectacle bifurcate themselves from the Hegelian-Marxist tradition towards (post)structuralism. This bifurcation disentangles the negative denouncements imposed on spectacle. Negatively, spectacle is seen as an illusion that alienates the subjects as an obstacle in appearance, and inebriates and restricts them to enchantment; this limitation wherein subjects are inebriated in what is reified and alienated from themselves is to be obsessed with a self-reflection, namely, narcissism, but without self-awareness of this self-reflection in spectacle being rather separation, deception and oppression, then, the dialectic of self-consciousness cannot be aroused to negate this illusion and reconstruct reality for a self-incurred totality. Alternatively, spectacle can be rather a derivative of representation to multiply images whereby reality is transcribed and mythologised on a virtual plane to enjoy the semiotic excess with an eruption of symbolic references. This visual myth does not simply assimilate alterity but allows an aesthetic experience of which the subject is dispersed to uncover various images. Borrowing from Deleuze again, what forces us to feel, rather than to think of, the spectacle, is our desires and impulses, not self-evident minds, aroused by the bodily sensation, while the subjects were travelling and immersed in the virtual and enchanting reality.¹⁶⁶ This travel then telescopes subjects from theory back to another Chinese myth, *modu*.

A Myth of *Modu*

This journey of Shanghai involves a term, '*modu*' (magic capital city), which was coined by a Japanese novelist, Yokomitsu Reiichi, the leading figure of neo-sensationalist fiction who deeply inspired the sensationalists in China, e.g. Liu Na'ou, Mu Shiyong and Shi Zhecun, etc. This term is adopted colloquially to describe the urban magic of Shanghai at the present, which enamours spectators in a perceptual exhilaration that is performed by the Chinese mechanism of modernisation unceasingly rotating and accelerating with a frenzied rhythm, though such acceleration has calmed during the last decade. This modern machine not only

¹⁶⁶ Deleuze, G. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p 94

reproduces for a quantitative progress but also proliferates desirable images to erupt as an exorbitant expenditure for those who inhabit such a machine.

Initially, '*modu*' coined by Yokomitsu was to delineate the old Shanghai during the 1920s and 1930s. The city spectacle of Shanghai visualised by Yokomitsu performed a dark myth of modernity in contrast to those Chinese sensationalists whose obsession with the phantasmagoria fabricated in the International Settlement immersed Shanghai in an unruly torrent of desires. This aestheticisation of the urban lives with the semiotic excess of romance, love, sex, and decadence, despite being cast by a surreal sensation of erotic exhilaration, cannot neutralise those ignoble and filthy scenes as discrepant to reflect those poverty-stricken sufferings that were also generated by the mechanism of modernisation. In regard to such filthiness, not only did Yokomitsu correspond to Mu Shiyong's delineation of ignoble images outside the heaven of the dance hall in 'Shanghai Fox-trot', but he also further penetrated into the city to play himself as ragpicker, rather than *flaneur*, to rummage through those wasted and unobtrusive images beneath the shadow of modernity illuminating the city as enlightenment. In this sense, for Yokomitsu, '*modu*', as an urban magic conjured by the modern society of spectacle, was not merely phantasmagorical but grimy and forlorn to throw the subjects into a desolation wherein the vigorous lives were exhausted and stifled by the unstoppable machinery of modernisation. Immersed by this grimy desolation, the *flaneur* and enchanting images were gone, but instead pedestrians were wandering as sluggishly as 'seaweed sedimented on the bottom of the sea', beggars squatting on the road contrasted the extravagant department stores, and the Bund, Nanjing Road, Art Deco style landmarks and boulevards were visually inverted by those filthy street scenes, slums, communal bathhouses, vendors, and skinned animals displayed in butcher shops.¹⁶⁷

Yokomitsu's dark myth of Shanghai during the 1920s and 1930s was hardly surreal but

¹⁶⁷ *Yokomitsu Reiichi ki*, (Collection of Yokomitsu Reiichi), Tokyo: Kawadesshobo, 1977, 31: 7, translated by Emanuel Pastreich in a paper submitted to a seminar at Harvard on Shanghai modernism, "Yokomitsu Reiichi's Shanghai" (Fall 1992), 15, cited by Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 317

visualised those realistic elements, whereby the sensational rhythm that was released by the surreal perception could mix with those characterless daily lives to reveal a 'complex tension' that embroiled the entire city in an unceasing conflict between colonialism and nationalism, and inebriation and revolution.¹⁶⁸ This complex tension has been loosened now, the post-revolution era of Shanghai, although modernity is fraught with the conflict between colonisation and revolution as a dialectical force to drive history till the present. Inebriation of urban lives in nationalism and patriotism, as a socialist technique adopted by the Chinese government to maintain the presence from any dissension, permeates the current Shanghai, but colonialism and revolution are rather transcribed into the memory that can be found at museums and those heritage buildings scattered around the city as fragmentary relics. This transcription of conflict into memory means that history driven by conflict reaches here for now but is temporally at a standstill in presence. Once history ends its drive, revolution is suspended and conserved as merely archives or exhibits for another cultural industry that is different from commodification, a spectacle of revolution on display. Accordingly, reality that is reconstructed by the endless conflict as historical variation is not historical, but rather becomes a repetitive visualisation of the unstoppable mechanism of modernisation that self-reproduces without any resistant conflict. Furthermore, this ahistorical reality, although its variation to future stagnates, does not reject what has happened and been experienced, e.g. struggle, suffering, poverty, etc., as memories that are conserved as images in the presence. Thus, the present Shanghai can still find visible traces to these realistic images as long as the modern machinery never ceases its realistic production and exchange that are fraught with banality, alienation and repression.

Vendors are salient among such realistic images. Since the ubiquitous supermarkets monopolise the consumption of daily necessities, vendors are marginalized by the spectacle that rests on the fixed-pricing system and comprehensive logistical system to be unobtrusive images, which but still survive to visualise the traditional art of the marketplace, bargaining, and still embed this art into the everyday life of the urban residents. One of the remaining

¹⁶⁸ Sakai, N. "Multi-ethnic Nation and Japanese Culturalism: On Cultural Studies and Internationalism," paper presented at the International Symposium, "Dialogue with Cultural Studies", at the University of Tokyo, March 17, 1996, p 14

sites to find these vendors is *nongmaoshichang* (farmer's market). Vegetables, fruits, aquatic products, poultry and eggs, meat, grain and oil, cooked foods, bean products, seasoning, snacks, and local specialty products, all converge at such a marketplace. Bargaining is always possible and enjoyed as a kind of craft, which is not merely quantitative calculation to save money, but an art of negotiation by which buyers and sellers are intercommunicated in a game as intimate as rivalry with the technique of bidding to circulate money as symbolic exchange that exudes a sensational gratification for the inner experience as if winning a gamble. That is to say, a sensation of worthiness is felt in snatching goods craftily in a rivalry of bidding.

When vendors converge at the farmer's market, a variety of trucks and vans assemble outside to deliver products here to form such a boom. Freight trucks can be seen as an integral component of the productive mechanism, which is unceasingly running as a conveyance to connect production and daily exchange in the marketplace. What is interesting is that their mobility is restricted in Shanghai. Their passage through the city centre during daylight is forbidden (between 7am and 8pm), even at the weekend, nor are they allowed to emerge downtown without licenses; some urban showpieces, such as Lujiazui, totally prohibit any freight vehicles all day.¹⁶⁹ Obviously, this limitation of freight mobility is a technique of urban governmentality by which to reduce the traffic congestion downtown due to the ponderousness and inconvenience of freight vehicles risking conflict with the traffic overflow during the peak time. More importantly, this restriction also visualises a phenomenon in the present Shanghai, that is, the city spectacle is varying, or rectifying itself to deliberately conceal and expel some productive elements from its phantasmagoria; at least, such productive images reflected by trucks cannot be publicised in daylight but only 'sneak' at night. In doing so, an immediate visual effect can be achieved on the surface. Those filthy and mediocre scenes, e.g. dirty vehicles, busy and tired workers loading piles of goods, etc., are constrained from the phantasmagorical vision that is enchanting subjects in ecstasy without caring about where all that is enjoyed originates and

¹⁶⁹ Wang, X.J. (2017). *Huochexianxingquyupandianhuadongpian* (Area traffic limitation of trucks in East of China). [online] Available: http://www.360che.com/tech/161226/73067_all.html. Last accessed 27th Oct 2017

is transported here. When city strollers are enamoured by nightlife conjured by such a magic city to get dispel their regular work and linger with leisure as nighthawks to be inebriated until sleep, such hidden production does not cease in shadow until morning. In this sense, to awaken Shanghai is not by sunlight but through those freight machines and vendors running overnight to prepare for the city spectacle that re-conjures its visual glamour the next day.

Restriction of freight machines and vendors visualises a reduction of productive elements in the city spectacle. Although showing of those images that reflects production is no longer ostentatious, they can be still found around the city from another example. Erect chimneys, busy factory, crowds of workers, old residence villages, huge warehouses, and dense railways, all such visual contents that depict industrialisation can be still found at Baoshan Iron and Steel Company located in Baoshan district remote from the city centre. These images marginalized and dimmed by the phantasmagoria that is illuminating downtown as a visual contrast rather remind travellers of an inerasable trace, that is, Shanghai was reconstructed by communists since 1949 to be a city of production, a homeland of proletariats, and a wonder of socialist culture. Such productive images shining in the remote areas rather never cease to affirm a disparity wherein the productive subjects exude their sensual torrent of inner intensity from production and dissipate it as an exuberance of collective commitment and loyalty other than a surreal surplus of eroticism and decadence.

A Myth of Money, a Credit-ruling Spectacle Recurring between Lujiazui and Canary Wharf/City of London

At this point, the flowering of modernity in Shanghai appears to still blossom, if modernity is understood as a dynamic process in which reality is reconstructed by endless production. In other words, the blossom of reality is reproduced by the productive dialectic of production and resistance, as already clarified before. In contrast to such solid and realistic variation on the daily ground, the surreal phantasmagoria released by the society of spectacle rather becomes an ejaculation of the erotic desires to flee from reality, but reality is still there. Although productive elements can be found to testify the blossom of modernity in the

steadfast reality, another visual experience rather provides a dissonance with this blossom. That is, while city spectators are strolling along Nanjing Road, or lingering at the Bund to feel crowds and traffic that channel a vital turbulence overflowing around the city, such delirium conjured by Shanghai, a city erotic machine, as a magical sensation is ostensibly attracted to the perceivable spotlight of Pudong, a symbol of new Shanghai, which overarches itself with the showpiece of hypermodernity that is visualised by Lujiazui as the new city dome. This dome not only delimits the city skyline but also overshadows the Bund, which led Nanjing Road to illuminate the old Shanghai as an urban wonder during the Golden Age, to claim a new '*modu*', wherein the productive reality is disappearing and modernity is also refashioned to face its end with the symbolic effervescences of which images are re-circulated to seduce subjects for unproductive expenditure in extravagance alone.

As argued in the 3rd chapter, the urban jungle fabricated by the height race of skyscrapers in Lujiazui has championed the wonder of Shanghai from the Bund. Here, the *flaneur* no longer stands on the Bund to gaze at such a high-rise showpiece in distance, nor lifts up to the crown to have a panorama of city spectacle, but penetrates into this spectacle to feel the extravagance cast by financial magic. In regard to this penetration, the Shanghai World Financial Centre (SWFC) not only provides a sensational skywalk tour on the top floor but also performs the most lavish site for prodigality at its shopping mall. To echo Nanjing West Road that is the westward extension of Nanjing Road, SWFC at Lujiazui also assembles all the luxury brands. This ostentatious expenditure not only unleashes an immediate sensation to those who are encapsulated in such extravagance by unreserved waste of wealth. What is more, those who enjoy themselves in such sensation of loss and prodigality are never the productive subjects who are used to struggling for subsistence and embroiled in necessary calculation of costs in marketplace, but the so-called 'elite' who live in the financial centre of Shanghai, ascend from necessity to be repugnant to the productive banality, then, thirst for an unproductive expenditure of life as heterogeneous as a miraculous moment. Although this shopping mall embedded into SWFC as another 'arcade project' of showing extravagance restricts the desire for heterogeneous excess to the luxury expenditure of wasting money, a critical point is revealed. That is, this sensation of wasting as prodigality is

no longer rendered as a surreal experience that escapes from the banal reality and productive suffering; it never flees towards an imaginary heaven and is actualised as a real and perceivable experience on a virtual plane filled with luxurious signs that has dimmed and even displaced reality. Also, as already stated, the dialectical reconstruction of reality as productive is being restrained, since revolution, which is presupposed as rational utilization of violence to remake reality rather than the unreserved release of excess nature to destroy it, has been frozen as exhibits in museum, particularly while post-revolutionary China is claiming to step into the society of affluence. Once the concern of poverty and survival fades out, resistance is thereby neutralised by affluence as unnecessary. Based on such two aspects, the subjects who seek to improve their real lives have to self-renounce revolt that becomes impossible but choose another way, being seduced by the unproductive expenditure to engage themselves in the society of money to work and make money. For them, work is not oppressive anymore, nor is money alienating, but erotic channels of dissipating life as impulse unleashed as alternative to revolt. Then, an extravagant spectacle like the scenes of the shopping mall in SWFC is not treated as struggling but a visible allurements of stimulating the subjective impulse to make more money and waste more. In this case, spectacle does not need to conceal or escape from reality because there is no antagonism, then, the spectacle grounds itself in reality to dissolve the real into the spectacular.

Thus far, money, rather than revolution, gathers the crowds in phantasmagorical consumption, not in campaign, and also distinguishes symbolically, not productively, the elite from the masses through ostentatious waste. Through this excessive consumption, money is also mobilised to overflow and vitalise Shanghai. That is to say, the immersive spectacle of consumption can also be a special channel for dispersing money around everywhere. Regarding dispersive money, one question arises here. Since consumption is a technique of spending money, how is such immersive money circulating? In this respect, another technique should be further discussed. Various financial apparatuses of banking, mortgages, personal loans, and credit cards should be involved. They are engineering an

omnipresent circulation of money to refashion the phantasmagorical experience and energise mass ecstasy of consumption.

Thanks to such money flow, individuals can buy in excess, and they are gratified as 'happy' in excess. This exhilaration not only recurs in the lavish expenditure of shopping malls at the financial centre of Lujiazui but also happens as the commodity fetishism at Oxford Circus that also presents a spectacle of money cult. To worship money is because of an exclusive reasoning, that is, money is channelling and releasing power. This power is concentrating to include anything and also discursive to disperse everything. It is circulating with money to vitalise ordinary life and endows austere and boring daily routines with a phantasmagorical expenditure. In short, money is a bio-technique in which financial mobility enriches everyday life and experience.

If money is interpreted as a bio-technique that inhabits the immensity of excess energy to channel it out as intensity for expenditure, this expenditure through money, being surplus to the productive subsistence, cannot be condemned as the alienated needs of money, but should be re-justified as an erotic mechanism, which internalizes the money flow as an intrinsic capacity of investing the inner flux in the phantasmagorical experience. In this regard, money as a channel of internalization to release and dissipate the inner impulse is reversible to the external reification by which subjects exchange themselves as calculable labour in production. Then, the dialectical variation between internalization and reification, which is presumed to happen through a conflict between them, is revised to happen without conflicts through monetary expenditure, though this internalization restricts the gratification of the inner experience to money alone. Thus, to spend money in excess does not have to merely objectify the subject of production in necessity as subjection to the object of exchange in rationality, but should be affirmed as a subjectification wherein lies an unruly capacity overflowed by bodies to desire more than subsistence through making more things and spending more money. This subjectification in the form of money is to master things as erotic objects by which the subjective excess is exuded rather than alienated. At this point, re-circulation of money in the form of phantasmagoria can be justified as a channel of

subjectification in which the heterogeneous elements, e.g. fantasy, joy, vanity, and enchantment, etc., can be invested to consume life to exceed the productive imperative. In other words, although money is re-circulated as a homogeneous mechanism to schematise the consumption as regularity and measurability, the subjective excess channelled by it towards expenditure is rather heterogeneous and irreducible to coexist with the endless reproduction in utility.

Thus far, the concept of money is formulated as a complex, which is bifurcated into a homogeneous and external circulation of calculability and also a bio-channel of internalization that consumes the excess life as heterogeneous. The latter is incongruous but symbiotic to the former that is utilised variably to form a ubiquitous system. As for this system of re-circulating money to everywhere, re-circulation indicates repayment, which has been formulating the daily practice as a hegemonic theme. Financial services grant flexible solutions to motivate spending, but these solutions are always conditional. All the borrowed money must be repaid in agreed instalments. Terms of repayment cannot be broken. Financial propagators always intervene in everyday life to formulate a positive science of money management, whereby personal wealth can be regulated, and a sustainable balance between income and expense can be maintained. The ultimate purpose of this precise regulation is to guarantee that debts can be repaid. In most cases, banks periodically write letters, email, or telephone clients to notify them of any change of terms and conditions. They also suggest convenient ways of repayment, e.g. online reimbursement, direct debit, or cheque. Also, some favourable modes of repayment are also introduced, e.g. to pay a little more monthly can reduce extra costs of interest. In this sense, repayment of debts intermediates daily practice. People are being cultivated as men/women of financial knowledge, a political-economic life.

For this economic life, repayment has been justified as a critical maintenance of credit or creditability. This creditability can be a financial accountability of repaying and sustaining the endowed financial credits, that is, spending and repaying responsibly. This creditability has two aspects. On the one hand, credit has become a normative 'benchmark', particularly in

the current situation of money overflowing and dispersing everywhere by its financing loans. Credit is used to diagnose, evaluate and distinguish all the people in debt. In this case, the wage is not merely a financial capability of affording but becomes an indicator of assessing a person's endurance of working to repay the debts or how much value of loan should be authorised. In other words, the wage has been scarcely productive, nor is it reserved and accumulated for subsistence alone, but is little more than a sign of showing a bearable position in this affluent society of spectacles that has been formulated by financial power. This bearable position does not have to be a revelation of real suffering to stir antagonism against spectacle but a stimulant, by which the subjects maintain work as a guarantee of their inherent capacity and affirmatively present this capacity of investable human capital as deposit to the financial authority that gives credit. Therefore, how much to earn is an evaluation of how much a person can sustain his/her credit, and credit also shows a worthiness of everyday life to be invested. In this logic, stable employment is a diagnosis of personal ability and judgment of this person as trustworthy or not.

This situation is evident in the tenement in London. For any tenant to rent housing via either agency or a private landlord, the credit check from national credit databases is a normative procedure of distinguishing the tenant. This vast database encompasses all the personal credibility, i.e. background, employment, repayment records, and debts. In other words, credits promulgated by the financial regime to infiltrate into daily life also anatomically examine everyone and collect their information of debts to configure a vast system. This system regards everybody as a specimen in surveillance. A credit history shown by the system as good or bad becomes an index for agencies or landlords to judge the accountability of tenant. Good credit history can be thus trusted to endow qualification to rent a new house. In this sense, credit becomes a governmental craft of the power channelled by finance to disperse and discipline the conduct of everyone. Credits/debts are re-circulated under scrutiny as an apparatus of 'index' of translating and reshaping the collective body of consumers to a transparently administrative system.

On the other hand, compliance with financial contracts or terms of repayment without breach is loyalty to the monetary regime. This loyalty submitted to the monetary regime, in return, means to be endowed with more credit and loans. For instance of the credit card, if the loan is repaid as requested and in time, the bank will gradually upgrade the card from ordinary to premium. This upgrade will authorise the increase of credit and grants more benefits, i.e. discounts on home insurance, free car service, and low-interest personal loans. In this case, credit becomes a bond of loyalty to channel the monetary regime and people in reciprocity. The regime substantiates its power and instils money to invigorate and conserve daily life through the technical evaluation of credits. The people also inhabit the debts and comply in obedience to be awarded more credit that is exchanged for their phantasmagoria of consumption. In short, credit has become a crucial craft of financial governmentality to weave an inescapable discourse in the capitalistic society of spectacles.

Financial power does not simply render a deceptive spectacle of looting the personal wealth by which the elite minority is enriched at the expense of the ordinary majority. David Graeber contends that this loot is happening now by the financial machine of loans to manipulate the world in debts. As for him, money is used to being invented as a measurement of value of things to utter the quantification by which trust between creditors and debtors can recirculate. This trust represented by money is mythologised as a moral obligation, and also a social convention, which traverses history to be not only an economic bond but also coexistence with other heterogeneities of the credit system, i.e. the gift economy. In this respect, money should not predominate as a rational faculty of representation that subtracts incommensurable qualities with the aid of violence to extract calculable equivalence from incalculable differences. Other than the marketing exchange, it is also a leitmotif that recurs in the presence of different forms of reciprocity to reveal an original power presuming human life in debt as a lasting redemption.¹⁷⁰ However, the regulation of credit and endowment loans must be admitted its positivity of governing masses in sustainable debts. With the aid of debts, money is circulated to nourish people

¹⁷⁰ Graeber, D. (2011). *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*, Brooklyn and London: Melville House, p 4-19, 37-41, 46-49, 52-62, 90-126, and 158-164

with pleasurable consumption and convince them of phantasmagoria exhibited by the monetary regime.

The credit system, as argued above, is diffusing into daily life. To acquire fiscal credibility, people repay in obedience and submit loyalty to the financial regime. This loyalty, or a cult of credit, easily re-orientates the journey between London and Shanghai from the phantasmagoria of Lujiazui to another spectacle, the



Figure 4.1 The City of London

preferred height of City of London (*the City*) and Canary Wharf. The City covers only 2.90 km² in area, colloquially known as the *Square Mile*. It is a central international hub, intensively encompassing various financial services and institutes, i.e. banks, insurance companies, and accounting firms.¹⁷¹ Just 2.5 miles (4 km) to the east, a secondary financial district is located at Canary Wharf, outside of the traditional City of London.¹⁷² Such twin financial centres become the beating heart of monetary re-circulation. All the monetary



Figure 4.2 Canary Wharf (highest building is Canada Square)

pulses, i.e. credits, investments, and loans, which are dispersing around everywhere to energise everyday life, are ultimately gathered in this beating heart. This heart affirms a sovereign power to energise everything living in the spectacle of London.

This financial omnipresence is overflowing as monetary circulation. Consumers worship such omnipresence in a manner reminiscent of solar worship. We worship the sun because it invigorates us with infinite energy. We worship money because it drives our consumption with fiscal impulse. Money power can be seen as one of the alternative channels to solar power, which exudes the excess of life as

¹⁷¹ Moves, H. (2017). *Removals City of London, Removals, Moving House in City of London Man and Van*. [online] Handymoves.co.uk. Available at: <https://www.handymoves.co.uk/greater-london/removals-city-of-london-ec1-ec2-ec3-manandvan.html>. Last Accessed 13th Oct. 2016.

¹⁷² Reuters. (2017). *Higher occupancy lifts Canary Wharf's Songbird*. [online] Available at: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKL2253602220070322> Last Accessed 11th Oct. 2016

heterogeneous expenditure as monetary consumption, and also Bataille's demonstration of money as a common denominator, which is the foundation of social homogeneity to extract all the activities as commensurable as calculable equivalence, which can be altered.¹⁷³ This solar principle of finance visually affirms itself in the appearance of the super-tall financial centres (figure 4.1 and 4.2). Along with the City, Canary Wharf contains many Europe's tallest buildings, including the second-tallest in the UK, One Canada Square. These super-tall spectacles have clouded the city horizon of London. They became part of the skyline, and in so doing ascend visually to the throne of sovereignty, like a sun shining down on us, shedding light on us so as to make us worship its sovereignty.

A Myth of Bubble, Being Excess of Monetary Expenditure

However, a critical point can be noted here. An architectural notion of 'vanity height' applies to such super-tall structures. Vanity height indicates the distance between a skyscraper's highest occupiable floor and its architectural top, as determined by CTBUH



Figure 4.3 juxtaposition of top crown and beer bubble

Height Criteria.¹⁷⁴ That is to say, vanity height is non-occupiable space. According to the statistics of CTBUH in July 2013, the world's top five tallest vanity heights are arranged thus: Burj Khalifa in Dubai, Zifeng Tower in Nanjing, Bank of America Tower in New York, Burj Al Arab in Dubai and Emirates Tower One in Dubai.¹⁷⁵ The non-occupiable height of One Canada Square is 130 ft (39.6 m), which is approximately 17% of the total height of 771 ft.¹⁷⁶ By this token of 'non-occupiable', those pyramid crowns atop the super tall buildings or those pinnacles penetrating the skyline can be associated with another phenomenon of the

¹⁷³ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol I Consumption*, New York: Zone Books, p 22-24; Bataille, G. *The Psychological Structure of Fascism. Visions of Excess Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 138.

¹⁷⁴ Vanity Height: the Empty Space in Today's Tallest, *CTBUH Journal*, (2013). Issue III: P 42-43

¹⁷⁵ Burj Khalifa in Dubai (vanity height 244 m/29% of total height 828 m), Zifeng Tower in Nanjing (133 m/30% of 450 m), Bank of America Tower in New York (131 m/36% of 366 m), Burj Al Arab in Dubai (124 m/39% of 321 m) and Emirates Tower One in Dubai (113 m/32% of 355 m), Vanity Height: the Empty Space in Today's Tallest, *CTBUH Journal*, (2013). Issue III: P 42-43

¹⁷⁶ One Canada Square, (2017). *SkyscraperPage.com*. [Online] Available at: <http://skyscraperpage.com>. Last Accessed 20th Oct. 2016

bubble (see figure 4.3). The spectacle of the pyramid top that overrides the city space as a non-occupiable space (the left image) is not built for economic utility and rationality, just like the right image of the bubbles, head floating on the top of beer. It is only aesthetic grounded on the very stone to affirm being excess of which the financial power is intensifying and exceeding height limit, or a border of utility and rationality, to thirst for sovereignty, a solar principle of money. Only in so overriding in sovereign height, the financial power can gather an overwhelming propensity to release money in intensity as a powerful overflow to disperse around everything. In this regard, the phantasmagorical carnival of overabundant commodities is rather an expenditure of such excess since financial power exceeds the limit of utility and rationality. All the financial apparatuses, i.e. credits, loan or mortgages, are a governmentality of expenditure to release as much intensity as possible.

The governmentality of monetary expenditure affirms the financial regime in the appearances, i.e. commodified phantasmagoria and super-tall iconographies. Inspired by Bataille, the money is a channel of driving an unrestrained energy flow sourced from the communal body of consumers, that is, their exorbitant desires, as a ubiquitous re-circulation in the form of investment. Desires are restless and heterogeneous in excess. Money to channel such desires is thus ceaseless. This excessive expenditure of money not only generates the phantasmagoria in London but also intensively proliferates extravagant projects in Shanghai to encapsulate its urban presence in a dominant spectacle. However, the investment as an entrepreneurial technique of re-circulating money in Shanghai is driven by a political incentive of retaining the growth and affluence, which is different from the marketing mechanism seen in London.

Graeber refers *Guanzi* to introduce coinage as a monetary technique by which the ancient Chinese society was institutionalised in debt.¹⁷⁷ According to Zhengyuan Fu, this technique was used by the traditional Legalism to affirm sovereignty as extravagant to monopolise the exchange of resources to regulate the expense of the masses. Through resolute totalisation, all channels of gratifying desires were controlled to domesticate people as obedient. In

¹⁷⁷ Graeber, D. *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*, p 219-221, 258-260, 268-270

return, national sovereignty can mobilise society to realise its will.¹⁷⁸ This political intervention of government in the market is now inherited. Cadres are not merely engaged in political mobilisation but also infiltrate into commercial activities as bureaucratic entrepreneurs to scrutinise and execute the decision-making.¹⁷⁹ Intertwinement of political profile and economic engagement weaves a powerful denominator of investing in public construction to drive the local government in debt to reproduce the grand projects whereby a fact of maintaining the economic growth can be justified. The discrepancy of taxation and banking can also be involved. From 1949 to 1980, a taxation system was used by the central government to centralise all the fiscal revenues, and reciprocally, disburse money back to the local governments. This fiscal monopoly was an important technique to remove any economic independence of locality and consolidate the political control of the central government. After 1980, fiscal centrality was de-centralised. Local governments reclaimed their fiscal autonomy, but the central financing was depleted. The system of dividing taxes was adopted in 1994 to re-strengthen the control of central government. A large portion of tax revenues was submitted to the central, and the small portion retained by the local governments. This tax system operates a regulatory mechanism by which money flow is re-circulated between local dispersion and central intensification. Banks are another channel of money. Unlike London, most of the Chinese banks are state-owned. Branches of state-owned banks are controlled under the 'dual leadership' of their bank headquarter and local government. In actual practice, bank branches are heavily swayed to the local government because the latter is controlling their personnel appointment, party organisation and logistical support.¹⁸⁰ This special support of local bank branches enables the loan decision to be positively swayed by the local government.

This monetary reciprocity between centralisation and de-centralisation can be a salient feature of 'the Beijing Model' that merges political authoritarianism and economic governmentality. Such political-economic hybridity here refers to a unique technique in

¹⁷⁸ Fu, Z.Y. (1996). *China's Legalists: the earliest totalitarians and their art of ruling*. An East Gate Book, P 36-37, 71-72

¹⁷⁹ Gore, L.L.P. (1999). The Communist Legacy in Post-Mao Economic Growth, *The China Journal*, No.41, p 30

¹⁸⁰ Gore, L.L.P. The Communist Legacy in Post-Mao Economic Growth, *The China Journal*, p 37

which macro-level bureaucratic regulation is interweaved with micro-level market operations, so constituting a merger between central planning and market-oriented practice. By such hybrid technique, monetary flow can be stimulated by the central government at the top and channelled through the local bureaucratic intervention to disperse around the market interaction at the bottom.¹⁸¹ Money is everywhere in China, permeating the practices of everyday life. It re-channels the exorbitant desires of the masses by various investment-intensive projects.

The prosperity of public construction can be entrepreneurial, generating spectacles by the creative deployment of resources and the reproduction of new urban landscapes that continually attract investment. However, it is also speculative, with a preference for simulating global images that stimulate local economic growth with renditions of phenomenal prosperity. Entrepreneurialism and speculation drove this urban spectacle to reach its zenith in 2008 with the Beijing Olympic Games, as investment became its developmental engine and significant sums were injected into the construction of city spectacles. Yet concentrated investment into the creation of the spectacle of the Olympics did little to avert China from entering recession. In order to maintain the spectacle of prosperity used to verify the country's revered socialist development path, the central government consequently launched an economic stimulus program (RMB 4 trillion/US dollar 586 billion) in 2008-2009. This stimulus package had the effect of generating a second compatriot wave of spectacles, most notably a series of skyscrapers and the extension of the public metro system. Spectacles were again fabricated through coalitions of central-local resources and investment, which compete for prestige based on their projects' exhibition of prosperity. Since 2008, this competition has entered into a global race to become super-tall, not just in Beijing, but also in many other cities such as Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong,

¹⁸¹ Regarding this money reciprocity, Gore's example of 'fishing' and 'reverse fishing' can be involved. 'Fishing' is a practice of which central agencies deliberately leave funding gap in a planned project to attract the local governments to fill gaps with their money and land the project in their districts. 'Reverse fishing' is rather a counterattack in which local governments intentionally show off attractive projects to trap the central agencies and then force Beijing to pump in funds. This arena of governmental crafts between locality and centrality is also a technical re-circulation of money flow. Gore, L.L.P. The Communist Legacy in Post-Mao Economic Growth, *The China Journal*, p 37-38

Nanjing, Wuhan, Shenzhen, Tianjin, Wuxi, Jiangyin, Shaoxing, Dongguan, and Wenzhou.¹⁸²

Skyscrapers are exemplary images of what constitutes the visual myth, but underground another spectacle is being constructed. Since the Olympics, 28 large cities—not including Beijing, Shanghai & Guangzhou—have been rapidly constructing underground metro systems. Among the different types of transport infrastructure available for construction of cities, the building and continual cost of maintaining and operating an underground transit system remains the most expensive. This huge cost requires accordingly intensive investment, constituting yet another extravagant showpiece this time beneath the city surface. Underground, China's metro spectacle could be associated with that of London. London Tube—as the oldest underground infrastructure constructed in the Victorian period, as well as being the largest metro system in the world by 2012—is a typical spectacle symbolic of modern industrialisation. The London Tube spectacle took 149 years to construct a total length of 420 kilometres. However, it has been surpassed by the Shanghai metro system which is second only to Beijing (439 kilometres, 3 kilometres less than Beijing), it only spent 22 years building it, which is half of the time Beijing spent building its own.

The speculative projects visualise a boom of images to proliferate the enchanting spectacle. Furthermore, spectacle never ceases to stimulate the leap of housing prices and living costs.¹⁸³ The phantasmagorical rendition accompanies the dramatic increase of Chinese housing prices in the last decade. Shanghai never ceases to champion this increase. Such a leap has been suspected as a speculative fever that is not based on market mechanisms and opposed to an economic rationality but to stimulate a significant bubble that would be burst. Concerning this bubble, a premise should be clarified. An overabundance of beautiful images drifting along the leap in housing price cannot be simply read as a market signal. All of these are little more than a governmental craft by which the political power to refresh itself takes the form of monetary re-circulation between decentralisation and

¹⁸² Anon, (2016). [online] Available at: http://www.skyscrapercenter.com/create.php?search=yes&status_COM=on&type_building=on, Last Accessed 14th Nov. 2016

¹⁸³ China real estate. (2015) *The ranking of Chinese cities in terms of housing price to income*. [online] Available: <http://esf.cs.fang.com/newsecond/news/16277798.htm>. Last accessed 15th June, 2016.

re-centralisation. The market mechanism or signal is a manipulative tool for the political control. In short, all such phenomena are ultimately aimed at governing.

According to this premise, all the phenomenal spectacles share a similar thread with Great Leap Forward (1958-1962). The Great Leap Forward is an economic craft of re-channeling the revolutionary passions sourced from the masses as an intensity to create an extraordinary miracle. In other words, the GLF is not a political economy in economic rationale but rather a general economy of excessive expenditure. Frank Dikotter criticised GLF as a catastrophe made by a brutal dictator.¹⁸⁴ From the perspective of economic rationale, he is certainly not wrong. From the standpoint of general expenditure, GLF to harden 'positive' orthodox economics from (Bataille's) general economics is rather an intense spectacle rendered by waste, destruction and death, which are also the ultimate and heterogeneous contents of human expenditure. Despite the excess in the general economy, the GLF can rather be understood as a governmental symbiosis in which the political economy of production in utility is fused with the gift economy of unproductive expenditure in waste. Inspired by Foucault, this hybridity rests on a power effect in which a socialist governmental art substantiates reason into an irregular exercise on the collective bodies to tempt and bifurcate their daily activities from utility toward devotion to a communist miracle. This bifurcation reveals that the GLF, as a kind of intense politics, did not utterly abandon the utilitarian exercise of socialism as a governmental reason, since the economic Five-Year Plan was insisted on as productive accumulation. In this sense, this campaign was embedded by the political sovereignty into utilitarian production as an excessive exudation of revolutionary intensity. Also, to entail the governmental utility, the GLF channelled and utilised the intensity of the masses as human capital to invest in extensive public construction, e.g. infrastructure, dams, and irrigation systems.¹⁸⁵ At this point, this hybrid governmentality of excess and utility becomes an intrinsic practice wherein the revolutionary subjects invest their wills, loyalty and commitment into a distinctive technique of re-circulating between homogeneous utility and heterogeneous wonder. If this viewpoint

¹⁸⁴ Dikotter, F. (2010). *Mao's Great Famine: the history of China's most devastating catastrophe, 1958-1962*, Bloomsbury.

¹⁸⁵ Lippit, V.D. (1975). "The Great Leap Forward Reconsidered", *Modern China*, Vol.1, No.1, p 93-113

is adhered to, the visual mythologisation by the leap in house prices and extravagant projects is not merely founded on a political economy of reproduction and accumulation. It does not simply represent an economic logic but should be rather a locus of the bio-politics in which the excessive desires of the people can be released and dissipated in the form of investing and consuming money as a kind of heterogeneous expenditure.

The release of such insatiable desires is always exceptional to rationality but naturally wastes and overproduces.¹⁸⁶ This overcapacity of the housing market is surplus but also based on two factors. Firstly, the needs of residential housing are actual and solid. Since the end of the last century, an immense human capital that has been accumulated by rapid urbanisation generates a significant need of houses to live in a city such as Shanghai, which can be invested to stimulate the leap of housing prices according to the supply-demand marketing rationale. On the other hand, the demand for housing can exceed the real need being surplus as greed for extravagance and other symbolic exuberances. That is to say, to invest in the housing market is not only confined to usage that concerns subsistence and conservation but also for excess that rather cares about ostentation to show a hierarchical distinction. This surplus is not necessary to survival but rather psychologically allures the subject to invest through mortgages to own more than one, whereby the financial regime would overload the circulation of money to respond to the excess needs.

Thus far, the bubble can be re-interpreted. According to the economic rationale, the bubble is an overabundance stimulated by a speculative fever or economic irrationality but cannot be consumed as real; in short, it is a dangerous phantom. If fixed with this rationale, the Chinese society of affluence is little more than a spectacle of the bubble and this bubble is perhaps vulnerable to bursting. However, the fever or overcapacity is not just a purely market activity entailing rationality but rather the instinctual desires, passions and fantasies exceeding to release by a surplus expenditure of money. In this regard, the bubble is an excess of the expenses in the disguise of market signal. Compared with the bubble of investment, the utopia of revolution, i.e. the GLF, is an alternative art of governmentality

¹⁸⁶ Bataille, G. The Notion of Expenditure, in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 116-129

utilised by the revolutionary regime that concentrates human capital as discrepant to the liberal art of using the market-medium as a dispersive mechanism. The former is an excess of vital energy to affirm itself by money, and the latter does by revolutionary intensification. Then, recurrence of spectacle is bifurcated from the commodified phantasmagoria to arouse love, pride and commitment in socialist wonders. In this sense, the bubble does not entail an economic rationale, and the utopia is not a consciousness on the ideological plane but exuded as a miraculous moment that can be invested as a reward to stimulate the creative capacity of the masses by unleashing their heterogeneous excess, e.g. passions. They are both the varied bio-politics in which the instinctual expenditure discharges energy to exceed and affirm sovereignty. In short, investment and revolution are heterogeneous ways of expenditure to gratify the insatiable and diverse desires of the communal body in a general economy.¹⁸⁷ Also, the bubble is not restricted to the subject of interests and utility that is reproduced by a rationale of political economy but exceeds this to inhabit the subject of excess by another governmental technique of the political manipulation of monetary re-circulation.

A Myth of Shanghai Expo

The above myth of money has encrypted the spectacle recurring between the spotlights of Pudong, Lujiazui, and the City of London as well as the Canary Wharf with an irresistible financial magic. Then, the travel of Shanghai as a new '*modu*' telescopes the city strollers to another myth, Shanghai Expo. The international exposition, or namely world's fair, is undoubtedly a mega-event. What is more important is that it is a mechanism of visualising a phantasmagorical experience to divert visitors and further re-fashion the regime in a myth of modernity. However, such exhibition of modern miracle and trading capability was historically hosted by Western nations. That is to say, the universal exposition was used to be a phantasmagorical apparatus of which the modern western regime affirmed its superior

¹⁸⁷ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol II The History of Eroticism & Vol III Sovereignty*

capability to illuminate and assimilate other supposedly inferior non-western civilisations.¹⁸⁸ This modern European myth rendered by Expositions has its rhetorical nature to manifest the collective thinking subject since Enlightenment also spreads the product of rational and logical procedure to other civilisations.¹⁸⁹ Michael Dutton also demonstrated this collective thinking subject as a Babel consciousness that appropriates the mechanism of representation to reproduce images and monopolise spectacle whereby the capitalism justifies itself as universality.¹⁹⁰

Regarding this consciousness, Dutton also exemplified Bruno Latour's story of western colonists, between the 15th and 17th centuries, who translated another mysterious world by recouring such indigenous heterogeneity to a rational formula. In this story, a scientific and narrative technique of re-mapping, 'T-O map', was applied whereby the living and different knowledge of an indigenous culture was extracted, alienated, compressed and translated into a 'summary form'.¹⁹¹ Dutton saw such map and mapmaker as a metonymy to the community of scientists, technicians, and planners, who were all dedicated to making the world manageable, intelligible, and portable.¹⁹² However, this faculty of representation has its technical positivity verified by the industrial regime to translate everything in the world into a calculation.

This positivity can also be visualised by the journey of Lord McCartney offering gifts to China in 1792. He offered the emperor a solar planetarium as 'the most ingenious mechanism that had ever been constructed in Europe', together with a geocentric armillary sphere and other industrial crafts.¹⁹³ The spectacle exhibited by such industrial gifts did not impress the Chinese. However, Emperor Qianlong showed no particular interests in the gifts and declined

¹⁸⁸ Harvey, P. (1996). *Hybrids of Modernity: Anthropology, the Nation State and the Universal Exhibition*. New York: Routledge; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett B (1998) *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press; Mathur, S. (2007) *India by Design: Colonial History and Cultural Display*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

¹⁸⁹ Vattimo, G. Truth and Rhetoric in Hermeneutic Ontology, *The End of Modernity*, p 130-144

¹⁹⁰ Dutton, M. (2002). Lead Us Not into Translation: Notes Towards a Theoretical Foundation for Asian Studies. *Nepentla: Views from South*, 3(3), p 497-501

¹⁹¹ Latour, B. (1987). *Science in Action*. London: Open University Press. p 216,217

¹⁹² Dutton, M. Lead Us Not into Translation: Notes Towards a Theoretical Foundation for Asian Studies. *Nepentla: Views from South*, 3(3), p 497-501

¹⁹³ Elman, B.A. (2005) *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550–1900*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

his request of opening the marine trade by saying 'I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufactures.' Such three gifts are mechanical devices that positively substantiated a scientific discipline, the geometry in the 19th century. This geometrical discipline was one of the knowledge apparatuses, by which the self-awareness of transcendental reason as an immanent faculty of subject (see more details in 1st chapter) extracted things at different spatial positions, translated their relations as signs of points, lines, planes, angles, curve, surface, and sphere.¹⁹⁴ All such signs were calculated and unified in metric measurement, whereby things and their positions were represented mathematically as a topological simulacrum. This simulacrum, during this journey of Lord McCartney, transported and encrypted the real plane as gifts of the solar planetarium and armillary sphere.

This positivity of substantiating reason with the aid of representational faculty attempted to decipher and penetrate another mysterious world. This positivity of representation cannot be utterly negated, as said before. It should be affirmed as a regular faculty of epistemic practice. However, it is rather juxtaposed with its limitation. That is, to weave homogeneous interpretation over the world should admit a rarity that is always possible to exist outside the homogeneity. This rarity as heterogeneous, and any knowledge to enunciate such rarity, should be a disparity in regularity rather than irregularity.¹⁹⁵ For instance, epistemic positivity of representation did not impress Emperor Qianlong. This indifferent attitude was an epistemological rupture, that is, a discrepancy between two different positive faculties of knowledge, e.g. political economy of commodity and gift economy of tribute. In the economy of tributes, the emperor was the son of heaven, a sovereign body of embodying the heavenly mandate as a ubiquitous power. All the commoners were administrated as a collective unity, which was restricted to being educated with sophisticated thoughts and knowledge but fed to be vigorous and loyal. Mindless and obedient bodies instead submitted their capability of thinking to the emperor. Only he can think as the head. His ears can hear the sound of heaven, his eyes see an extraordinary miracle, and his mouth inquires

¹⁹⁴ Foucault, M. *The Order of Things*

¹⁹⁵ Foucault, M. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p 134-141

about the heavenly mandate. For the masses fed with such sovereign power, the emperor was a 'gift' granted by heaven; reciprocally, they returned thanksgivings to behave loyally or sacrifice and contributed all the resources to the supremacy. This economic reciprocity is an 'enclosed circle of resemblance' in terms of the primordial site.¹⁹⁶ Within this circle, the interaction between emperor and commoners is emulated with a similitude as re-circulation of life by symbolic exchange of gift/tribute. This resemblance between the vital kinship and gifts is different from the representational faculty of extracting the world in global trading.¹⁹⁷

This epistemological discrepancy should be affirmed as regularity between different epistemic subjects. In such regularity, disparities never mean two sides negate each other to re-unify a univocal presence. Spectacle reappearing by different faculty in different images exists in this discrepancy. In this sense, the universal exposition rather exhibited this discrepancy as a spectacle, while 'T-O map' entailed the representational faculty to translate the world navigated and known in the western myth. 'China' was displayed as an exotic specimen in the exhibition. At the 1851 London Exposition housed at Crystal Palace, China appeared only as the indigenous source of non-technological products, namely traditional, sharply contrasted with other British miracles of industrialisation.¹⁹⁸ This humble show of China was not merely its defeat by the British army in the Anglo-Sino opium war but more importantly an epistemic disjuncture. The Chinese did not recognise this concept of 'universal exhibition' and were also indifferent to participation. At the 1862 London Exposition, despite China being invited, it declined in order to save face, mianzi. To avoid embarrassment during the exhibition, the British had to use some private collections of Chinese items instead to bolster the event.¹⁹⁹ In 1876, the Chinese still did not concern their mianzi in the world of global trading. There were still only traditional products, i.e. silk, tea and porcelain, at the Philadelphia Exposition. Actually, what the Chinese could show to the world at that moment was also nothing more than traditional craftworks. The Chinese old

¹⁹⁶ Foucault, M. *The Order of Things*, p 20-46

¹⁹⁷ Mauss, M. (2002). *The Gift*, Routledge, New York, p 7-9

¹⁹⁸ Wasserstrom, J. (2013). *China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know*. New York: Oxford University Press

¹⁹⁹ Witchard, A.V. (2009). *Thomas Burke's Dark Chinoiserie Limehouse Nights and the Queer Spell of Chinatown*, London: Routledge.

myth, an ancient legend, was on the wane.

Time is lapsing, and myth never ceases its repetition. The 2010 Shanghai Expo exhibited a brand-new myth of modern China. Premier Wen Jiabao announced at the open ceremony that the Shanghai Expo would be a huge influence on all mankind. The whole world was receiving a message that a myth of new global power was about to be found. The Chinese rather utilise the faculty of representation to restore their national image in the face of those western hosts who used to display China as little more than a fossil of tradition. The developmental regime of China can host its phantasmagoria. Not only were international spectators immersed in Chinese technological miracles but unprecedented progress led by Chinese-characteristic socialism was also affirmed.



Figure 4.1

To configure such a phantasmagorical experience, Shanghai's Expo was intensively invested as the biggest and most expensive in world history. It received the most visitors, hosted the highest number of nations and organisations and cost the host nation \$45 billion, nearly twice the price tag of the Beijing Olympics two years earlier.²⁰⁰ Such a colossal sum of investment apparently projected a promise of 'good futurity' that echoed the official theme of the Shanghai Expo, 'Better City, Better Life'. This theme shows that the technological progress endows the present urban life with a sustainable and ecological vista to welcome a promising future. In this sense, Shanghai Expo was deliberately cast with a technological panorama of standing in the present but to touch the future. All the visitors were immersed in various technologies, devices, or ideas in future vision. The future was displayed no more as an imagination but in the real presence that was fabricated by the phantasmagorical exposition. A border between reality and fantasy seemed blurred. A hyperreal spectacle was presented. All these presentations of the future were encrypting a hegemonic reference, a future belonging to China.

²⁰⁰ Hubbert, J. (2015). Back to the Future: The politics of culture at the Shanghai Expo. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 1-17

The most attractive spectacle was the central icon of the Shanghai Expo, the China National Pavilion, now named the China Art Museum (see figure 4.1). This pavilion was the brightest image at the mega-event, costing an estimated \$ 220 million. The 63-metre high tent was also the tallest building at the Expo (three times taller than any other structure), covering 71,000 square metres of space. Such a spectacle was exemplified as ‘uninhibited monumentalism’ that was keen to announce China’s rise among today’s global powers.²⁰¹ Such monumentalism grounded through architecture has become an essential craft of which the host regime inscribes its myth into stones to endure time lapse, traverse history and retain such phantasmagorical power as an enduring icon. In this sense, the universal exposition is not only a rich collection of technological exhibits but also an exhibition of new architectural monuments.

Exhibition of architectural monumentalism at universal exposition can telescope back to the commodity phantasmagoria of Paris which peaked at the 1889 Paris Exposition Universelle, held from 6 May to 31 October 1889. In this global fair, the paramount event was the super-tall spectacle, Gustave Eiffel Tower, following the Crystal Palace created to house the 1851 London Great Exposition (figure 4.2). It was erected in 1889 as the entrance arch to the World’s Fair. Since its birth, this spectacular project of iron and steel has endured many



Figure 4.2 Gustave Eiffel Tower

controversies, mainly between architecture and engineering. The lifeless and massive steel framework that visually subjugated the city horizon, according to those architects who firmly hold the artistic and aesthetic grounds of humanity, would be destructive as if it were a monstrous spectre to haunt the Parisian cityscape. The prominent architect Charles Garnier and some of the most important figures of the French artists further sent the Minister of

²⁰¹ Bennett, T. (2013). Afterword. In: Winter T (ed). *Shanghai Expo: An International Forum on the Future of Cities*. New York: Routledge, p 193-197

Works and the Commissioner for the Exposition their critical letter.

‘We, writers, painters, sculptors, architects and passionate devotees of the hitherto untouched beauty of Paris, protest with all our strength, with all our indignation in the name of slighted French taste, against the erection ... of this useless and monstrous Eiffel Tower ... To bring our arguments home, imagine for a moment a giddy, ridiculous tower dominating Paris like a gigantic black smokestack, crushing under its barbaric bulk Notre Dame, the Tour Saint-Jacques, the Louvre, the Dome of les Invalides, the Arc de Triomphe, all of our humiliated monuments will disappear in this ghastly dream. And for twenty years ... we shall see stretching like a blot of ink the hateful shadow of the hateful column of bolted sheet metal.’²⁰²

Gustave Eiffel, the designer of this gigantic mechanism, responded to these criticisms by comparing his tower to the Egyptian pyramids, ‘my tower will be the tallest edifice ever erected by man. Will it not also be grandiose in its way? And why would something admirable in Egypt become hideous and ridiculous in Paris?’²⁰³ In May 1884, after his discussion with the engineers, Eiffel decided the outline drawing: ‘a great pylon, consisting of four lattice girders standing apart at the base and coming together at the top, joined by metal trusses at regular intervals’.²⁰⁴ On 30 March 1885, Eiffel also addressed his project to the Société des Ingénieurs Civils, after discussing the technical problems and the practical uses of the tower: ‘the tower will symbolise not only the art of the modern engineer, but also the century of Industry and Science in which we are living, and for which the way was prepared by the great scientific movement of the eighteenth century, to which this tower will be built as an expression of France's gratitude.’²⁰⁵

For Eiffel, the steel-framed spectacle would stand as a super-tall icon of the ‘scientific movement’ and Euro-centric industrialisation. Such a super-tall wonder also contains a more

²⁰² Oyrette, H. (1985). *Gustave Eiffel*. New York: Rizzoli, p 174

²⁰³ Souriau, P. & Souriau, M. (1983). *The Aesthetics of Movement*, p 100

²⁰⁴ Harvie, D. E. (2006). *The Genius Who Reinvented Himself*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton, p 78

²⁰⁵ Oyrette, H. (1985). *Gustave Eiffel*. New York, p 116

significant representation to the Egyptian pyramids. The Egyptian Pyramids are monuments that reawaken the past in the present and continue to the future. They bear the traces of memory that are rooted in the past but remain inscribed in the present. In this sense, Eiffel's insistence on erecting his tower means to ground an 'aestheticisation of irons'.²⁰⁶ It is inscribed into the Parisian panorama. Crucially, its solid engineering structure and powerful steel framework is not rooted in an aura of artistic originality, but rather founded on the logic of scientificity and technology. That is to say, this tower imitates the past but not to illuminate the effect of 'passage of time' to revive memory. It rather traverses time. As long as the technological force exists, such a tower can resist the eclipse of time and make of itself as a permanent and encompassing presence in history, obscuring the past and inhabiting the future. Under such manifesto of futurity, no matter how the surrounding landscapes are changed, this sovereign monument will stand for immortality. Perhaps this is the time effect Eiffel held the holy principle of science and technology to seek, namely to erect such a super-tall spectacle as the ultimate peak at which is manifested the industrial power across the globe in Paris, the capital of the 19th century.



Figure 4.3

Telescoping from the Parisian Expo, this monumentalism was still applied to the China National Pavilion that overarched the phantasmagorical experience of the Shanghai Expo. The huge building was also dubbed 'the Crown of the East' due to its resemblance to an ancient crown of China. Many of visitors were stunned by such a symbolic crown that represents a new Chinese myth of restoring its new empire.²⁰⁷ The design of pavilion was not derived from an ancient crown. Its chief architect, He Jingtang, was inspired by the Chinese corbel bracket called *dougong* (figure 4.3) as well as the old bronze cauldron called *ding* (figure 4.4).²⁰⁸ Gustave Eiffel founded his steel spectacle to awaken old memories in the modern Parisian landscape. Now He Jingtang also

²⁰⁶ This quote from Andre Antoine who is drawn from Lynton, N. (2009). *Tatlin's Tower: Monument to Revolution*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, p 89

²⁰⁷ Lu Z. (2015). *China and the World Fairs (1915–2010): Blending Nationalism and Internationalism. Identity Discourses and Communities in International Events, Festivals and Spectacles*. London: Palgrave Macmillan

²⁰⁸ Liu, D.H. (2010). *2010 Expo: He Jingtang and the China Pavilion*. Available at: <http://english.cri.cn/6909/2010/01/21/1781s544131.htm>. Last Accessed 2nd June 2016

reiterated the metaphors of Chinese memory, *dougong* and *ding*, passing the time to re-visualise in his spectacle that has become a new city icon to exhibit the vista of the future. *Dougong* is a unique structural element of interlocking wooden brackets, one of the most important elements in traditional Chinese architecture. Liang Sicheng profoundly affirmed it not only as a crucial technical part of the skeleton structure of traditional Chinese architecture but also as a distinctive symbol of Chinese classic and national aesthetics.²⁰⁹ To reemerge such national elements, the large roof of the pavilion was designed as a huge resemblance to the structure of *dougong*.

Not only was the big roof designed as a resemblance to *dougong*, but the shape of the building also resembled a large vessel, *ding*. *Dougong* is symbolic to traditional craftsmanship, the technique of Chinese construction. *Ding* in Chinese tradition was another symbol of the sovereignty, a power overriding and tolerating everything. A point should be noted here. Chinese sovereignty



Figure 4.4

mythologised by the symbol of *ding* is not merely a coercive power crowned on top of anything to dominate and demand loyalty. *Ding* is also a technical apparatus, a cauldron to cook, contain wines or be used for ritual offering. These functions generate two myths. One is a myth of hospitality and carnival, to treat friends with the best wine and food and to drink and eat with friends with the precious cauldron. Another is a myth of harvest and loyalty. During the harvest season, when a country flourishes and people live in peace, a ritual would be held before a huge cauldron. The emperor, son of heaven, burned incense, bowed and showed his power lineage from heaven, and also gave thanks for all the given gifts, i.e. harvest, prosperity and peace. In terms of the two myths, the sovereignty that was mythologised by *ding* cannot be merely understood as a ruler who self-asserts himself. It should be a process of substantiating the heavenly mandate, a transcendental origin in absence/*Dao*, as a vital and ubiquitous power in presence. This power invigorates everything with gifts, treats anyone with hospitality, but must be bowed with loyalty –

²⁰⁹ Lang Sicheng, <why study Chinese architecture>, accessed from <society for the study of Chinese architecture >, Oct 1944, Volume 7, No. 1, Text book of <History of Architecture>, 1993

shuntianzhechang nitianzhewang. This traditional sovereignty was visualised in the phantasmagorical experience of international spectators, while the China National Pavilion presented a huge *ding* in the Shanghai Expo.

A Myth of *qi*

What is more, such an icon of *ding* not only stuns the spectators but also grounds itself as a specific metaphor, *he* (harmony), whereby a Chinese myth of Great Harmony is visualised to the global society. In regard to harmony, Daniel Bell's reiteration of new Confucianism that is used to weave a global myth of great harmony can be involved. As Bell argued, Confucians celebrated their ultimate goal of 'great harmony'. It has been restored not only as a long-standing tradition but also as a core cultural value which modern China expectedly brings back to re-flourish itself as the beating heart of Asia and even the world.²¹⁰ By this token, Bell obviously attempted to seek another mythologisation of the peaceful rise of China as different from formerly Western myths of modernity. He thus put his key on the restoration of Confucianism as a fair cultural value of harmony. However, this overt emphasis on harmony as a cultural value is also his limit, that is, trapping the Chinese new myth into culturalism. Huang and Ding also echo this limit. They both demonstrated that restoration of Confucianism as a traditional value system could represent the semiological reference of harmony as another universal and sympathetic value.²¹¹ This Confucian value is an alternative to the existing universalism of humanity and democracy accepted as normative principles.

The spectacle of Shanghai Expo that reappears along with China's rise is neither a replacement for London's global image nor the next global hegemony. The cultural sympathy of harmony rendered as a global picture cannot be only an instrumental or culturalistic manifesto. In other words, the harmony is not a universal value. In this regard,

²¹⁰ Bell, D. (2010). *China's New Confucianism: Politics and Everyday life in a changing society*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p 20-33; and Lai. H. & Lu. Y. (2012). *China's Soft Power and International Relations*. USA: Routledge, p 55

²¹¹ Huang, Y.Z. and Ding, S. (2006). "Dragon's Underbelly: An Analysis of China's Soft Power." *East Asia*: p 26-33; and Mingjiang, L. (2008) "China Debates Soft Power". *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, p 287-308

Bell's citation of Fairbank that China's historical position was the 'Middle Kingdom' to impose an enormous cultural influence on its surrounding neighbourhood is limited. 'Middle Kingdom' does not simply mean a central hub to weave its hegemonic myth, enunciate a universal value and predetermine ultimate meanings. It is rather a beating heart as gravity that had the power to perform and co-exist rather than to dominate. Harmony inherits this magnet to be a vitality that is unceasingly accumulated and released to disperse around everywhere and invigorate everything. This vital energy that gathers and disperses everything as a continuity of life flow can be called *qi*.

Confucianism inherited from Taoism to insist on *qi* as a sovereign power. This sovereignty is not confined to a scientific concept or idea that is enunciated and verified by the rational faculty of representation. It is rather, ontologically, a continuation of the heavenly mandate that remained by the absent origin as a power flow. While Bell argued Mencius's great harmony as a moral value to justify the national behaviours, he omitted Mencius's crucial concept of '*haoranzhengqi*'.²¹² Great harmony is not simply a self-verification of universal value to appeal, enchant and sympathise others. More importantly, it is a ubiquitous re-circulation of the sovereignty as power flow, *qi*, in benevolence and generosity.

Although reiteration of Confucianism regenerates *qi* as a ubiquitous life flow to refill the current Chinese discourses, this vital torrent that is summoned from ancient times is rather incongruous with the present Shanghai. Not only does this incongruity rest on Shanghai's colonial history of which its flowering as a modern metropolis is bred by Westernisation to conflict with the indigenous memory, it also comes from a different urban planning that manipulates the spatial arrangement to be unsmooth to the flow of *qi* around the city. As for the traditional city planning in China, urban space was arranged as a 'reservoir' of *qi* to re-circulate this vital flow fluently whereby urban lives would flourish. According to *Zhouli*, *Kaogongji* (Artisan Record in The Chou Rituals), the city plan was a square with a side length of nine li; each side has three gates of different sizes; there were eighteen streets - nine in

²¹² Mengzi. (2014), *Gong Sun Chou*. In: *Mencius* 孟子 • 公孙丑, Beijing: 21st Century Press

the vertical plane and nine horizontal; all the streets can allow nine carriages to travel side by side; the palace was the centre; the temple was located to the east of the palace; the altar of land and grain was located to the west; the worship area was in front of the palace; and the market was behind the palace.²¹³ In this traditional city planning, the palace occupied the centre at which the north-south and east-west axes intersect to ground itself as the magnet of concentrating *qi* to invigorate the imperial supremacy. Along other two principles, walled enclosure and courtyard, a north-south central axis is still preserved as a relic in the current Beijing, which runs through Tiananmen Square.²¹⁴ However, the example of Beijing that conserves urban heritage to instil *qi* as life flow to disperse around the city is not applicable to Shanghai. Before being conceded to colonists as treaty port, Shanghai was little more than a remote county town that, strictly, was not yet counted as a capital city. Then, its urbanisation as a global metropolis was considerably based on the boom of the International Settlement. This urban form that was influenced by Westernisation substantiated the scientific rationale into daily spatial management, rather than continuing the classical cosmology of *qi* as an urban metaphor wherein the life flowing within individual bodies and the vital torrent infused in urban space are interconnected and encrypted into an urban resemblance. Since this urban myth of *qi* faded, the present Shanghai cannot find any sizeable urban relic that could match the old city remaining in Beijing, Xi'an, Nanjing, or Hangzhou.

At this point, the incongruity of *qi* with Shanghai's urban space, at least from the perspective of urban planning, indicates that the visual mythologisation of urban lives as a sensual torrent of desires overflowing along the acceleration of city as an erotic machine is discrepant to the mythologisation of *qi* as a longevous and vital flow. However, this myth of *qi* does not prohibit itself to be re-encrypted as city folklores, wherein the spectacular encapsulation of urban lives is cast in aura of mystery that is awakened from the far-off time to render the perceptual experience of Shanghai as heterogeneously as uncanny. Among city folklore relating to the myth of *qi*, the story of nine-dragon pillar is salient. In 1995, a giant

²¹³ Wang, J. (2002). *Chengji* (City Record), Sanlianshudian, p 40

²¹⁴ Boyd, A. (1962). *Chinese Architecture and Town Planning, 1500 B.C.- A.D. 1911*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

project of Shanghai circular roads was launched to ameliorate the traffic congestion. Construction of a viaduct over East Yan'an road was a crucial part of this project. An unexplainable problem was encountered. That is, the piling of the overhead highway bridge could not proceed no matter how hard it was drilled. All the technical possibilities were tried, but it remained unsolvable. In this case of which the scientific rationale that was presumed as homogenous to subsume all the possibilities encountered an incommensurable exception, those heterogeneous elements that were expelled as superstition might conjure up their magic. Then, officials had to consult a senior monk, who told technicians that the location of the piling work was a reservoir of *qi*, a life torrent flowing beneath Shanghai. This dynamic flow resembled a black dragon resting underground, so this dragon body was magically impenetrable. To continue piling, this monk led a ritual to dispel the magic and dissipate the concentrated life flow. Then, a miracle happened. Drilling was smooth to complete the piling and a huge pillar was erected to support the overhead highway. Also, the construction team, as advised by the monk, engraved the pillar with nine golden dragons as an incantation to envelope the life flow. Despite construction continuing, this monk ceased his life in parinirvana as a result of unveiling the untold secret.²¹⁵ This uncanny myth projects the city spectacle of Shanghai with a mystic glamour. Such an immense urban mechanism never ceases its running to unleash the concentrated desires as an unruly torrent, but this torrent channelled in the form of money rather withers another mystic flow of *qi*.

Since the uncanny flow of *qi* is withered by the hypermodern spectacle in Shanghai, the myth of 'harmony' encrypted by recollecting the ancient life flow is not simply an instrumental transcription of history into reconstructing reality as national ideology to claim a cultural hegemony, but more importantly as inspired by Cornelius Castoriadis, it is to revitalise an imaginary floatation as semiotic excess, which transverses time and penetrates memory as an ontological, unverifiable and inassimilable drive prior to any homogeneous mechanism of production, then, to materialise and formulate this imaginary drive in the presence as a variety of governmental institutions that organise concrete events, e.g. the

²¹⁵ Baba, Z. (2015). *The legend of Yan'an elevated bridge for 20 years*. [online] Available: http://www.guancha.cn/society/2015_04_23_317025.shtml. Last accessed 29th Oct 2017

Shanghai Expo, and construct ostentatious images, e.g. architectural landmarks. Thus, while those distinguished images stand in the Shanghai Expo to visualise the ancient Chinese myths as semiotic effervescences, they are not necessarily received as awkward propagandas of nationalism and patriotism. They can be rather interpreted as some individual designers, architects, intellectuals, etc., who perform their unruly and immanent faculty of imagination as radical gesture to exhibit their artworks and inventions in the Universal Exposition as creative surplus that has been unceasingly refreshing the imaginary drive and re-instituting such imagination in reality, whereby the predominant city spectacle that has institutionalised the social imagination and reception of modernity as 'instituted imaginary' is questioned and challenged.²¹⁶ Then, a collective social imagination about what is China is expected to form through fabricating the historical images that are incompatible with the hypermodern spectacle but arouse the ancient Chinese myth as another imaginary force to re-institute reality. In this sense, history does not have to be retrospective to memory but can be imagined in images as creativity to re-institute the present society. Here, Castoriadis's demonstration of imaginative creativity and social institutionalization is involved. Society cannot be denied as a process of institutionalization that entails the imperative of utility to reproduce itself by the homogeneous mechanism of production as commensurable as reality in the presence. However, this institutionalization dominating in the real presence cannot be treated as an irrefutable framework of materialism, because this mechanical process, as a tedious repetition of production alone, is ahistorical, meaningless and lifeless, nor is it able to clarify how it travels along time from the past, until the present, to be historical. That is to say, society, as an institutionalization that is social-historical, must not be homogeneous alone but open to exudation of the excess human capacity infilling the institutionalization as creative surplus.²¹⁷ This creative effervescence is defined by Castoriadis as 'imaginary'. For him, the imaginary is not fabricated as any image given in the presence but a discontinuous, unceasing, undetermined flux that 'has no flesh of its own' but inhabits and borrows substances from the stable and homogeneous representation to regenerate itself as affective and intentional images that

²¹⁶ Castoriadis, C. (1997). *The Castoriadis Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell, p 108

²¹⁷ Joas, H. (1989). Institutionalisation as a creative process: The sociological importance of Cornelius Castoriadis's political philosophy. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94(5), p 1191

are fragmented along time and space.²¹⁸ Thus, society that is historical is not simply produced and institutionalised in reality but endlessly invests into the imaginary flux as creative excess to drive the homogeneous mechanism to refresh between 'instituting' and 'instituted' as a historical and meaningful process. Any society that rests on institutionalization does not mean to deprive its capacity of imagination that is interwoven with the mechanism to be semiotic excess as creativity. In this sense, while the society of spectacle never ceases to materialise the imaginary excess by institutes as phenomena, this society cannot be simply condemned but always creative.

²¹⁸ Castoriadis, C. (1987). *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, Cambridge: Polity Press, p 3; Robert, J. (2005). The power of the imaginary in disciplinary processes. *Organization*, 12(5), p 619-642

5th Chapter – Simulacra

Simulacra

The recurrence of spectacle by visible images as sensory disparity aims to utter alterity in disjuncture, rather than to conjure typicality, translate and reduce it as generic for an original ethos. Baudrillard named this reappearance of difference as 'simulacra'. In other words, the recurring spectacle can also be an endless simulation over irreplaceable differential simulacrum. Simulacra have been clarified in the first chapter, and it is reiterated here for emphasis. Baudrillard relates to Nietzsche and Bataille as starting points. Nietzschean contention of Dionysian force aimed to restore the healthy vital intensity from lifeless rationale and impassive ideas whereby the present world was thrown into an eternal recurrence as neither real nor apparent, but drifting between them.²¹⁹ The life to struggle and affirm itself in a repetition of drifting in nihilism cannot look for any ideas and pre-given meanings. As for Bataille, only can the general economy of expenditure in excess unleash vital impulse to dissipate life as heterogeneous, e.g. cult, gift, ecstasy, orgy, waste, death, etc., whereby a homogeneous economy of utility that restricts life can be broken to free life for sovereignty.²²⁰ Since such a sovereign life is exuded by the productive imperative of utility as heterogeneous effervescences, such heterogeneous effervescences float on the subsistence to embrace those surplus perceptions that are intimate with the inner world, and these perceptual heterogeneities are neither commensurable nor translatable but opaque in semiotic exuberances. Bataille's affirmation of exorbitant vitality to discharge life to embrace death testifies that his contestation and trace to Nietzschean Dionysian economy is hardly humanism, nor entails any monotheistic insistence upon humane conservation of life as secured and valued as being illuminated by a god-like representation, but rather a revelation of unrepresented, unconscious, and primordial energy. Such impulse to be revealed without any humanistic conservation and representation, for human beings, is not only an atheistic claim of the death of God as a phantasmal simulacrum that secures

²¹⁹ Nietzsche, F. *Twilight of the Idols*.

²²⁰ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share, Vol II Eroticism & Vol III Sovereignty*.

and numbs life in utility, but also demonstrates a 'base materialism' wherein the primordial energy never ceases but flows along and surges from the human bodies that function merely as a bio-energetic channel to dissipate such an infinite energy as unreserved waste alone to embrace death.²²¹ In this base materialism, death is no longer deferred and avoided by the god-like representation to survive but an intimate drive to expose the utilitarian subsistence of life as merely an instrumental means in the service of fuelling a transgression from humane subsistence to sovereign creativity. This echoes Nick Land who reviews Bataille in light of Nietzsche, 'mankind as a whole is nothing but a resource for creation, a dissolving slag to be expended in the generation of something more beautiful than itself. The end of humanity does not lie within itself, but in a planetary artistic experiment about which nothing can be decided in advance, and which can only be provisionally labelled overman.'²²² This creative surpassing of humanity through the base materialism is scarcely overlapped with dialectical materialism, which restricts the increate energy to the domain of utility that the superstructural surplus is in conformity with the productive base, but stirs such energy to transgress towards being excess without any recourse. Insofar as such creative excess through self-annihilation of humanity releases the increate and inhuman energy, this energy is counted as solar energy, the sun, an absolutely useless squander of the excess. For Bataille, such solar excess to be received by the real world and vitalise the human bodies as truth is, above all, through the eyes. However, the profane eyes directly regarding the sun would suffer blinding of vision, and they are unable to bear such an immoderate glare. Epistemologically, the sun is always reflected, reserved, distorted and diminished by the pineal eye of which the intellectual authority, i.e. philosophers, priests, scientists, etc., appropriates and represents the sun as metaphors or images in rational discourses of knowledge.²²³ While the profane eyes are replaced by the pineal eye 'at the summit of the skull' to receive the blinding sun as truth represented in the head, such profane eyes rather become blind to see merely the spectacle that is illuminated by the represented sun as if only seeing the god-like image. In this sense, Bataille's demonstration of the eyes obliterates the representational vision of the solar energy and transgresses towards another vision in

²²¹ Bataille, G. Base Materialism and Gnosticism, in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 45-52

²²² Land, N. *The Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism*, p 15

²²³ Bataille, G. The Pineal Eye, in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 79-90

which such energy flow can be seen as unproductive and heterogeneous spectacles surplus to the represented reality.²²⁴

Rejection of rational faculty of representation to release vital excess becomes the precondition of signs simulating each other as simulacra. Within the representational mechanism, all signs must exchange to reproduce meanings imposed by ideas. Baudrillard demonstrated this representational exchange of signs still belongs to the utility law, that is, use-value by mechanical (re)production and exchange value by commodified consumption.²²⁵ Without representational faculty, it is also necessary to abandon any pre-existing reference, and the utility law of market values, which are held to dominate throughout the history of production, is also dismantled. Signs are thereby autonomous to exchange and imitate for themselves alone, championing their independent value, 'sign-value', rather than being instrumental forms of signifying the predetermined. This free exchange and imitation are the simulation where different signs or images interact for their disparity alone without negating each other and without any original references. Baudrillard named such meaningless simulation of differences only in appearance as 'pure simulacrum' of each sign or image, which is the ultimate form to end the history of reproductive mimicry that ranges from counterfeiting in the Renaissance era, then, mechanical reproduction in industrialisation, until the present simulation.²²⁶ Spectacle exists in such pure and meaningless simulacra. It dominates and varies in presence to float over real things, never veil and negate them, but actualize them as virtual sensation (see the next paragraph) by an autonomous interplay of images and without any conscious intervention from ideas.²²⁷ Such a spectacle, as said by Baudrillard, is hyperreal, a phantasm that unceasingly reappears without any trace to essence and origin.

In this respect of losing any essence, a salient feature of spectacle can be re-thought, its effect of de-realization (see 4th chapter). De-realization cannot be only understood by critical

²²⁴ Bataille, G. *Eye*, in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 17-19; Land, N. *The Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism*, p 26-33

²²⁵ Baudrillard, J. *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, p 50-53

²²⁶ Baudrillard, J. *Simulacra and Simulation*, p 6; Baudrillard, J. *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, p 50.

²²⁷ Baudrillard, J. *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, p 6

consciousness as a negative force of spectacle to conceal the real but should open its positivity. To testify this positivity, I draw inspiration from Deleuze to review 'realisation'. Conventionally, as Deleuze argued in his book on *Bergsonism*, realisation is a process of which the possibility of multiple and different meanings pre-existing in an ideal plane preoccupies the reality to let such possibly diverse ideas come true as facts.²²⁸ In other words, this realisation is a representation by which existential differences of real things are reduced, subsumed and displaced by conceived differences. Deleuze named such irreplaceable difference pre-existing in reality as 'the virtual' to distinguish from 'the possible' conceived by the idea.²²⁹ At this point, de-realization of spectacle should be an existential actualization of the virtual reality rather than a justifiable realisation of the possible ideas.²³⁰ Immersed within this spectacle, 'if we could accept this meaninglessness of the world, then we could play with forms, appearances and our impulses, without worrying about their ultimate destination... we are not failures until we believe life has a meaning.'²³¹

Madame Tussaud's Simulacra

This meaningless world that appears as spectacle only with forms, images and our curiosity can be exemplified by Madame Tussauds wax figure museum in London. Marie Gresholtz, born in 1761 in France, used to be a maker of wax death masks. She founded Madame Tussauds wax figure's museum in 1835 in London Baker Street (later moved to Marylebone Road in 1883 where it is currently based). The Museum started from an exhibition of her collection of wax imitation guillotined aristocrats and relics of the French revolution.²³² A bloody spectacle filled with torture, punishment and execution were simulated from memory as a commercial display.

²²⁸ Deleuze, G. (1966). *Bergsonism*, by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (tran.), New York: Zone Books, 1988

²²⁹ Deleuze, G. *Bergsonism*

²³⁰ Deleuze, G. *Bergsonism*

²³¹ Baudrillard, J. (2001). *Impossible Exchange*, London: Verso, p 128

²³² History TV. (2016). *Madame Marie Tussaud*. [online] Available at: <http://www.history.co.uk/biographies/madame-marie-tussaud>. Last Accessed 5th Oct 2016

In the late of 1790s, it was an era filled with death and fever, blood and passion, torture and rebirth. The whole of Paris was immersed in the images of upheaval: scaffolds were erected to publicise execution and barricades were grounded in the street to make resistance. These violent images refashioned the spectacle of the Parisian landscape as a bloodthirsty experience of revolution. This bloody experience reached its spectacular climax during The Reign of Terror (5 September 1793 – 28 July 1794). The death toll ranged in the tens of thousands.²³³ Exercised by the scaffold, the spectacle of mass executions of the ‘enemies of the revolution’ became the spectre of terror haunting Parisian daily life. The Jacobins, who hosted such bloodthirsty spectacles, rather celebrated the ecstasy of violence as an annihilation of a past time and a claim toward progress and a new future. In the name of revolution, actual lives were immersed in a carnival of violence through the ubiquitous spectacle of the scaffold, like a public exhibition of butchering before the masses. Indeed, as for the revolutionary regime, this open butchering of those hated aristocrats can be regarded as the most effective justification. Putting those nobles onto the scaffolds, publicising their execution as condemned body, or even as animals, and hearing their cries for mercy, can dramatically stage a gift of death to the oppressed masses. Maybe the hierarchy is different, but the death is equal. Displayed by the scaffolds, the punitive torture and killings became a fatal presence of terror to aristocrats, an experience of death, but rather became an ecstatic spectacle for the masses, an expenditure of the butcher’s festival. Intermediated by such celebrated spectacle of execution, exorbitant passions, desires and fantasies of the masses were intensified and re-channeled into an excessive expenditure of violence.

When this spectacle of scaffold reappeared through Madame Tussaud’s wax crafts, a

²³³ The Reign of Terror under the Committee of Public Safety killed 16,594 people by scaffold after trial (2,639 in Paris), with another 25,000 in summary executions across France. Unofficial executions may have gone up to 40,000. Towards the final month of Thermidor, such killing became worse as a period called the ‘Great Terror’. Statistically, and contrary to popular belief, only 8% of the victims were aristocrats, 25% of the victims were bourgeois and middle-class, 28% were peasants and working-class, and the rest were clergy. During the ‘Great Terror’ after the Law of 22 Prarial, where 1000 people were executed in a single month (matching the executions in Paris the previous year), the victims became 38% Nobility, 26% Clergy, and rest were ordinary citizens. Greer, D. (1935). *The Incidence of the Terror during the French Revolution: A Statistical Interpretation*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press; and TV Tropes. (2016). *The French Revolution / Usekful Notes - TV Tropes*. [online] Available at: <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/UsekfulNotes/TheFrenchRevolution>. Last Accessed 5th Oct 2016

disturbing history of bloodshed was mimicked as a simulacrum of visual entertainment. Heads, decapitated bodies, guillotines, executioners, condemned criminals, and all such gruesome scenes were technically simulated as wax figures in the exhibition. A real experience of revolutionary terror was actualized by the wax simulacrum, but the truth of revolutionary intensity was cast far away only in the background. In other words, Madame Tussaud's wax exhibition simulated a fact of revolutionary intensity happening in history as a virtual reality of sensory experience, but without any necessary nostalgia to the revolutionary origin.

Regarding this wax craft simulation, Debord's argument about spectacle recurring between dispersal and intensification can be invoked again (see 1st chapter). Such wax works function as artworks that are diffused around substantial lives as fragments to fabricate wonders, i.e. spectacles. These perceptible wonders then perform as a technical 'channel' through which the exorbitant desires, passions and energies of the masses are either intensified or dispersed by different experience. The intensification, such as the revolutionary spectacle of scaffolds, rendered the ecstatic effects by which the collective body of masses are agitated and gathered to discharge their hatred as violent animality. The dispersion, such as the spectacle of wax crafts, visualised the mesmeric effect by which the spectators were diverted to enjoy the simulation of cruelty but estranged from the real pains, in short, to move away from intensity. This mesmeric effect also happened in the 1851 London Great Exhibition, two decades later than Madame Tussaud displayed her wax figures at Baker Street.²³⁴ All the celebrated industrial works were exhibited at Crystal Palace to stage a wonder of capitalism. However, the English governors were fearful about a radical reaction of visitors, especially the working class, to such a spectacle of mechanical reproduction. After all, all the machines being celebrated represented what was oppressing them. Such fears very quickly proved unfounded. All the visitors were amused by such technical miracles. The exhibition became a fun fair. Insofar as intensification has an ecstatic effect and dispersion has a mesmeric effect, they are alternated as governmental technique. This

²³⁴ Dutton, M. (2005). From Culture Industry to Mao Industry, A Greek Tragedy. *boundary 2*, Duke University Press, p 160-161

technical alteration not only enables the spectacle to reappear as simulacrum over different images, it also achieves heterogeneous expenditure of which desires or curiosities can be gratified to affirm life as the real experience of different spectacles.

Time is lapsing, and spectacle never ceases its simulacra. Madame Tussaud's wax figure museum has now become one of the main spotlights for the journey of London. The sculptures inside are not only wax figures of the French revolution that is currently located in the chamber of horror to exhibit along with other infamous murderers and criminals in history. Other chambers also include the historical figures and events. Royal family, politicians, athletes, scientists, and social celebrities, are all displayed. Walking along the guide route, all the wax images, one by one, weave those important events and figures altogether as a live experience for the spectators. During such a real experience, time is frozen, and these wax simulacra also visualise history.

At the end of the travel, the final chamber discloses the manufacturing process of each wax figure. It is not a secret that spectacle proliferates by simulacrum to actualize history and reality as these enchanting appearances of wax figures. Each character regularly takes more than 250 measurements of the real person to be mimicked. Colour of eyes, hair, skin tone, iconic facial expression, teeth, and costumes, all the details must be involved to simulate.²³⁵ The head and body are made by means of creating the measured sculptures in clay and filling the same shape of plaster mould with hot wax for 170 hours, and then removing the mould.²³⁶ Each wax figure must be hand-made and also made at the central studios in London.

The spectacle of wax simulacra never ceases its simulation of which the real presence is virtualized, not concealed, as a phantasmagorical experience of different images made by

²³⁵ Business Insider. (2016). *How the incredibly lifelike wax figures at Madame Tussauds are made*. [online] Available at:

<http://www.techinsider.io/how-the-lifelike-wax-figures-are-made-2016-2/#the-sculptors-have-to-make-sure-the-measurements-are-exact-and-that-their-figure-is-starting-to-come-to-life-4>. Last Accessed 10th Aug 2016

²³⁶ Wonderopolis.org. (2010). *How Are Wax Figures Made?* [online] Available at: <http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/how-are-wax-figures-made> Last Accessed 2nd Oct. 2016

wax. This experience in which spectators are immersed is neither real nor false, floating over the real to refashion it in aesthetic appearance. Now this floatation of wax simulacra has been drifting from London to China. Madame Tussaud's museum in Shanghai opened in 2005 on the tenth floor of New World Mansion on Nanjing East Road. It is the sixth museum around the world and has seven theme pavilions in which over 80 wax figures of Chinese celebrities are all exhibited.²³⁷ Though these wax figures simulate the Chinese celebrities, all the works must be made by the central studio in London and then delivered to Shanghai. That is to say, the phantasmagorical experience of various wax simulacra staged in Shanghai depends on the reproduction of London's technology and materials. Such wax-made spectacle recurs in Chinese appearance but with a British heart.

Qinshihuang's Simulacra

The spectacle of the museum might have a Chinese appearance, but it is produced with British technology. A question arises, that is, whether or not the recurrence of spectacle as simulacra drifting over different areas has certain conformity with an original version of reproduction. Given that the answer is none of any original technique, the different craft used with various materials in various region and different times must reproduce spectacle in different appearance to be perceived and for the different purpose. In this respect, the spectacle simulated by Madame Tussaud's wax crafts can repeat its journey of varying toward a different form, *Qinshihuang's* spectacle of simulacra, namely the Terracotta Army, which was buried in his tomb.

The treasure was unearthed by a contingent event. On 29th March 1974, Zhifa Yang, a young farmer of Lintong district of Xi'an, Shanxi province, was digging a well but excavated a human sculpture of warrior without the head, and then he took it to the local museum. This excavation finally proved the area as one of the largest pits of Qin's Terracotta Army, where he buried over 8,000 soldiers and horses, and 130 chariots. Since then, a buried miracle

²³⁷ Chinatravel.com. (2015). *Madame Tussauds Shanghai*. [online] Available at: <https://www.chinatravel.com/shanghai-attraction/madame-tussauds-shanghai/> Last Accessed 11th Oct. 2016

remained in darkness to get through time was exposed to the public.

Such a spectacle of the terracotta army located at the periphery, only 2 kilometres away from the imperial tomb, to function as safeguard protecting the remains of *Qinshihuang*. *Qinshihuang* ended the Warring State Periods and unified China to begin the totalitarian state. Qin became the empire, and *Qinshihuang's* sovereignty peaked as the first emperor. To continue his sovereign rulership in the afterworld, *Qinshihuang* initiated the extravagant project of his posthumous politics.²³⁸ The key to this project was that his cemetery must be grounded as a spectacle to affirm his power not only dominating life over the ground but also the dead under the ground. In other words, his sovereignty recurred from the present world to the afterworld, still being total and eternal. During constructing such an underground spectacle of retaining posthumous power, it was indispensable that massive replicas of the army were reproduced to simulate Qin's strong military force whereby such conquering force could be transported into the ground.

The reproduction of large-scale replicas, namely, *yong*, needs skilled craftsmanship and a high number of artisans. This technique is relatively different from Madame Tussaud's wax works whose hand-made craft is filling hot and fluid wax into the mould to shape the figure and wax is the material used. Arts of making terracotta figures have the complicated process of combining hand-made individualization and mass production. Used materials are mainly yellow clays and quartz sands. This technical combination of individualization and generalisation is aimed to ensure each terracotta figure is differential to the others. Mass production is the first step in which the many rough casts of arms, torsos and feet are reproduced by a general mould. These pre-fabricated rough casts are the crude form by which the artisans can elaborate each of the terracotta figures in every detail. The second step is the hand-made process. A mixture of yellow clays and quartz sands are filled with the pre-fabricated rough cast from the bottom. Normally, the hand-made process starts from the feet. Artisans knead a square pattern and then pile up clay to make the shape of feet

²³⁸ ChinaHighlights. (2014). *The Terracotta Army in Xi'an — Why and How They Were Made*. [online] Available at: <https://www.chinahighlights.com/xian/terracotta-army>, Last Accessed 23rd Oct. 2016]

and legs.²³⁹ The legs are not only made together with the pants but also muscles are carved with small details. After feet and legs, the torsos, wearing armour, are made to have four holes in which two arms and two legs are inserted. All the joints are filled with soft clays and fragments of tiles and then fixed with glues to make sure they are tight enough. After the torso, the head is the most complicated process. Each head is made of two halves, front and rear. The artisan needs to continuously knead the inside clay of the head until the clay becomes tight enough, then seal the two halves together. The face of each warrior and horse looks different since each face is hand-made. Eyes, nose, ears, mouth, eyebrows, hair buns and hat are carefully carved, and pasted to the head, and are further carved with fine crafts to imitate the real soldier. After finishing the head, the entire figure is fired in kilns.

Through such delicate craftsmanship, a spectacle of terracotta warriors, horses, and chariots is reproduced to occupy three pits in the cemetery of *Qinshihuang*. The first pit is the largest in size, with 14,260 sqm, estimated to have 6,000 terracotta figures. The second pit is the most complicated with around 6,000 sqm.²⁴⁰ It exhibits the military pattern of cavalry and crossbow army. The third pit is the smallest, with only 520 sqm, displaying the base of a command centre. Such a conquering army that repeats the glory of the Qin Empire visually impresses spectators. This spectacle also enunciates another interpretation. That is, reproduction of things as proliferating images to simulate each other and form a spectacle is not totalized by the industrial regime that utters being modern by mechanism and capital. The spectacle to reappear by reproduction and simulation existed early in China, between 208 BC and 246 BC, two thousand years ago. In this regard, reproduction of things to simulate the real as visual images does not necessarily fix with any exclusive pertinence of the so-called modernity, but always recurs along the time.

Madame Tussaud reproduced wax works of imitating the dead as a spectacle to exhibit death, violence, and horror in the late seventeenth century as the commercial display for

²³⁹ He, C.K. (2006). *The making of Terra-Cotta*. [online], Available at: <http://web2.nmns.edu.tw/PubLib/Newsletter/96/233/3.pdf>. Last Accessed 7th Oct. 2016

²⁴⁰ Scio.gov.cn. (2013). *Qing Terra-Cotta*. [online] Available at: <http://www.scio.gov.cn/ztk/wh/slx/31211/document/1376537/1376537.htm> Last Accessed 6th Oct. 2016

enchancing Londoners. In short, she imitated the dead for the live. However, Qin's spectacle, two thousand years ago, was a reproducible simulation of the live for the dead. That is to say, *Qinshihuang's* terracotta army in which live soldiers and horses were replicated to form an unprecedented spectacle had been early founded as an affirmation of posthumous sovereignty.

The sovereignty uses the technique of simulation to continue itself as posthumous power beneath the ground. The spectacle also recurs as another different appearance, not merely commodification for rationality and utility. To be differential, Qin's massive project of reproduction and simulation, lasting 38 years, cannot be generically understood as a public symbolism imposed on things to represent a holy spirit or a rationale. It is not a spotlighted monument that inscribes memory into stone to recollect the past as 'trace' in presence. Nor is it a political fragment, as argued by Dutton, created by the art of the machine as a wonder to disperse or intensify the subjects. All these discrepancies are because this spectacle of replicas was not erected over the ground in any public space. Since they were buried along with remains of *Qinshihuang*, these terracotta replicas would never be expected to be exposed. In other words, this spectacle of reproduction and simulation was not purposed to let the live memorise the past, but only belonged to the dead. All these works were exclusively a secret play of sovereign power that channelled Qin's imperial authority into the underground.

In respect of this secret under the ground, Heidegger's contention of the origin of artworks does not work for Qin's spectacle. In his 1936 essay on *The Origin of the Work of Art*, Heidegger criticised art as being preoccupied as various artworks. Artworks seem little more than the rhetoric of artists who propagate and impose their visions and skills on a thing with an aesthetic form. This rhetoric nature given to artworks is but an appropriation of things that bear traces ontologically remaining by concealed origin. In this regard, Heidegger contended the monumentality of art by which the trace of recollecting the origin can revive in works, namely, an effect of 'passage of time' to reawaken the past in the presence by *status quo* to wait for the advent of the future. However, Qin's spectacle of the terracotta

army, such a huge work of art, was not aimed to have monumentality built over the ground as the Egyptian Pyramid. In other words, its initial construction was not willing to bridge a passage of time to reawaken the origin as memory in the presence and recur to future. Its excavation was contingent, an accident. Without that farmer's digging, this spectacle should have been still hidden in darkness, far away from the so-called passage of time. So many replicas buried with the dead were not to evoke the memory of a life but in being buried they escaped memorization. The dead are dead, just to be forgotten. This oblivion is what the dead should be. Only the living presupposes so-called nostalgia as self-assertion to re-affirm the presence, nothing more.

According to the folklore of local people, the excavation of Qin's spectacle to publicise is not fortunate. This massive excavation and exhibition disordered the regal *qi*, *diwangzhiqi*, which was channelled and buried along with these terracotta works.²⁴¹ As said in the 3rd chapter, *qi* in Chinese cosmology is a ubiquitous but also unobtrusive life flow, a vital energy determined by heavenly mandate, or namely *Dao*. This untamed life flow never ceases to circulate and disperse around to invigorate everything and everyone. The human body, as for *qi*, is a bio-channel. According to 'Nüwa zaoren', a Chinese myth, humans were made by *Nüwa*, a primordial deity, with yellow clay, but were not yet alive. *Nüwa* blew in a puff at the body to channel *qi* as vital flow to invigorate the body. In this case, the body accumulated *qi* and life was thus flourishing; once *qi* was dissipated, the body also degenerated and life waned. Given that the human body was a bio-channel of accumulating and expending *qi*, *Qinshihuang*, as the son of heaven, should focalize the life flow as intensity on his body. His death meant *qi* accumulated by his body was also dissipated. According to local folklore, Qin's spectacle of the terracotta army was reproduced to reserve *qi* from the live world to sustain his sovereignty in the afterworld.²⁴² Each replica that simulated the real soldier was made of yellow clay that resembled the material used by *Nüwa* to create life. On the other hand, the torsos of warriors and horses were all made hollow. This hollow design can be

²⁴¹ He, B.Z. (2016). *Why one cannot visit Terra Cotta for more than three times in a life time*. [online] Available at: <http://c.m.163.com/news/a/BQ0GUAJ905219M64.html> Last Accessed 12th Oct. 2016

²⁴² He, B.Z. (2016). *Why one cannot visit Terra Cotta for more than three times in a life time*. [online] Available at: <http://c.m.163.com/news/a/BQ0GUAJ905219M64.html> Last Accessed 12th Oct. 2016

expressed by science to facilitate the heating process. However, according to folklore, this hollow design was rather reservoirs to maintain life flow inside and channel it into the cemetery. In this sense, the entire spectacle of reproduction and simulation can be re-interpreted as a channel of *qi* and reserve the life flow beneath the ground. It did not expect to be re-opened.

Shanzhai

Another different knowledge that enunciates another reproductive simulation is uncovered to exist as folklores outside the homogeneity of scientific rationale. Folklores repeated myth, and myth was propagated verbally as rumours. The regal *qi*, a mysterious and vital flow, was channelled and reserved by the terracotta army down to the ground. Despite such a myth, local farmers do not dislike the massive excavation and exhibition of Qin's spectacle. So many visitors give the area renown which is then transformed into a marketing opportunity for those farmers who live in the surrounding areas. Money is always the strongest stimulant. Farmers are keen to favour their new role, merchants, to sell souvenirs of replica warriors, horses and chariots that copy the terracotta replica inside pits. These copies, which cost no more than 50 RMB each, are claimed by farmers to be made of 'real clay from the pits'. Even so, bargaining always happens. Tourists are dubious it due to the look of mass-production and low price. The farmer would reply with a smart answer: "If I say this is fake, would you pay for it? If I say it's real, would you believe it? The real thing is there inside the pit! Can you take it home?" Indeed, Qin's spectacle of reproduction has been preserved by the museum as a cultural inheritance. However, this inheritance seems not about authenticity that bears the original, because Qin's terracotta replicas were reproduced not for being real but for simulating the reality that happened two thousand years ago but has faded out now. The souvenirs farmers are selling are doing copies of *Qinshihuang's* copies over again. So many souvenirs are neither real nor fake, far away from authentic, but overflowing around the market, just near the pits of terracotta. The perceivable distinction is that Qin's copies protected by the museum are immobile, not to be exchangeable, but farmers' copies are mobile through monetary exchange to diffuse around daily life.

This reproduction of Chinese farmers simulates the existing copies in real presence to generate new copies, simultaneously erasing any trace to the authentic or original. Such a creative re-simulation in China floating between real and fake can be called *shanzhai*. *Shanzhai* explicitly relates to Benjamin who demonstrates the mimetic faculty of reproduction, 'the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. By making many reproductions it substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique existence. And in permitting the reproduction to meet the beholder or listener in his own particular situation, it reactivates the object reproduced.'²⁴³ The mechanical reproduction demonstrated by Benjamin did enable spectacle to appear as a phantasmagorical experience of overabundant copies in commodification. An aura of the original was withered by such phantasmagoria, nothing more than the repetition of reproducibility. However, *shanzhai* seems further differential to this reproducibility. *Shanzhai* is re-copying the existing reproduced copy as new and different and crossing out a trace of the copied. In other words, *shanzhai* is not only far away from the original but also estranged from the reproduced. This repetition of copy or reproduction, namely re-copy or re-reproduction, is the simulation of the reproduced. At this point, *shanzhai* exactly echoes Baudrillard's hyperreality of simulacra. It is an independent and ultimate simulation of the equivalently reproduced, which virtualizes the real as an experience of proliferating simulacra but always beyond the real.

For spectacle to recur with the aid of *shanzhai* must have differential appearance whereby a different phantasmagorical experience is generated. This appearance can be experienced neither by Madame Tussaud's wax exhibition nor by Qin's reproduction of the terracotta army. It can find a peculiar marketing settlement in Shenzhen, namely Huaqiangbei Commercial Street. This street is well known for being the heaven of *shanzhai* in the field of electronics. By the end of the 1980s, this street was still a labor-intensive industrial zone of manufacturing and processing. Less one decade later, in the mid-90s, it had been transited as the wholesale assembly point of electronic devices and components. By 1998, it

²⁴³ Benjamin, W. The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, in *Illuminations*, p 215

developed to be 930 meters long, and 1,560 meters wide. It has 27 markets with thousands of shops selling electronic products, which receives more than 50 thousand customers per day.²⁴⁴ Now, it is a hypermarket that converges all the Chinese electronic products made as a result of *shanzhai*.

Strolling along this street customers are immediately immersed in overabundant images proliferated by *shanzhai*. *Shanzhai* is so rampant that its copies are overflowing. A spectacle of re-copying is dominating the sensation. Amongst such an experience, various copies of international top-brands, e.g. the iPhone, are spotlighted. Despite copying, the products must appear slightly differential to iPhone to visualise their distinction. By doing so, the iPhone designed by its high-tech headquarter in California, in the US, is refashioned visually in numerous new appearances. Some versions of *shanzhai* further revise the logo of Apple as another different image labelled on their products. Reproducible images of *shanzhai* that copy those international top-brands are ubiquitous around Huaqiangbei to weave a peculiar phantasmagoria. Within this phantasmagoria, those top brands dominating the international market in the name of high technology rather metamorphose in China as so many different derivative forms.

Products of *shanzhai* abuse copyright and never cease their overflow. This outpour also infiltrates Shanghai's marketplaces. Among Shanghai's streets of *shanzhai*, Xiangyang Road is typical. Xiangyang Road was originally named 'Route Tenant de la Tour' after a staff member of the French Cruise. Its construction was completed by the French concession in 1921 and street scenes were mimetic to the French buildings. At this present street, this mimicry is telescoped to its marketplace of counterfeit goods. Before strolling this market, its fame could be heard, that is, South China (Shanghai) has Xiangyang Road, while North China (Beijing) has Xiu Shui Street. As one of two such marketplaces notorious for selling counterfeit goods, Xiangyang Road market concentrates over 800 retailers, who sell fake luxury products, such as clothes, watches, jewellery, home decorations, etc., and also

²⁴⁴ Fei, S. (2010). *An Economic analysis of domestic mobile phone competition based on 'Shan Zhan' mobile phone market*. Master Thesis, University of Xiamen.

provide electronic counterfeits from Huaqiangbei. Although its commerce of *shanzhai* is comprehensive, this market mainly targets purchase of the fake brands at cheap prices. What is surprising is that such a phantasmagoria that is foul to the authentic foreign brands does not cease to draw foreign travellers to visit and buy fake Louis Vuitton or Chanel. To treat such an overflow of crowds, this commerce of counterfeit goods also develops its shopping guide. When customers arrive at the market, *huangniu* (scalpers) rush to them with hospitality and follow them all the way to provide detailed introductions. More importantly, they help to bargain. As a result, these scalpers can be rewarded with commission fees from the retailers.²⁴⁵

However, condemnation also comes with the commercial boom of counterfeit goods. *Shanzhai* is involved in illegal piracy, being little more than fake counterfeit. Indeed, Madame Tussaud did copy the real by her wax craft in reproduction, and her replicas were regarded as wax artworks with copyright. Qin's spectacle of the terracotta army also simulates the real soldiers, horses and chariots, and his reproduction was seen as cultural inheritance with exclusivity. That is, the real endows the two equivalent reproductions of copying with a legal cover, or namely an authenticity. According to Baudrillard, this so-called authenticity is a rational faculty of representation to impose bondage of being from the real on the copies.²⁴⁶ However, products of *shanzhai* de-stabilizes this imposition on the copies. It is to re-copy the copied and to reproduce the reproduced, rather than the real. The copyright of preserving authenticity, which is based on the representation of the real to the copying, is thus withered by the rampancy of *shanzhai*.

Indeed, the copyright is breached, but this rampancy of *shanzhai* is not necessarily denounced excessively, because it at least undoes a self-evident faculty that preoccupies the real in the name of authenticity to translate and identify any other disparities. Once without any authentic identification, differences proliferated by *shanzhai* become an independence

²⁴⁵ Ftchinese.com. (2006). *The last day of Shanghai Xiangyang Road market*. [online] Available at: <http://www.ftchinese.com/story/001005295> Last Accessed 31st Oct. 2017

²⁴⁶ Baudrillard, J. *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, p 73

of copies repeating the self-copying. Such differences should be empirical diversity rather than *a priori* identity preexisting in the representation of reality to judge and negate the so-called 'fake'.²⁴⁷ If *shanzhai* can repel its negative light, the spectacle to appear as a result of it should have an efficacy of active performance to affirm multiplicity of simulacra in very appearance. In this sense, the technological regime cannot be simply negated as a homogenous domination but also a creative force that virtualizes the real life as a phantasmagorical experience of endless differences in simulation, i.e. *shanzhai*.

More importantly, *shanzhai*, as a creative force to disengage simulation from being commensurable to authenticity, is also a concrete technology of substantiating the subversive strategy, namely *détournement*, which is aimed at dispelling and refashioning the global spectacle that has been projecting reality as integratable as multinational corporation in the cultural industry with a reproductive denominator of copyright. With regard to *détournement*, Sadie Plant defines it as two-fold, 'diverting' and 'subversive'.²⁴⁸ Diversion reveals an impossibility of which creation of differences can be done by inventing anew. Intermediated and subsumed by copyright, so-called inventions are detained as reproducible as an infinite self-variation of a pre-given authenticity, and this variation is little more than a repetition of generality as differences. Thus, the creative force to mark difference as irreplaceable, rather than reproducible, must diverge from invention as diverting as idleness and apathy to the invention that has been preoccupied by copyright. On the other hand, such diverting activities should be also subversive. This subversion means that creation, since it is bifurcated from reproductive invention through idleness, should be an autonomous play of sabotage, stealing, and piracy, that is, an art of plagiarism, whereby those illegitimate and unintegrable elements that were inhibited by copyright can be revealed and re-justified as an 'antithesis of quotation' against the copyright.²⁴⁹ This refusal of quoting copyright as playful as the frenzy of *shanzhai* is to mock the incapacity of so-called authenticity by illegal and ignoble mimicry. What is critical is that such ungraceful

²⁴⁷ Deleuze, G. *Difference and Repetition*

²⁴⁸ Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 86; 'All the King's Men', *Situationist International Anthology*, p 115

²⁴⁹ Debord, G. *The Society of the Spectacle*, p 205, 208

parody is never ashamed of itself with self-awareness to identify its existence as a foul reappearance as derivative to the self-variation of an original authenticity, but always affirms itself as an independent mimicry. This mimicry for a play of foul alone, without self-identification to any predetermination, further indicates a bifurcation whereby the present spectacle that is restricted to a sole copyrighted rendition can be dislocated to embrace other possibilities.

Cuan

Shanzhai in China never ceases. Its technical performance is also endless to proliferate different products and images around daily experience. In this regard, the spectacle rendered by *shanzhai* appears as a visual hybridization of reproducible material disparities. Rey Chow defines this hybridization as a process of ‘putting altogether’, that is, an amalgamation of gathering incommensurable differences altogether to resist the original or authentic.²⁵⁰ This amalgamation of differences through *shanzhai* to visualise a peculiar spectacle has its Chinese terminology, *cuan*. *Cuan* means a technique of conglomerating different pieces or fragments altogether to enunciate a distinction whereby the original or authentic is erased. This craft is not merely re-copying, but a creative production. This creation is also the key of *shanzhai* to weave the present Chinese spectacle. That is to say, *cuan* as a key technique of *shanzhai* is not an end of spectacle but continues it as excessive to exceed the regularity of rendition by the Chinese-styled plagiarism, as argued above, putting altogether without quotation. With regard to this plagiaristic amalgamation, as Vaneigem argued, while spectacle that restricts itself to a regular rendition and preserves its authenticity is proliferating goods and multiplying images, this rendition that self-preserved as authenticity, rather simultaneously, casts a shadow on itself.²⁵¹ That is, what is proliferated and rendered dialectically provides what can be plagiarised, thus those images registered with copyright are always vulnerable as a ‘turnstile’ open both to being forged by anti-copyright and to being protected by laws. Though this dialectic of plagiarism and

²⁵⁰ Chow, R. (1995). *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography, and Contemporary Chinese Cinema*. New York: Columbia University Press, p 185,189

²⁵¹ Vaneigem, R. *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, p 75

copyright is insisted on by situationists as a resistance against spectacle (see more details in 1st chapter), this resistant logic can be rather revised by the Chinese-characteristic of *cuan*, rather than to negate this spectacle totally, but to repeat it as a divergent play of plagiarism.

Huaqiangbei is still a good example of experiencing this plagiaristic craft. Madame Tussaud used wax as materials with moulding to shape her spectacle. Qin's artisans used clays and sands as materials with moulding and kneading to elaborate the wonder. *Shanzhai* exhibited in Huaqiangbei uncovers craft of *cuan* gathering multiple electronic components as the new. This craft is based on the feature of Huaqiangbei. Huaqiangbei not only sells products but, more importantly, converges all the electronic components. It does not exaggerate in saying that any customer can purchase any electronic component in this planet from Huaqiangbei. All-encompassing assembly of multiple components provides an unlimited possibility to *cuan* any electronic device in any shape and with any appearance, without so-called authentic branding. In this way, workers not only sell components but also sell the electronic devices *cuan*-ed by themselves. A complete system of *shanzhai*, including design, the supply of materials, assembly, and production, is established to implement *cuan*. This system takes much less time to finish the whole manufacturing process.²⁵² Those top brands in hot sales are simulated but with different components, different appearance, labelled with different logos and even added functions, but at a lower price.

Concerning this craft of *cuan*, de Kloet and Scheen regard *shanzhai* as 'an inherent part of the capitalist economy of China. Its potential destroys the brand that they copy should not be seen as a threat to the economy, but as a vital feature keeping the economy alive and generating new products.'²⁵³ Indeed, not only can products of *shanzhai* employing *cuan* reproduce commodified images to mythologise daily life but also their reliable quality and low price can facilitate more subjects to experience the creation of *shanzhai*. Also, such mass enjoyment of forgery and amalgamation as an ecstasy of anti-copyright disrupts a

²⁵² Free Trade Zone focus (2015). *The technology entrepreneurs starts business in Huaqiangbei*. [online] Available at: <http://m.apdf.com/news/241900.html>. Last Accessed 6th Oct. 2016

²⁵³ Kloet, J. & Scheen, L. (2013). Pudong: The shanzhai global city, *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 16(6), p 703

seamless and self-contained circulation of the multinational monopoly.²⁵⁴

It is phenomenal that the industry of *shanzhai* has grounded the spectacle with particular experience of *cuan*. This craft of conglomerating differences to regenerate the new is not confined to the electronic world of Huaqiangbei but ubiquitous to infiltrate everywhere. The myth of *shanzhai* has thus encompassed everyday life, not only popular in mass consumption but also flourishing in the online community. Since online social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, and Youtube, are banned by China's firewall, a huge space is then left for the industry of *shanzhai* to *cuan* Chinese online communities. Immediately, an all-encompassing social network is *cuan*-ed in China. Weibo copies Twitter but gathers much more functions together, i.e. online forum, gaming, long comments, short messages, pictures online and sharing within other online communities. WeChat copies WhatsApp but regenerates a much stronger and different online experience, i.e. online banking, payment, online friends circle, free call, discover people nearby. Renren copies Facebook but initially targets students, especially in universities, by which those students can search for their classmates/friends online.²⁵⁵

Not only does the industry of *shanzhai cuan* the boom of Chinese online community but it also *cuan*-s the spectacle as the mass entertainment industry. Most live shows and TV talent shows in China simulate the western and Korean mass entertainment industry. At the early stage, all the shows were directly bought with a high payment. For instance, *Voice of China* is bought from the *Voice of the UK*, *China's Got Talent* is bought from the *Britain's Got Talent*, and the live shows, such as *Running Man*, are also bought from the Korean version. These shows have been now utilising *cuan* to add Chinese elements to re-establish a new and different Chinese version. Not only are the contents changed but also the name of the show is redesigned. *Voice of China* is renamed as *Sing! China*. More importantly, such ubiquitous TV shows, for example, *huayangjiejie* (Sisters over Flowers on Journey) performed by Shanghai Dragon TV station, not only saturate spectators in a joyful rendition but also their

²⁵⁴ Allen, V. 'Faking it', *The Face* 23, Aug 1990, p 40-43

²⁵⁵ Liu, H.J. (2014). *Why Chinese renren didn't develop to be Chinese Facebook*. [online] Available at: <http://tech.sina.com.cn/i/2014-01-14/08589094859.shtml>, Last Accessed 11th Oct. 2016

immersion has been blurring the border between show and reality. While those pop stars, actors/actresses, and social celebrities, engage themselves into live shows and perform scenarios, such scenarios are not merely received as pre-designed but played to simulate the live scenes of real life, that is, to simulate the reality as images of a live show. Insofar as real life and show are simulated in mass media as interchangeable, the subjects are irresistibly seduced by those live images as a self-reflection as if gazing at a mirror to be obsessed by the self-images reflected in mirror. Once being allured and incapable of distinguishing reality and show, the performances and scenarios conjured by those highly paid entertainment stars are no longer a surreal imagination that is fleeting, and neither are they grabbed by reality, but a hyperreal experience that is perceived by the inebriated subject as simulacra of reality to happen as real life but with an aesthetic appearance, thus becomes more believable than reality. At this point, this seduction of live shows to absorb and dissolve reality unreservedly exudes a kind of heterogeneous effervescence, that is, narcissism, as an eruptive self-reflection of spectators such as those deliberately fabricated idols on the screen. In other words, for spectators to love such images is to love spectators themselves, since the subject in reality is being tempted and merged into the mirrored images and a self-consciousness of distinguishing I as real and I as imaged is then nullified.

The technique of *cuan* enables the industry of *shanzhai* to regenerate spectacle in the appearance of overflowing simulacra conglomerated adrift along the online community and entertainment industry. What is more, this craft has also been refashioning the urban space through amalgamating multiple and global images together to render a visual hybridity of landscapes. This visual hybridity of landscapes generated by the craft of *cuan* characterises a Disneyfication in Shanghai.

The concept of Disneyfication is used to being criticised by situationists as a generic spectacularisation of reality to visualise the globalised capital power.²⁵⁶ It encapsulates concrete lives by fabricating real life as surreal as an imaginary fantasy to anaesthetise their suffering and neutralise struggle. This neutralisation of real sufferance and resistance

²⁵⁶ De Caeter, L. (2004) *The Capsular Civilisation: On the City in the Age of Fear*. Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, p 46

through fantastic rendition can be seen as a treatment of allopathy exercising on individual subjects. Insofar as forging pleasure to counteract pain, Disneyfication is cast in a negative light. Beneath this negative light, the city spectacle of Shanghai that conjures its phantasmagorical magic through amalgamating various global urban images on the Chinese city stage is hardly affirmed but always denounced as a 'Potemkin village' or 'fake of the original' to render and conceal reality.²⁵⁷ Simulation of super-tall iconography, copy of fashionable design of futurity, and gathering CBDs downtown, all these simulacra are *cuan*-ed to refashion the urban space, mark the skyline, and fake Shanghai's urban panoramic aesthetic as global. This fabrication cannot leave aside the overabundant flow of money in Shanghai, which energises the boom of its city spectacle industry. Thanks to extravagant projects staged by the local government to attract intense investments, global city images are woven through with an unprecedented speed of urbanisation and marketization. International supermarkets, high-end shopping malls, and international hotel groups, have been then reshaping the entire urban space. These high-profile images are sewed together not only to *cuan* an enchanting city panorama but also to encrypt an urban entrepreneurship wherein such global architectural images are invested by urban imaginers and city marketers as alluring as urban iconography to produce real economic value.²⁵⁸

Furthermore, the visual effect of Disneyfication that is driven by the urban entrepreneurship is further strengthened by the completion of Shanghai Disneyland theme park, which is also located at Pudong. Since the super-tall showpiece of financial centre at Lujiazui visualises a wonderland through the extravagant and ostentatious expenditure in the form of monetary circulation, this new Disneyland repeats such a wonder as another dissipation of which exorbitant torrents of desires exuded by everyday life can be channelled as heterogeneous as magic and fantasy. Like other large amusement parks, i.e. the Happy Valley in Beijing and

²⁵⁷ Huang, Y. (2008). *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, P 231; and Ackbar Abbas addressed the city spectacle rendered by Chinese urban modernity as a discrepancy between the original and the fake. That is, Chinese modernity grounded in urban space is a differential identity of being fake globalisation to the original. Abbas, A. (2008). Faking globalisation. In: Huyssen A (ed.) *Other Cities, Other Worlds: Urban Imaginaries in a Globalizing Age*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, p 243-264

²⁵⁸ Hall, T. (ed.) (1998) *The entrepreneurial city: Geographies of politics, regimes and representation*. Chichester: Wiley & Zukin, S. (1995). *The cultures of cities*. London: Blackwell

Shenzhen, Shanghai Disneyland is also an erotic machine, which is a scattered fragment as a 'funfair' to be distributed in Pudong and comprises a multitude of entertainment facilities, e.g. tea cups rides, flat rides, and roller coasters, etc., to technically immerse the subjects in a miraculous moment. All such entertainment machines physically simulate the effect of weightlessness by augmentation of acceleration, rolling and rotation to intensify dizziness whereby the excess sensations, e.g. fear, surprise, exhilaration, etc., can be triggered to outpour as intense impulse as a nervous effect of miracle, which is disparate from sensations that are acquired from other fragments of the city wonder dispersed in the phantasmagoria of Nanjing Road, the mimicry of Madame Tussauds wax figure museum or the luxury of Lujiazui. At this point, the city spectacle of Shanghai, since it is an unproductive expenditure that inhabits everyday life but also floats as surplus and irreducible to the productive imperative, is hardly unitary but fragmented as different pieces dispersing around the urban space with disparate perceptual effects to attract the city residents and channel their influx of desires as different experiences. Disneyland is one of such different experiences.

Furthermore, recurrence of spectacle from wonderland in Lujiazui to Disneyland is not a surreal circularity but a hyperreal repetition. That is to say, Disneyland is not merely a funfair for concentrating ecstasy through mechanical simulation but also grounds an imaginary plane as solid and real. Then, fantasy no longer ascends as rootless and boundless as surreality but visualised and constructed in reality. All the animation figures reproduced by the Hollywood film industry, e.g. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Beauty and Beasts*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, *Tarzan*, *Princess Elsa in Frozen*, etc., are simulated in Shanghai Disneyland; and even those scenes of *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Treasure Island* are also virtualized as real parks; more attractively, a firework show is performed every night at the magical castle, a central icon of Disneyland, to render the entire theme park as a world of magic falling into real life. While the subjects are saturated in such a world, they are seduced but without rejecting and veiling their reality. That is to say, perceivably, there is no a clear line to be found between Disneyland and everyday life as separation to denounce and repel each other, but such an ecstatic play of simulacra is merged within real life. With regard to this mergence, Baudrillard envisioned it as a safeguard of the real, or a final remainder of

the real as ruined but bearable. That is to say, while reality is appropriated and represented as the dialectical reconstruction of reproduction and revolution, a carnival of simulacra, such as Disneyland, becomes an extra redemption to the reality that is circumscribed in the regular representation through seducing and evaporating its last breath, those heterogeneous excess, into the simulacra; thus, hyperreal Disneyfication reflects reality as the last guardian but also evaporates it to remain a bearable form of being real.²⁵⁹

Thus far, Shanghai's Disneyfication *cuan*-s global images as amalgamation. However, this visual amalgamation cannot be utterly condemned. It is not a simple derivative of the 'generic city' as demonstrated by Rem Koolhaas to repeat an ethnocentrism as visible in urban modernity,²⁶⁰ nor are space-image-subject in different experiences persuaded and institutionalised as a global dimension that is primarily aligned with the exported hermeneutics of the modern western regime.²⁶¹ Actually, Shanghai's Disneyfication rather mixes global images with locality to perform a visual hybridity that is between local and global. For instance, there is a special park that is rendered by twelve Chinese *shengxiao* (twelve symbolic animals associated with a cycle of twelve years) in Shanghai Disneyland to mix with other Hollywood figures. Moreover, this visual fusion also involves a mergence with socialist realism. That is to say, the hyperreal carnival of Disneyland does not overshadow the Youth Palace and socialist cultural heritage industry that are used to run patriotic events and extracurricular activities to educate younger generations and propagate the national spirit. At this point, the visual hybridity of multiple simulacra can be seen to sew a spectacle, not to necessarily erase global alterity. Instead, it reduces the negation between East and West by the technique of *cuan*, into a discrepancy between the existing reproduced and the re-copying. This re-copying evaporates any aura of originality and authenticity that is imposed on real experience but sustains visual disparities in amalgamation.

²⁵⁹ Baudrillard, J. (1983) *Simulations*, New York: Semiotext(e), p 25

²⁶⁰ Kloet, J. & Scheen, L. (2013). Pudong: The shanzhai global city, *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 16(6), p 693-707; Koolhaas, R. (1995). The generic city. In Koolhaas R (ed.) *S, M, L, XL*. New York: The Monacelli Press, p 1248-1264

²⁶¹ Robinson, J. (2004). In the tracks of comparative urbanism: Difference, urban modernity and the primitive. *Urban Geography* 25 (8), P 710

6th Chapter – Puzzle/Solution

Modality of Puzzle/Solution

The spectacle on a journey, as recurrence in different appearances, has sewed its salient features together, such as phantasmagoria, myth and simulacra. Amongst such features, spectacle is no longer detained by the productive imperative but exuded as irreducible as an unproductive expenditure for heterogeneous excess, and also it is hardly a generic representation that is restricted to the pre-given ethnographical centralism, nor is limited by any exclusive regularity of rendition, but is dislocated as fragmentary and discontinuous scenes adrift along different spatiotemporal coordinates. Also, then inspired by Foucault and Benjamin, using a method of montage, these fragmentary scenes are conglomerated in terms of an order appearing on the surface of visible images and intelligible events, rather than of a presumed historical succession, whereby the heterogeneous elements of excess life can be channelled out as diverse sensations in such a visual fusion. This chapter demonstrates another feature of spectacle, that is, the enunciation of spectacle by the modality of puzzle/solution. This modality characterises the spectacle to discard being involved with heterogeneities, signs, representation or simulacra, but becomes a governmental practice embedded into concrete social contexts.

The modality of puzzle/solution is elaborated with reference to Thomas Kuhn. Kuhn in his *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* developed the paradigm of science. It is an exemplary scientific model, or a competently testified principle, which presupposes a conjecture as positive in privilege but is open-ended to be questioned and shifted in substantial activities of experimental disputes and empirical verification. Kuhnian positive science inspires two valuable points to the debts to Foucault.²⁶² Firstly, practical activities to verify empirically any presupposed hypothesis must be an anatomical examination in the appearance of things,

²⁶² Kuhnian history of science apparently corresponds to G. Canguilhem's history of the concept. The latter argued any concept as an endless displacement and transformation by repetition of being challenged and re-written in concrete verification, rather than just a progressive increase of rationality. Canguilhem's argument profoundly influenced Foucault's archaeology of knowledge. See Foucault, M. *Archaeology of Knowledge*, p 5

images and events instantaneously changeable, rather than an assertion of novelty imagined by self-consciousness as creative. Any change of anything on the surface must generate a new and different appearance to be explained and verified. This empirical change of the new thing in appearance poses a puzzle. This puzzle can be a significant issue to many or also an ordinary matter dispersed around daily life. The former is significant, and the latter is trivial but unavoidable during the routinization. In order to solve such a puzzle, the empirical verification must re-question the given hypothesis, adjust the experimental approach, and use various techniques to inspect and perform on this puzzle. This verifying performance by which a hermeneutic power promulgates specific knowledge to exercise on a puzzle is a puzzle-solution.

Secondly, regarding the modality of puzzle/solution, the history of presence should be a discontinuity reappearing by the unceasing irruption of a different puzzle looking for a different solution. During the substantial practice of solving puzzles, the contingent technical inventions and incommensurable events of anomaly disrupt the present world not in cumulative progress to predetermined linearity. In this sense, this modality of puzzle/solution challenges the Kantian-Hegelian-Marxian historicism. This contention of history, as already clarified in the 1st chapter, is presupposed as a real and dynamic reflection of the dialectical variation of self-consciousness. That is to say, since the subjective perceptual faculty, i.e. intuition, imagination and emotion, is illuminated but also represented and alienated by the immanent faculty of grasping the transcendental reason as an external reification as the objective reproduction in rationalism, once the productive consciousness is aroused and able to be aware of being alienated from the perceptual intimacy, such consciousness would become a critical force to retrieve what is to be alienated as the unitary subject, then, the objectification is reversed to restore the dialectic of unification and separation whereby the reality, as a reflection of this dialectic, would be accordingly reconstructed as historical in the presence as a creative progress. Insofar as reality is reflectively remade by the dialectical force, and if this remaking can be understood as a creation, such creation is self-incurred as those surplus and unintegrable inner drives, such as imagination, sensation and intuition, but also self-evident and must be grounded in

production. At this point, history driven in the presence as creative progress is internally traced back to the unverifiable and absolute inner spirit. Though such a spirit is unceasingly shackled by the realistic imperative, it never stops to struggle and unshackle to re-free itself as unruly novelty to remake the real world as aesthetic as it is supposed to be. Then, this self-incurred novelty that seeks an aesthetic restoration of self-contained totality is incompatible with the modality of puzzle-solution, rests on empirical verification.

Furthermore, the modality of puzzle-solution also supplements Nietzschean genealogy of the presence as another interpretation of creation. Genealogy disengages a historical consecution from being represented by those impassive and superfluous ideas towards a kind of spatial-temporal irregularity, which scatters as trivial matters, fragmentary events, diffusing images and disparate memories of different individuals. This dispersal does not indicate a disorder but its sequences to happen for now in the presence is a discursive practice, wherein those spatiotemporal 'fragments', aimlessly and contingently, collide to erupt a boundless creative power by which the course of time flow is interrupted from any productive law and deviated from any absolute knowledge but towards a surge of inner intensity that dissipate itself unreservedly as a sovereign willpower. Then, history is no longer deduced as unitary but created by a contingent collision of fragments as unexpected as miraculous moments of unleashing the heterogeneous and unruly excess for sovereignty. Despite this history being unstable, vigorous and hardly homogenised, it is rather embroiled with a libidinal economy of regenerating and expending the natural excess for an unrestrictive play of loss. As for this economy, history, as an endless recurrence in presence, has a sole and untamed orientation, that is, sovereignty, and then, what sovereignty ultimately concerns is creation in which subjects, through making new things, not only acquire but also give their infinite inner flux to production as excess energy to refresh reality and also guarantee themselves ascendancy during the historical recurrence in the presence. In this sense, things to be made by the economy as mechanical channels of exuding the subjective excess are also erotic machines whereby the subjects are never subjected to things but master them as means, nor do they pertain to such utility of means, to exalt the subjects themselves to be sovereign. Thus far, creation for sovereignty, inspired by Bataille,

is a free and unconditional play of inner flux as unproductive expenditure, rather than being restricted to the productive imperative of purposed and utilitarian labour. However, the modality of puzzle-solution rather alters this creative recurrence of the presence as a supplement. Although contingent discoveries or inspired inventions of machines or technologies can be triggered by the torrent of the inner desires as an excess, this irreducible surplus that drives reality to recur in the presence rather inhabits the modality of puzzle-solution that functions as utility of verification to form a symbiosis between them. That is to say, desire for remaking reality is not merely excess but also a puzzle, how to remake; thus, as for the desire to outpour through remaking reality, each change of reality becomes a puzzle. More importantly, to seek and verify each technology as possible solution and to substantiate the inventive technology by production as concrete machines does not have to be lifeless and tedious but can be also an art of governmentality, which reorients the unreserved play of excess as sovereign as creation towards a reserved play of excess as utilitarian as a process of invention, verification, production and solution. In other words, to solve puzzles by invention, verification and production can be also one channel to exude desires as excess as creation. Thus, creation, as excess to stir life as sovereign, is not necessarily separated from the productive utility since creation itself is inherent about remaking the presence by desiring, verifying, and reproducing new things. Though verification of technology and production of machines in utility to solve puzzles constrain the excess from unconditional play, they rather allow a partial and fragmentary expenditure of excess as creative as puzzle-solution, rather than being simply condemned as servile labours to produce things for an economic rationale. Insofar as the empirical practice of puzzle-solution grounds excess, logic and knowledge are embedded into the torrent of excess and also exude such torrents as an intrinsic channel towards heterogeneous elements, e.g. curiosity and wisdom. At this point, to be sovereign does not have to be heterogeneous alone, nor does it refuse any mechanism of verification as homogenous rationale, but fuses them both as a symbiosis of recirculating the sovereign will between them as an irreducible effervescence from the latter.

When the above modality applies to the spectacle, the spectacle can be reviewed. It exists

between two planes: a discursive formation of which things are reproduced in utility and dispersed as ubiquity in trivial life; simultaneously such ubiquitous things are also perceived as an endless visual reappearance of images floating as surplus over reality. In the case of spectacle recurring in the presence according to reproducible things and images, this re-visualisation of reality as different images on the surface, for the epistemic subject who is experiencing the reconstructed reality, is hence regenerating different puzzles waiting to be interpreted and solved. That is to say, each change of images, as reflective rendition to correspond to the reconstruction of reality, is symbiotic with the homogeneous mechanism of remaking reality with the modality of puzzle-solution; furthermore, this figural symbiosis affirms the recurrence of images as visual excess that is allowed to exude from the solid rationale of verification in knowledge, apart from visualising those technical solutions of refashioning the real world. At this point, new knowledge is then promulgated and exercised on the puzzle of reconstructing reality to look for its solution. The practice of solving the puzzle must then bring about the emergence of new technology and reproduction of new machines to exert on concrete things and reshape the appearance. This reshaping on the surface accordingly refreshes images to render new spectacle and trigger a different visual perception. The reappearance of new spectacle as figural excess, then, stirs the inner faculty of perception and imagination to re-gaze at the real world and imagine new appearance, whereby a new puzzle is posed and needs a new verified solution again. Such an endless repetition is formed in the presence.

Concerning this symbiosis between spectacle and modality of puzzle-solution, Foucault's nexus of power/knowledge in governmental practice (see more details in the next section) can be called upon here to further develop this nexus with the modality of puzzle/solution. As mentioned before, Foucault-Deleuze's genealogy reduced the subject from the transcendental and singular idea to the disintegrated empirical experience. The immanent reason is not either necessarily fixed with conformity with the self-assertive faculty of representing a pre-given mind over things as a universal principle. The reason should be reduced and dispersed into empirical practice to uncover and enunciate those heterogeneities with reasonable interpretation. In this way, criticism of reason is not

anymore a negative faculty of critical consciousness in the fashion of dialectics to self-negate. Criticism should be disassociated from any ideal *priori* but reduced into an epistemological nexus in which multiple and incommensurable types of knowledge enunciated by different empirical experiences are put together in interplay. In this interplay, criticism rather turns into a debate, or an open conversation, among epistemic discrepancies. Each debate is triggered by a puzzle that already happens in real experience to look for a possible solution. Once a debate starts, a solution is then expected to emerge from the conversation among diverse knowledge. The solution must be not sole and univocal but always multiple, because different knowledge based on various experience must provide different solutions. When different and irreplaceable solutions are all gathered in the debate, for the puzzle to choose an answer from them must be not a negation between right and wrong but a comparative optimisation of efficiency to solve the puzzle in that case. That is to say, any chosen solution coexists with others and also bifurcated to regenerate multiple possibilities that will further trigger multiple puzzles.²⁶³ In the case of the new puzzle appearing, those unchosen solutions might be reconsidered.

This bifurcation of solution choice tolerates multiplicity and sustains the endless repetition of the puzzle as the different appearance to re-search for a new solution in the open conversation of diverse knowledge. This diversification and fragmentation of knowledge as the provider of bifurcated solutions is explicitly related to Lyotard's report on knowledge in the postmodern condition. For him, formulation and promulgation of knowledge are subsumed as little more than a variable repetition of a meta-narrative theorisation, which overarches itself as an unchallengeable preface to refine the incommensurable fragments scattering along time and space through self-referential manifestation as fictional as a historical positivity towards an ideal end; more importantly, this theorisation never ceases to preoccupy a self-contained centre to presume itself as a self-evident truth-claim, which, in the name of truth, is invulnerable to any criticism that entails the dialectic, because this dialectic, as a self-negation of the meta-narrative theory, is rather a self-development of

²⁶³ This viewpoint is influenced by Deleuze's reference of Chinese philosopher named Ts'ui Pen, each one of the possible solutions is not exclusive but being a point of departure to generate other bifurcations. Deleuze, G. *Difference and Repetition*, p 148-149

such theorisation through variation of theoretical contents only to strengthen this self-evident *priori* as a universal validity of totalizing all in a unitary theory.²⁶⁴ Lyotard demonstrates disruption of the dialectic that hardly liberates differences, nor exudes heterogeneities, but only repeats a self-incurred totality as homogeneous as self-development, then, fragmentizes the theoretical unity to reveal the nexus of knowledge as discursive and bifurcated, even though this bifurcating nexus that locates spectacular reconstruction of reality into verification is incongruous with Nietzsche and Bataille's libidinal economy of unleashing the excess as expenditure for intensity towards sovereignty, as he argued. However, as is contended, they are rather likely to be symbiotic with each other as a coexistence of incompatibilities.

Thus far, another hermeneutic of spectacle is supplemented with the modality of puzzle-solution that is illuminated by Foucault's concept of governmentality to amend the inspiration of Nietzsche-Bataille's libidinal economy wherein spectacle is seen as heterogeneous excess.

Puzzle-Solution of Finance

The above argument has clarified a symbiosis between the reappearance of spectacle and the knowledge nexus of puzzle-solutions. In this symbiosis, each instance of puzzle solution must exercise the concrete things in real experience to arouse visual perception. This perception of spectacle is not merely surplus but also inhabits and drifts along the bifurcated and optimised puzzle solutions provided by the discursive nexus of knowledge. Then, power dispersed by apparatus of knowledge to infiltrate daily practice does not relate to the spectacle as a dialectic of essence and surface, or of rationale and excess. It is rather that the power must be uncovered by spectacle to affirm itself in appearance, not necessarily as an unreserved play of dissipation to face absolute risks, but being reserved relatively as a governmental practice of puzzle/solution. With regard to this practice, an example can be

²⁶⁴ Lyotard, J.F. (1984) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Manchester University Press; Lyotard, J.F. (1974) *Economie Libidinale*, Paris, Minuit, p 117, 287; Lyotard, J.F. (1984). 'Adrift', *Driftworks*, New York: Semiotext(e), p 13

found from the financial omnipresence that never ceases to spectacularise reality.

Financial mobility, above all, is characterised by a necessary knowledge of finance that secures our daily life within a verifiable domain. Regarding knowledge apparatus promulgated to substantiate and verify the power, Foucauldian hermeneutics of 'power-knowledge' is reiterated. Power, i.e. money power, is not merely an instrumental tool of manipulation but rather a dispersive discourse of verification. This discourse is diffusing into ordinary routine of trivial matters, and according to Foucault, can be seen as a discursive formation, of which a historical variation of ideas, concepts and values is encompassed and then enunciated and encrypted as a system of norms, principles and formulas; in short, an overall formulation of knowledge.²⁶⁵ This knowledge is never privileged as a philosophical dogma nor an authoritarian manifesto. It has however a 'genealogical' root to saturate practical exercises and embed itself into concrete actions of everyday life. That is to say, promulgation of knowledge as an apparatus is to seek and normalise a distinctive verification vis-à-vis the daily governmentality. This actual practice of justification in distinction is essentially aimed at those small, random and fragmented events to provide a technical solution or a persuasion, rather than to seek a universal theory. This efficacy of conviction, or a convinced and preferred disposal, is thus about power, and vice versa, whereby people can be disposed toward making a judgment about their concrete action and daily behaviour.

Foucault's power-knowledge nexus did reshape the hermeneutics of power. Power promulgated knowledge and is also delivered by the knowledge to convince the subjects. This nexus can also be applied to money power and its financial techniques. That is to say, the authority of money must verify itself with financial services to persuade people that they could not live without money. Intermediated by this nexus of verification, the monetary regime never ceases to enchant people with the spectacle of consumption. Immersed by such overabundant commodities, people not only enjoy themselves but also have to face

²⁶⁵ Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings*, New York: Pantheon Books, p 111-28, 130-33

such commodified images as a puzzle, that is, how to afford such desirable things. The more stylish and more expensive commodity not only triggers stronger desire but also poses a tougher puzzle of unaffordability. Puzzled by unaffordability, the ordinary people, not including the rich, would repress their desire and defer pleasurable consumption, and back to austere work and saving money. A contradiction between reality and pleasure is revealed here. To seek pleasure is conditioned by the self-repressive reality of working, saving, and then buying.

However, the situation is different now. Monetary regime does not only allow the exorbitant desires to outpour in the form of commodities but also promulgates knowledge to help dissipation of such desires. In other words, a phantasmagoria is presented as a puzzle and simultaneously solutions are also designated to those thus puzzled. The puzzle is need of money to afford, so the solution is a conditional offer of money. A variety of financing derivatives, i.e. low-interest personal loans, credit cards, and customised mortgages, are thereby promulgated by the regime. Many financial services, for instance, the car financing of BMW, have been proffering customised financial solutions. The customer can have flexible choices, including fixed repayments of owning the car, optional final payment to part-exchange or return the vehicle, and hiring the car by monthly payments. Various financing solutions provide flexible options to the puzzle of unaffordability, that is, 'borrowing – immediate procurement – repaying'. People are thus disposed to buy and enjoy without any deferment. Mobilised by these financial solutions, the financial regime is then permeating and overflowing around everyday transactions to solve puzzles and convince people of money realising their dreams.

By this token of puzzle/solution, the authority of money is encircled within a self-verification. It refashions a phantasmagorical puzzle to stimulate desires and simultaneously provides financial solutions to invest and gratify such desires. A kind of symbiosis between the spectacle of consumption and financial solutions then forms. Through this symbiosis, the monetary regime exercises substantial experience of everyday life. It has two technical products, i.e. spectacle and financial knowledge, which have been appropriating consumers

as a bio-functional 'transducer'. The more phantasmagorical enchants the consumers in the obsession of buying, the more financial services diagnoses and convinces consumers of their professional solutions. Consumers become a locus, or an expendable source, to affirm the monetary regime using spectacle and financial services. In short, this symbiosis between financial services and spectacle reveals a salient feature of money power. This power is bred by excessive desires of consumers to live with its various financial crafts.

This symbiosis is not only the capitalistic power crystallised in commodities and financial services to diffuse around daily life but is also an array of professional institutions and agencies. Agents are well-trained 'experts', 'specialists', and 'consultants', who specialise in relevant fields of knowledge – e.g., financing, accounting, business, and economics – that are then filtered and disseminated through society. Their role is primarily that of a propagator.²⁶⁶ These propagators are also puzzle-solvers. They are always everywhere using their financial knowledge and skills to provide solutions to puzzles created by the monetary regime. That is to say, expansion of a phantasmagoria is always accompanied by diffusion of these financial propagators. Since spectacle is displayed to create puzzles of obsessing subjects, and derivative solutions provided as 'remedies' must be delivered by propagators to profess to solve puzzles and relieve obsessions. When someone is puzzled as to how to find a job, a wide range of recruitment agencies are present to provide solutions to unemployment; when someone is puzzled by how to buy a house, or what kind of house to buy and where, a wide range of agents will provide mortgage solutions tailored to financial capacities; when someone is puzzled by how to invest those finances, brokers are ready to introduce financial products. Every bank is more than willing to help to manage personal wealth. They appear as servants of customers – the subject – about whose life they care deeply.

²⁶⁶ David Bray reviewed Foucault's argument about the propagator as dissimilar to that of the function of the pastor in the middle ages. He also equated the role of propagator with the role of the cadre during the brief period of Chinese socialism. Bray, D. (2005). *Social Space and Governance in Urban China*. California: Stanford University Press, p 60-61

Puzzles and solutions are interconnected: the puzzle-solvers gather a toolbox, of puzzle-solutions for the spectacle-intermediated everyday life, while the ubiquitous commodity weaves a technical matrix as a condition for the rhetorical verification of the puzzle-solvers. Together, they both formulate an infinite knowledge constituted by the puzzle-solution. Holding such knowledge, commodified phantasmagoria and professional puzzle-solvers then configure an inescapable locus, which operates rhetorically and instrumentally between money and everydayness.

Underground

The above model of puzzle/solution provides an alternative version of Foucault's 'power-knowledge' nexus, which elaborates 'the monetary power – financial knowledge' nexus. In terms of the modality of puzzle/solution, the journey of spectacle is cast with a light of governmentality to re-visualise the experience between London and Shanghai. Spectacle reappears in ubiquity to diffuse as a phantasmagorical experience that immerses the overground landscapes in the financial omnipresence. Such a ubiquity of images is not confined to the overground scenes but also rooted in shadow, the images of the underground metro system. The more conspicuous the phantasmagoria illuminating over the ground, the more pervasive the metro mechanism supporting from below. Since the spectacle infiltrates into the underground, the governmental practice of puzzle/solution uncovered by spectacle is thereby embedded into the ground. In this way, the journey of spectacle leaves its panoramic view of the City of London, the Bund, or Lujiazui dominating over the ground, and enters into the underground experience.

This underground experience starts with the London Underground, more colloquially understood as 'the Tube'. It is the world's oldest public metropolitan railway system. This mechanical infrastructure embedded in shadow is performing daily to connect with the world above as an intermediary of commuters that integrates them into the dominating spectacle of routinized everyday life. In other words, this massive infrastructure is not only mechanical but also a visual extension, by which the spectacle reappears from the panorama

above to the mobile images of machines, railways, crowds, tickets and Oyster cards overflowing underground.

The appearance of such a huge mechanism is born by a solution chosen by the late 19th century, a steam-powered mechanical age, in regard of a puzzle of traffic disorder happening to city life. The modern spectacle of London was driven by technological reproducibility and marketing exchangeability. This spectacle rendered by the ecstasy of commodities indeed staged an urban phantasmagoria but also stimulates radical urbanisation. Radical urbanisation along with foreign trade and industrial revolution made London a prosperous metropolis. This prosperity not only housed the 1851 Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace but also resulted in an incessant growth of population and expansion of urban space.²⁶⁷ As the numbers significantly increased, a puzzle emerged to the spectacle settled in the market, that is, traffic chaos. The traditional metropolitan railways became overburdened and in the end incapable of bearing such a huge volume of commuters. That is to say, mass population enchanted and gathered by the marketing phantasmagoria into London also meant an intensive flow of crowds to cause serious congestion.²⁶⁸ This congestion was also at risk of explicating public space in danger of a governmental disorder. When Sophie Von La Roche came to London, she witnessed the 'eternal stream of coaches' driving down Oxford Street. Horace Walpole in his article revealed in 1791 that transportation in Oxford Street was chaotic and full of chariots, curricles, phaetons and coaches rushing everywhere endlessly. The pedestrians have to stop every five minutes to wait till the coaches pass.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ In 1500, the population was 75,000, considerably smaller than Paris and the Mediterranean centres. In the 17th century, it grew from 200,000 to 575,000. By 1700, London was the largest city in Europe and the world's leading business centre. By 1800, the population had reached on million; by 1900 it was 6.5 million and peaked at 8.6 million in 1939. Glover, J. (1999). *London's Underground: the world's premier underground system*, Ian Allan Publishing, P 8

²⁶⁸ In 1855, a Parliamentary Select Committee determined that over 750,000 people were entering London every day. "The streets were being blocked by a variety of iron-tired vehicles—omnibuses, coaches, hackney carriages, drays, and so forth—all making a vast din on the cobbled roads." Glover, J. (1999). *London's Underground: the world's premier underground system*, Ian Allan Publishing, p 9

²⁶⁹ O'Brian, A.F. (2003). *Walking, rambling, and promenading in eighteenth-century London: a literary and cultural history*. PhD Thesis, The University of York.

The puzzle emerged along with marketing phantasmagoria. The solution was then requested. One of the most ambitious solutions conceived was to construct a tile-lined glass arcade encircling central London to divert the congestion and preclude the disorder. This encircling arcade would be of a duplex structure, with the street above and the railway below. Trains, on no less than four tracks, would be imaginatively powered by atmospheric pressure. The duplex arcade was originally proposed by Sir Joseph Paxton to make a spectacle of a circular line on the city surface.²⁷⁰ However, this project circle was never actualized due to the limited capacity of dispersing crowds overground. Opposed to the solution was Charles Pearson, a solicitor to the City of London. Pearson proposed a railway running trains underground — a submerged version of Paxton’s original idea. He described “a majestic eight-track covered way, thoroughly lighted and ventilated”. Motive power in the shallow tunnels was estimated to be able to carry more than “250,000 commuters a day into and around London”.²⁷¹ Pearson’s solution demonstrated an efficiency of traffic dispersion that channelled the traffic crowds into the underground tunnels. According to this efficient puzzle-solution, a steam-operated underground railway then appeared to run between Farringdon Street and Bishop’s Road, Paddington in 1863. Since then, the London Tube infrastructure has been expanding over a century of demolition and renovation to visualise a huge spectacle of mechanism underground. This mechanism anatomically penetrates beneath the city surface as ‘veins and nerves’, is exercised on each commuter’s journey, and verifies its indispensability to the utility life of daily mobility.

Pearson’s solution of dispersing crowds underground brought the appearance of a pervasive system that has been now radiating from Zone 1 to Zone 6. This underground system further triggered a new governmental puzzle, that is, how to quickly and accurately assess the crowds overflowing through the system. In other words, an efficient solution for marketing assessment that is capable of translating and representing the mobile crowds as calculable statistics was urgently needed. In this case, knowledge of economics was involved, in which the rational faculty of representation translated the overloaded intensity of commuters as a

²⁷⁰ O’Brian, A.F. *Walking, rambling, and promenading in eighteenth-century London: a literary and cultural history*. PhD Thesis, The University of York

²⁷¹ Long, D. (2011) *London Underground: architecture, design and history*, The History Press, p 12

value relation of fare-collection. This fare collection was not only an economic technique of exercising the economic knowledge of value on crowds. More importantly, it was also substantiated as a real device, ticket, which represented people into the controllable calculation. Fare-collection was at one time based on the issue and control of tickets. Paying for a ticket and simply having it in hand was then sufficient enough record of where and when the ticket-holder entered the system. In this sense, the ticket was an apparatus to translate the fares into concrete means of payment (for the passenger) and fare collection (for the operator).²⁷² At this point, the puzzle found a solution. The solution advised by economics enabled the small image of tickets to appear along with the Tube spectacle. Though tickets appeared to be unobtrusive, they were rather dispersed with crowds to economically assess each passenger and permit him/her access to the daily mobility.



Figure 6.1 Edmondson Tickets

The appearance of tickets as an economic solution not only achieved the marketing assessment of crowds by fare-collection but also generated another puzzle, intense labour of ticket clerks to deal with a long queue. Till the 1840s, the British railway companies had previously used handwritten tickets, which required intensive labour by ticket clerks and led to long queues. This was because handwriting

tickets were laborious and inefficient and ticket clerks were unable to match the frequency of passengers, especially during peak time. A new solution was then required to relieve the labours and increase the efficiency of ticketing. Engineering craftsmanship was involved. In 1836, Thomas Edmondson created a pre-printed and numbered card ticket to record the payment of railway fares and raise revenues (figure 6.1). The Edmondson ticketing system segment the metro system as calculable distances. The different distance between different stations was valued at the different price represented as different coloured tickets. These

²⁷² Mezghani, M. (2008). *Study on electronic ticketing in public transport, European Metropolitan Transport Authorities (EMTA)*, [online] Available at: <http://www.emta.com/IMG/pdf/EMTA-Ticketing.pdf>. Last Accessed 11th Oct 2016

different coloured tickets were pre-printed by machine and stamped with the date. Dated tickets were then individually numbered in various type and destination. They were secured in a lockable cupboard. The serial number printed on the different-coloured ticket made it easier to count the amount of tickets sold and unsold at the end of each day, which made it simpler to calculate revenues. The technological invention of Edmondson tickets appeared as a puzzle solution of relieving ticket clerks from the intensive task of handwriting tickets and also of dispersing the intense flow of commuters during peak time.

The invention of Edmondson tickets increased the efficiency of fare-collection system that sped up the frequency of crowds flowing through the Tube stations. In this sense, speed was inseparable from the increasing efficiency of fare-collection. Along with the crowds more quickly overflowing into stations, a new puzzle emerged, how to quickly deliver such crowds. The new solution was then found from modern engineering and physics, that is, electrification. Since electrification displaced the steam-powered system in the early 20th century, this technical upgrade directly sped up the Tube system of delivering passengers. More saliently, the electrification, like a puzzle solution, not only refashioned the visual perception of the steam-polluted underground. As Dutton cited before, it also actualised the speed, as the ethos of capitalistic power, in the appearance of 'streamlining' as a self-expression of the machine (see 3rd chapter). In other words, electrified acceleration to affirm the capitalism in existence should be visualised by refashioning the locomotives and carriages as a sense of frictionless and mechanical bodies.

However, this speed increase was not only visualised in trains but also congealed in the reappearance of new ticketing machines. That is to say, the solution of speeding up the delivery, in addition to an expansion of new lines, further triggered a puzzle that more and more city dwellers were attracted but to increase the ticketing burden. Since then, speed was not merely about accelerating trains for delivering efficiency but also about accelerating issue of tickets for fare-collection efficiency. To solve this puzzle, the solution of speeding up ticketing mechanisation never ceases its technical optimisation till now.

"Twopenny Tube", a type of cheap tickets that cost a flat fare of two pence, was firstly invented to adapt to the speed of electric and overload of masses (see figure 6.2).²⁷³ Cheap fares further attracted many more passengers. Profits of the railway companies were also sharply accumulated, whereby the ticketing solution of governing the fare revenues never ceased its upgrade. Pre-printed tickets appeared less efficient to manage the intense flow of masses. A ticket that was rapidly-issued to passengers was created. In the late 1920s, the reproducible mechanisation of ticket issue by the rapid-printer machines that printed, dated, guillotined and ejected arrived.²⁷⁴ The

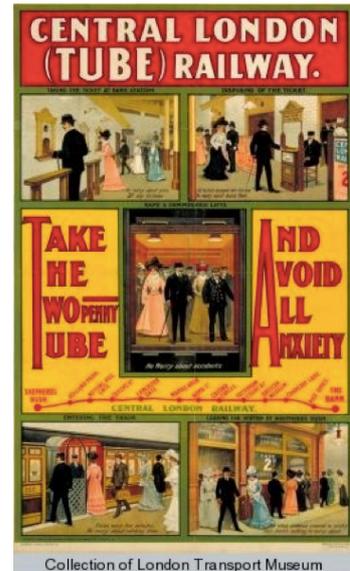


Figure 6.2 Twopenny Tube Poster

instant-printed ticket not only facilitated passengers to transfer for any journey but also enabled the fare-collection to be more accurate from the different journey.²⁷⁵ However, mechanisation of rapid-printed tickets still lagged behind the automation phase of ticket fare collection (AFC) since the 1960s. Despite performing poorly at the initial stage, the benefits of technological automation could not be denied.²⁷⁶ In the end, the upgraded automation of ticketing system prevailed through the 1980s. This upgrade led to general improvements in the efficiency of London's public transport service infrastructure. Along with the increase of effectiveness, a new electronic-encoded ticket the size of a credit card was introduced later on. This new generation of ticket replaced the magnetic oxide on the back with a black magnetic strip, which was more compatible with the ticket barriers. The new appearance of this technological invention further optimised the solution of speeding up the passenger flows and simultaneously assessing their fares in accuracy.

²⁷³ Within weeks, 100,000 people were travelling on the Twopenny Tube every day. By the end of 1900 approximately 15 million had been carried across London using the Tube. More new lines were also opened to deliver such overflow of passengers. Bownes, D. Green, O & Mullins, S. (2012) *Underground: how the tube shaped London*, Allen Lane of Penguin Books, p 77

²⁷⁴ Glover, J. (2010). *London's Underground*, Ian Allan, p 87-88

²⁷⁵ Glover, J. *London's Underground*, p 88

²⁷⁶ Bownes, D. Green, O. and Mullins, S. *Underground: how the tube shaped London*, p 196

Automation encapsulated the personal passenger, the technical encoding, and the regulatory system. This technical solution coexists with and paves the way for digitalisation. The Oyster card is the most sophisticated development of the Tube's ticket regulation system so far. Digital creation of this smart card appears to optimise the solution of the e-Tube, an 'interoperability' of information. Oyster card is the size of a credit card and easily kept safe inside a wallet. However, unlike a credit card, which has a mini-chip somewhere visible, Oyster cards are equipped with Philip's Mifare microchip technology. The microchip functions as a memory card that processes and stores data to synchronise with a card reader at front-end equipment, i.e. self-service ticket machine or ticket barrier. The digital interoperability further intensifies through contactless interface among front-end apparatuses, the Internet. Powerful online journey tools have facilitated millions of passengers' travel itineraries each day. By e-Tube service, card usage data is instantly stored on both card and the central database. At this point, a ubiquitous network of interoperability is completed to form an overall digital regulation that significantly improves the technical efficacy. It enables up to 40 people per minute to pass through the Tube's ticket barriers, which is 15 more than was possible when using the magnetic strip variant. Entering the Tube is now faster, which relieves overcrowding at ticket barriers during peak times and increases passenger flow. This digitalisation to translate cardholders into identifiable e-passengers is now part of Transport For London's (TfL) ambitious plans to implement e-governmentality for the Tube.²⁷⁷ Surveillance and marketing assessment is then infiltrating everywhere. Individual use of the card is scrutinised by the TfL's regulatory system with their information stored and made measurable in the corporate database.

²⁷⁷ E-government is supposed as central to TfL's approach to implementing an efficient administration for daily travels and provide accurate travel information for customers. The e-government strategy is aimed to offer a chance to breathe new life into local democracy and to transform local service. Since launching in 2003, more than 17 million Oyster cards have been issued, via which more than 80% of the journeys on London's public transport system are made. The automatic ticketing barriers and the self-service ticketing machines are distributed across 275 Tube stations. Approximately 2300 outlets that enable people to top up their Oyster cards are also spread over the city surface. Gov.uk. (2015). *2010 to 2015 government policy: local transport - GOV.UK*. [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-local-transport/2010-to-2015-government-policy-local-transport>, Last Accessed 12th Oct. 2016

Thus far a visual historiography is weaved with the underground experience of London Tube. Efficiency along with speed, the ethos of modernity, is the core of this experience. It is disintegrated by the governmental modality of puzzle/solution as fragmentary images dispersed along the trivial matters. That is to say, the theme of speed reduces as trivial but unavoidable concerns during usual routines, i.e. why the train is so slow, or how to catch up with the next train. The theme of efficiency also reduces as trivial matters that always cares about 'economical', i.e. how to decrease the ticket fare, or which Tube route is the most economical to reach the destination. Also, efficiency tying the speed of transport to the speed of ticketing cannot neglect speeding up of the crowd because of daily schedules hastened by overloaded works and demands. The sensation of speed that is felt is then tied to a calculability of efficiency, that is, saving time, i.e. how to arrive a destination at 9:00 AM, if using the Tube it will save twenty minutes. Each trivial matter within the banal everyday life can trigger a puzzle. All such trivial puzzles must then find solutions from the highly skilled governmentality of the Tube system. That is to say, a public metro system well-managed by multiple knowledge and crafts is not only triggering puzzles to daily experience but also providing solutions. Each puzzle to be solved through a mechanical apparatus must visualise in appearance as a real experience of which the subject can feel the change to his/her actual life. In other words, the solution of the puzzle is not only a utility in the technical plane but is also a perceptible image in sensory experience. For instance, speeding up of trains cannot be merely a technical upgrade or pushing the accelerator must be felt by each passenger as sensation of speed, 'yes, it is indeed faster, rumbling and rushing.' Likewise, digitalisation of the ticketing system should also be felt in the appearance of the Oyster card as the sensation of digital, looking like a simulacrum of all other cards and ease-of-use, 'just contact'. The size of the crowd also produces the spectacle and the ticketing barriers and carriage gates are always where the crowd is at its most dense. Spectacle endlessly recurs along with these sensational appearances.

Another Smart Card

The efficiency of marketing assessment increased with speed-up that was affirmed in the appearance of concrete things and mobile images, i.e. acceleration of train, the rapid issue of tickets and digital smart card. Appearances of such inventions as ubiquitous images also happen with multiple puzzles, that is, those trivial matters and fragmentary events in the routinization of daily transport. Trivial puzzles and their solutions about how to economically assess and efficiently regulate the passenger flow are not confined to the underground experience in London but also recur in the daily traffic in Shanghai.

Before the early 1990s, a familiar scene could be seen during the peak time. On the bus ticket conductors could still be seen waving the small red flag and shouting 'watch out, the bus is pulling in!' The crowds were overflowing from the stop to swarm into the vehicle. 'Pay as you go' ticket purchased by cash was the primary apparatus that was issued by ticket clerks to calculate the fare and regulate the passengers. Regarding this kind of 'pay as you go' ticket, it was found that the image of the Edmondson ticket reappeared in Shanghai. Pre-printed tickets were numbered with the different colour that indicated different fares according to the different stop. All these different-coloured tickets were juxtaposed together and set on a handy board carried by the ticket clerk. The ticket clerk was always well trained. Not only must he or she have a good memory of accurate indication of the different stop as different colour with different fare but he or she also was proficient to calculate clearly the cash from the crowds and tear off one piece of a ticket to each passenger.²⁷⁸

Such an intense labour and inefficiency of assessing fare-collection drove the new solution. Since then, local transport companies invented the 'through ticket'. This kind of ticket is still used now. The appearance of through ticket replaces differentiation of fare according to the different distance by the fixed price. Fixed fare indeed brings benefits, a cost saving for those passengers who travel to distant destinations. What is more, fixed price also made the ticket clerks largely redundant, which further generated an appearance of the new

²⁷⁸ Yin, Y. (2015). *The Shanghai bus tickets you've never seen*. [online] Available at: <http://blog.renren.com/share/282722960/7670519520>, Last Accessed 6th Oct. 2016

automatic machine, non-ticket clerk bus. Since then, non-ticket clerk buses have been running around the city space and circulating the passenger flow everywhere. However, a new puzzle also occurred, that is, fixed fare also triggered the loss of profits to the transport that covers the remote destinations. Solutions are provided by the feature of the socialist political economy, that is, the subsidy policy granted by the government to financially recover the loss of operating long distance with fixed fare.

The technical solution never ceases its optimisation of regulating fare and channeling passenger flow. A new technological invention then appeared, the public transport IC card, to coexist with the non-ticket clerk bus. This IC card is another technical alterity of digitalisation to the Oyster card in London. Not only does such an image of a digital smart card sustain the disappearance of manual fare-collection but its appearance also diffuses into the daily mobility of each passenger. In the major cities, such as Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen, etc., the smart card is interoperated with the bus, underground, taxi, and pay utilities. Apart from its multifunction, easy-to-use of contact, the card reader also records the real time card use of each passenger and accurately calculates the travel fares.

In the case of the digital technology of smart cards invented as a technical solution of orienting the daily mobility of crowds flowing around urban space and translating it into the marketing assessment as calculable fares, payment prevails to be a fundamental theme of everyday life. That is to say, the application of digital technology not only facilitates the marketing evaluation as an integral technique of the marketing mechanism, but its popularity also augments the density of daily transactions to pressure the financial capacity of dealing with such amplified transactions. With regard to this puzzle of treating such transaction pressure, another technical solution emerges, that is, third-party payment technology. This new payment technology upgrades the marketing mechanism that is used to dualize the transaction structure into seller and payer as a triangle formation, wherein the dual transaction between payer and seller is granted and conceded to a technically

independent and financially accredited institute that runs as the third party to interoperate between the payer and seller and mediate their transaction.

Furthermore, as for the financial regime, i.e. banks, which fabricates and amplifies the spectacle to seduce individuals to buy and pay and simultaneously provides credit/debit cards as a solution to help this payment, the third payment technology presents itself as an extra solution to supplement or even exceed the bank cards that operate as smart as stored-value contactless card technology. That is to say, this new payment technology enables the smart card to be purely virtual simulacra that perform in mobile phones as touchable application programs that interconnect with bank accounts via mobile networks, then, such tactile simulacra on the screen has been dissolving the concrete cards, e.g. bank cards and IC cards, used in the reality of daily life. Since the application programs enable the mobile phone to simulate the stored-value cards as virtual wallets, transaction between sellers and payers is transformed to 'scanning' codes generated by the virtual wallets.

Then, not only are such simulacra of wallets testifying disappearance of card images but also the financial regime is cast with its shadow, those institutes who own and operate the third-party payment technology. At this point, re-circulation of money is augmented to excess, not via increasing the volume of currency, but through codification and simulation of currency as virtual in digital forms of flowing around the third-party payment platforms. Also, the financial authority restrictively grants the third-party institutes licence as an extra governmental technique of adjusting the monetary flow to ultimately manage the subjective expenditure in the given spectacle. Since circulation of money becomes excess, transaction is thereby dense and easy, and exorbitant desires of consumption outpoured and dissipated via the channel of money are also intensified, then, governmentality of this intensity needs to permeate the details of everyday life as an efficient and transparent assessment. In this way, Apple has been disseminating its third-party payment platform, Apple Pay, around the world. In London, Apply Pay has been infiltrating the entire commercial system, even the Cooperative convenient stores accept the third-party payment, and bank cards are becoming redundant. In Shanghai, Alipay operated by Alibaba and WeChat Wallet offered by

Tencent both dominate the third-party payment platform market. Their all-round functions cover all the services needed by daily routines, including top-up utility and daily traffic. Driven by the prevail of Alipay and WeChat Wallet, digital simulacra of money are floating and overflowing along the density of transactions to accelerate the symbolic exchange of commodified images, then, they magnify the semiotic exuberance, whereby the reality that is intermediated by smartcard-ruled transactions is being assimilated.

A technically optimised solution in Shanghai to increase the economic efficiency of regulating mobile crowds by daily transaction is illustrated as above. This optimisation can be visualised as another technical alterity on the puzzling leitmotif of market-based assessment of people flows gathered and dispersed with their ordinary mobility. However, to be differential, the puzzle of how to efficiently scrutinise the crowds in China is not merely an economic assessment that is congealed as the reappearance of calculation devices to translate individuals as measurable data. What is more, the Chinese solution has another technological invention that substantiates the governmental efficiency over people as a political scrutiny, that is, Resident Identification Card. In contrast with economic assessment, resident ID card is used to prove each cardholder's unique identity. Its appearance endows everyone with a political recognition of all the social conducts, arranged according to trivial matters, i.e. booking a hotel, to the big issues, i.e. social security. Its all-encompassing function is a political apparatus by which the socialist sovereignty is dispersed and channelled as a disciplinary power to exercise on each cardholder. As a result, it must always be carried in person.

The birth of the ID card can be traced back to socialist panoptic governmentality that was raised by the Yan'an way (see 7th chapter) and further established since 1949 to permeate the entire country. Take-over of cities, for the revolutionary regime, was not simply victory but perhaps also a crisis. The march toward cities was merely the first step of ten thousand *li*, but the real challenge was rather the governmental capability of managing cities.²⁷⁹ Thus, China could be captured from the countryside, but it could be only governed from the

²⁷⁹ Mao Zedong (1965). *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol.2. Beijing: Foreign Language Press. p 361-75

cities.²⁸⁰ The decentralised and militarised governance over rural areas would not be applied to urban governance of a centralised and complex reproduction system.²⁸¹ Trivial and multiple puzzles related to ordinary urban lives were encountered to test the new regime. The initial puzzle to be solved was how to efficiently scrutinise and reserve the masses with well-organised discipline as docile urban subjects.

Solutions were then provided. Either the birth of danwei or system of hukou functioned as a disciplinary technique by which all the human resources were imposed with a total scrutiny and also mobilised to engage productions and political campaigns. Economically, socialist transformation completed nationalisation whereby the state monopolised all the economic resources. The state also planned and monopolised purchase and supply of living necessities, e.g. grains. Through monopoly of necessary living materials, economic lives were rationed and regulated by socialist authority. The economy was then totally subjugated by political power as an economic tool of daily governmentality. These solutions, i.e. danwei, hukou, and economic nationalisation were all substantiated to each household of Chinese residence, the basic cell of the socialist organism. A particular device was then invented in very appearance, that is, hukoubu. All the personal information of each family was recorded on it as a copy of family archive, whose original version was reserved by the policing system. Using such an apparatus, ubiquitous networks of mass surveillance were elaborated and infiltrated into every family and exercised power discipline over everybody.

Beneath socialist panopticism, all the puzzle solutions cannot avoid a leitmotif, discipline. Hukoubu was generated by multiple solutions of domesticating subjects to visualise the discipline in the perceptible appearance of apparatus and was rooted in bodies. In this respect, substantial lives were submitted to an omnipresent political control. Only can the revolutionary sovereignty amass and mobilise the masses to act as its will. Any individual mobility between different areas, without political authorisation, was forbidden. Everyone was fixed with hukoubu, an immobile copy of the family archive. The only technical solution

²⁸⁰ Lieberthal, K. (1995). *Governing China: from revolution through reform*. New York and London: W.W.Norton & Company, INC. p 86

²⁸¹ Lieberthal, K. *Governing China: from revolution through reform*, p 86

for permitting individual mobility was another apparatus, an introduction letter issued by danwei.

Since the 1980s, Mao's panopticism withered along with the rise of Deng's economic reform. A new puzzle emerged. That is, the rise of the market-based economy must require the free mobility of human resources, but the latter was still restricted by the immobility of hukou that exercised political scrutiny to constrain the free flow of people. The introduction letter also became an inefficient solution whose administrative permission of mobility was incompatible with economic mobility. A new solution was required. It must allow the free mobility of people and simultaneously continue the political scrutiny of masses. This solution of two birds with one stone was to enable the immobile hukoubu to be mobile. On 6th June 1984, the Ministry of Public Security issued a new technical invention, the first generation of resident identity card. Technically, the ID card is a simulacrum of reproducing hukoubu from the immobile as the mobile form. Each cardholder's personal information was recorded on his/her unique ID card, a mobile hukou. Free mobility was achieved. The political scrutiny was also in mobility along with supervising mobile identity cards to disperse around the ubiquitous flow of Chinese people.

The ID card simulated hukou and encoded personal information. However, another puzzle was further triggered. The first generation ID card was a single page hard-paper card covered with plastic film. It visually stated 15 digits in which the first six digits represented the area code, and the next six digits were the date of birth (e.g. 851202 signified 2nd December 1985), plus a further three digits. Personal information was basic and printed on the card with a photo. This technical solution of translating each person as a unique number was too simple. It could be easily counterfeited. What is more critical, even if a card is reported stolen or missing, the stolen or missing card could still be used by someone else within the expiry date. This crude technique would significantly reduce the performative efficiency of mass scrutiny imposed on the social mobility that never ceased. A new solution was provided to increase the technical efficiency of mass surveillance, with the introduction of the second-generation residence identity card. It was issued in 2004 and is still in use

today. The new generation is a fully digitalised smart card, which is benefited by the Integrated Circuit Card technology. A micro-electric chip is inserted into the card base. This chip has a large and secure storage that re-codes not only personal identity as a unique 18 digit number but also includes personal name, parents, address, occupation, ethnicity, blood type, finger print and blood coagulation factor. All this personal information is recorded and measured by a national network in the central database, whereby an interoperable scrutiny of mass mobility around different areas can be achieved. This interoperable scrutiny using digitalisation and networking enables the falsification and misappropriation of another person's card to be rendered impossible.

Insofar as the reappearance from hukoubu to identity smartcard, the disciplinary scrutiny is not merely a general policy but visualised as apparatus that can be felt as a dispersive image adrift along the mobile crowds. That is to say, to carry the ID card at any time brings a sense to individual subjects that the immersive control is always in their daily experience.

Regarding such political control, the leitmotif of how to efficiently regulate the people overflowing within their phantasmagorical experience is provided with another solution that is alternative to market-based assessment. In other words, since the massive economic mobility of human resources staged the spectacle in Shanghai, the political scrutiny manipulates such spectacle through the mobile images of ID cards floating along with those dispersed subjects.

Spectacle and Panopticism

As introduced above, the panoptic technology is substantiated by ID cards as ubiquitous scrutiny of mobile individuals, and then, not only are individuals codified and represented by the national database as simulacra, but such simulacra collected in the system also register and encrypt the comprehensive details of personal information as specific knowledge, whereby the system can exercise its disciplinary power on individual bodies in action to precisely examine and distinguish. Such a panoptic technology explicitly relates to Foucault's specification of panopticism as a governmental technology that channels sovereignty in the

form of discipline. With regard to a correlation between disciplinary surveillance and ID cards, there are two points to be reviewed here.

Above all, Foucault's genealogical investigation into technical transformation that is from public execution in bloodshed to prison-ruled scrutiny reveals that sovereignty, as an intrinsic practice of power verifying itself as the regime of truth, is not only excess but also rests on reasoning as anatomical exercise on individual bodies to examine, manipulate and transform them with a technical bifurcation from excess to utility. More importantly, Foucault's arguments identify that discipline, which distributes power through punitive machines, is not for the excess violence, nor generic laws and homogeneous rulership, but is a nexus that formulates omnipresent 'grids' at which different regulations, norms, techniques, apparatuses, and procedures, etc., are intersected and distributed into every detail of every life. In such a disciplinary governmentality, the subjects are not simply intimidated, nor fixed by the regulations, but cultivated and stimulated by various norms to interchange their status, grow up, and increase their capacity as investable and utilisable capitals but are also restricted as governable. At this point, discipline becomes one of the governmental arts to exercise punishment and correction on the individual bodies, and it is illuminated by utility to entail political economy of which space is circumscribed in enclosure and time is utilised as one of the governmental components as an economic technology to individualise and fragmentise the activities of individual bodies as measurable to evaluation and normalization.²⁸²

Since 'hierarchical observation', 'normalizing judgment' and 'examination' formulate a governable formation of elaborating disciplines as transformative exercises to correct the condemned bodies enclosed in a limited space, e.g. army, school, factory or hospital, the technology of ID cards rather enables the discipline to transgress the enclosure towards mobility to form a society of socialist panopticism. As ubiquitous disciplines, panopticism is not simply a confinement of detaining the subjects with violence but a modality of exercising power by inventing machines, apparatuses, and technologies and utilising regulations,

²⁸² Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, London: Penguin Books, p 135-169

procedures and techniques to infiltrate everywhere to transform everything and everyone into transparent, visible and audible entities.²⁸³ In other words, any secret is unveiled as a result of the disciplinary mechanism infiltrating and re-encrypting the unobtrusive as open and governable, neither by arbitrary violence nor by enforcement of laws. This infiltration embodied by ID cards encapsulates not only prisoners but also crowds moving in daily mobility through examining all the details registered in the system. Furthermore, this panopticism visualised by ID cards as an art of political anatomy is not yet an omnipresent surveillance to shape the collective body, but rather rests on the individual bodies, through examination of registered details, to orient mobile individuals into a loose collection that scarcely dispels the multiplicity of individuals but also restricts such flow to a governable composition of differences. Moreover, the panoptic technology of ID cards is hardly a dissymmetrical scrutiny as Foucault argued, to be seen without seeing back. That is, individuals who hold ID cards to be examined are aware of being scrutinised and more importantly, they are also sure of who is seeing them, but automatically succumb to this discipline without any dissension. This self-subjection to the panoptic mechanism is clarified by Foucault to be an appearance of self-surveillance, a kind of total subjection that is a perfect power effect achieved by the play of discipline to reproduce fully docile bodies without intervention of excess violence.²⁸⁴

While self-consciousness of being scrutinised generates self-surveillance, self-renunciation of any dissonance rather triggers full subjection. Then, due to the examination of personal ID cards being performed as a homogeneous mechanism to exercise on a multitude of individuals for a generalised effect that is permitted or unpermitted, the consciousness of being subjected to such scrutiny is magnified as collective awareness in which a collective body is reproduced as obedient to the socialist panopticism. However, this homogeneous surveillance whereby the subject is transformed as docile with the communal body cannot utterly prohibit the unintegrable individual activities as incommensurable elements that are dissentient to the homogeneous supervision, for instance, forgery or falsification of using ID

²⁸³ Foucault, M. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p 198-202

²⁸⁴ Foucault, M. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p 202-208

cards. At this point, the panoptic solution of ID cards functions to distinguish such dissentient elements to predict possible crimes that are hidden and contained by forgery or falsification of ID cards, whereby the security of spectacle could be protected from any potential threat. That is to say, spectacle must defend itself. Above all, this protection is acquired from panopticism as a kind of recuperation. Thus, panopticism, as an art of distributing surveillance as ubiquitous disciplines, transforms the subject as docile, and this transformation is recuperation of spectacle from any dissonant elements. Furthermore, the society of spectacle in China scarcely needs to worry about any class struggle, nor be concerned about organised revolt with a purposeful manifesto, since revolution has been neutralised and mimicked as exhibits in a museum like historical heritages (see 4th chapter) and the political authoritarianism monopolised by the Chinese Communist Party has totalized the entire society as an indivisible unity. An omnipresent recuperation is thereby formed to welcome any self-criticism coming from inside and spin such criticism as 'remedy' to improve the growth of the spectacle rather than to disrupt it (see details in 1st chapter). In this way, the panoptic technology of ID cards no longer distinguishes the enemy for class struggle, nor warns conscious resistances that are organised as mass movements, since the history that is driven by revolution ends, but scrutinises the mobile individuals, traces their tracks as transparent assessments, and examines details of everyday life as controllable, to assist the prevention of the spectacle from being permanently unstable, unruly and unexpected crimes that are hostile to the daily performance of spectacle, such as sabotage, anti-social behaviour, vandalism, terror attacks, etc.

Thus far, spectacle and panopticism are correlated to be a fusion with each other. This fusion revises Foucault who demonstrates that the society running with disciplinary machines hardly rests on the spectacular rendition of reality but is rather constructed by the physical exercises on the real life; that is to say, proliferation of images through abstract exchange to fabricate reality as enchanting on the surface cannot avoid but is incongruous with meticulous and concrete training invested in the individual bodies.²⁸⁵ In short, excess and utility, images and techniques, or representation and bodies are bifurcated as

²⁸⁵ Foucault, M. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p 217

discrepancy. However, this bifurcation between homogeneous surveillance in utility and exudation of images as excess can be rather intermingled with each other as hybridity of different governmental technologies with disparate power effects. In other words, society should be diversified as disciplinary to be corrective by panoptic mechanisms and also as spectacular to be inebriating by the visual technology of representation. Neither have to negate and substitute for each other but coexist as irreplaceable disparities. Then, the society of spectacle and society of discipline can be seen as a multiplication of governmental technologies.

7th Chapter – Resistance/Revolution

Spectacle, Technology and Time

The recurrence of spectacle in presence as different appearance cannot happen without technology. Either Benjamin's demonstration of mechanical reproduction or Baudrillard's contention of hyperreal simulacra emphasises the technology as a creative force of exploding the excess of images in mobility. These images are drifting along the daily life and over reality whereby a continuously changeable phantasmagoria is rendered to attract the subjects. Regarding this relation of technology to the spectacle, its positivity can be found from Deleuze and Baudrillard, as mentioned before. For Deleuze, the modern mechanism is not only reproduction of things but also machine art by which personal desires are channelled as the sensory experience of excessive images and simulacra. This process affirms life. Moreover, the productive mechanism argued by Deleuze and Guattari as a desire machine is restricted to disparate territories and social systems; that is to say, there is no total machine by which the unitary subject can channel its inalienable and indivisible inner experience as universal, but the productive mechanism rather is scattered by different locations, social norms, cultural codes, extent of technological progress, etc., as irreplaceable fragments to formulate restrictive economies of such discrepant productions, then, the subject reproduced by the machine is accordingly disintegrated to circumscribe such dispersed subjects in non-identical productive fragments to acquire incommensurable but limited experiences. Although fragmented subjects inhabit restrictive economies on the dispersed productive mechanisms to territorialise their experiences as singularities out of multiplicity, such fragments are rather drifting and oriented along the inner flux, which is bred by the nature of excess as an unruly torrent of diverse and insatiable desires to unceasingly transgress the restriction of territorialisation, namely, de-territorialisation, to fuse with other fragments for a sovereign and unrestricted play.²⁸⁶ At this point, any productive system and its spectacular rendition are hardly stable. They do not only channel,

²⁸⁶ Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1988). *A Thousand Plateaux, Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, London: The Athlone Press

fragmentise and restrict the subjective experience as singularities but also are endlessly challenged and transgressed as limits for excess to fuse such irreplaceable singularities into a multiplicity. Also, Baudrillard affirms the technological simulation as a hyperreal experience that is no more a negation of real life but a virtual ecstasy of actualizing reality in a symbolic exchange without any repression.

Deleuze and Guattari's demonstration of de-territorialisation with intensity of excess to transgress the restrictive economy of production, and Baudrillard's insistence upon the general economy of excess to exude semiotic exuberance of simulacra, are both associated with the productive technology that proliferates spectacle with the foundation of libidinal economy. With regard to this association, Lyotard utters his ambivalent position towards the libidinal economy. For him, spectacle that is varied by the technological regime should be disengaged from the self-referential critical consciousness (see 6th chapter), nor should it entail the dialectic of production and revolution, alienation and intimacy, or utility and nature, whereby an opposition between political economy of technological reproduction and libidinal economy of excess is nullified to merge them as a seamless desire flow. This flow rejects performing itself as an unreserved play of libidinal economy to unleash untamed and primordial forces whereby not only is any systematic revolution as an integral part of the dialectical reasoning ceased, but the infiltrative marketing mechanisms and technologies utilised to dissipate desires partly are also put at stake. Then, to echo Baudrillard, such a flow rather manipulates reservedly the libidinal economy to testify to the spectacle as dissolution, rather than deception, into technological mimicry of tempting desires without nostalgia for the real.²⁸⁷

However, the debate always happens with criticism. In light of critique, Frankfurt School always casts the society of spectacle that inhabits the technological regime with severe criticism, as I already specified in the first chapter. These critics are used to negate the recurrence of spectacle in the appearance of things and images as a superficial phantasm. As for them, the spectacle cannot be simply the visual perceived by the subjects in their

²⁸⁷ Lyotard, *Economie Libidinale*, p 113

empirical experience. A dialectical consciousness is still inherited by them to insist that the society of spectacle is an encapsulation of the irreducible technological regime to render a false and illusionary enchantment. This enchantment does divert subjects but also preoccupies them. This critique of the disintegrated empirical subject is based on their negation of instrumentalised reason imposed by the modernity on the subject as a newly repressive form of domination to alienate the subject from enlightenment and emancipation (see 1st chapter).²⁸⁸

Compared to the Marxist tradition that entails the dialectic to criticise the technological regime as well as its spectacular rendition, Jacques Ellul rather diverges from this negation to cast the correlation between spectacle and technique in liberty for another interpretation. Inspired by Ellul, if the society of the spectacle is visualised as a derivative phenomenon encrypted by the axiom of technique, the modern spectacle, which, as Debord argued, is either fabricated by the marketing regime as phantasmagorical diffusion or built on the socialist/Fascist imperative as intensification as unproductive surplus as an erotic machine, it cannot be simply denounced as deceptive but it visualises the diverse and complicated technical operation, wherein incommensurably divergent methods are exercised to multiply bifurcated means, to be a technical phenomenon.²⁸⁹ In other words, the multiplication of spectacle driven by the technological regime to float on the productive mechanisms is a technique, and this technique, a kind of visual technique, as demonstrated by Ellul, justifies an omnipresent rationale or social consciousness of which the best and most efficient means exercised on reality to govern society would be sought, although this technique is perceived via the eyes as phenomenal. At this point, spectacle, as a phenomenon that visualises the technical operations and their evolution for efficiency as perceivable, never fixes its embodiment with those substantial and solid forms of productive machinery, consumable things or disciplinary and punitive apparatuses. If being merely constrained to the concrete machines or usable technologies alone, the spectacle is nothing more than negative as an alienating process of mechanisation that appropriates the real lives by lifeless machines, and

²⁸⁸ Adorno, T. & Horkheimer, M. (1979) *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans, John Cumming, London: Verso

²⁸⁹ Ellul, J. (1964) *The Technological Society*, New York: Vintage Books, p 19-22

facing such appropriation, it is not surprising that the dialectic logic is aroused to negate and fight against such oppressive mechanism. However, spectacle that is technical, as posited by Ellul, is never only reified as machines but exceed to reveal such a phenomenon as a nexus, which integrates the scattering human activities through repetitive inventions into a structural order that formulates human society as a technical progress for efficient optimisation.²⁹⁰ Intermediated by this order, technique that is perceived as phenomenal as spectacle is historical to traverse time and formulate different societies, or even civilisations, as a repeated process of 'technicalisation', whereby history is re-codified as an endless recurrence of technical applicability to proliferate objective means as scientific solutions.²⁹¹ In short, technique is accentuated as a regime that never ceases to verify itself as omnipresent formula. This verification means that Ellul's demonstration does not entail the humanistic contestations, in which the subjectivity is enlightened as unitary as a self-incurred impeccability to prevent this totality from any separation in technical operations, but it is rather cast in the light of structuralism to be a technical complex that is embedded into reality to reproduce the subject in the non-dialectical manner, a monistic way. That is to say, this technical complex is not about an insistence upon the human supremacy over techniques as opposition, nor suspending the technical regime to finish alienation, but rather to admit it as an inherent order of civilisation that is rooted in humanity and also never stops to adapt the subjects, or even assimilate them, to the technical transition or bifurcation.²⁹² Thus, in different periods and at different locations, bifurcated technical operations generate disparate means, then, reality is reconstructed visually as different spectacles. In this regard, history that is formulated by such technical divergences is never a progressive linearity but discontinued; especially until the modern society of spectacle, the technical regime ends its historical and discontinuous transition to encrypt itself a new and final myth in which all the humanistic elements have been dissolved and the subjects are assimilated as dispensable to the regime's self-augmentation.²⁹³

²⁹⁰ Ellul, J. *The Technological Society*, p 1-6

²⁹¹ Ellul, J. *The Technological Society*, p 11-12, 23-60

²⁹² Ellul, J. *The Technological Society*, p 71-73

²⁹³ Ellul, J. *The Technological Society*, p 142-144

Ellul's clarification of technique as an omnipresent structurality cannot dispel a critical logic that denounces the spectacle as a capsule of technological determinism that can be seen morphing throughout history as various spectacular presences. Different historical stages have different technologies and systems of production, and can, therefore, be distinguished as different spectacles. However, the spectacle of modern technology, due to its unprecedented technical efficacy, is aimed at ultimate domination.²⁹⁴ In regard of this determinism, Heidegger also made similar arguments about rethinking modern technology as something that has subjugated us through metaphysical claims of truth. Modern technology has become ubiquitous as a paradigm dictating the presence of perceptibility. Such technical intervention of perception poses a further threat of overshadowing the memory of the past and institutionalising temporality as a singular unitary linearity qua centric historicism, i.e., progress in the form of the modern market/technology regime, either in terms of space or in terms of time, is made the sole and ultimate choice. That is, progress is a permanence to erase the memory, preoccupy the present and predetermine the future.²⁹⁵

This negation of linear progress can be followed by the demonstration of Benjamin, Bataille, Debord and Vattimo. For Benjamin, time is not cumulating as linearity but has been visualised by technological reproduction as visible images scattered in daily life as fragmentary experiences. He called these images 'constellation' (see 3rd chapter). The fragmented and mobile images that recollect the past to flow in the temporal passage can be only recognisable but unapproachable instants.²⁹⁶ The viewpoint of images as a connection between presence and non-presence corresponds with Baudelaire who argues 'the modern' as transitory, fleeting and ephemeral. As for Benjamin, what to be transitory and irretrievable in presence is dialectically eternity to be recollected only in memory as an

²⁹⁴ Adorno, T. (2001) *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, London: Routledge; Marcuse, H. (1991). *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, New York: Beacon Press.

²⁹⁵ Heidegger, M. (2011) The Question Concerning Technology, collected in Heidegger Basic Writings, London & New York: Routledge Classics, p 218-238. Vattimo, G. Hermeneutics and Anthropology, in *The End of Modernity*, p 159. Debord, G. *Society of the Spectacle*, p 90

²⁹⁶ Bahti, T. (1979) History as Rhetorical Enactment: Walter Benjamin's Theses 'On the Concept of History'. *Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary Criticism*, 9(3)

apparition of the absent.²⁹⁷ While these images are technologically proliferated and floating over the reality to render a spectacle, this visualisation rather freezes the temporal flow as such mobile images. That is to say, spectacle presented by modern technology telescopes the past into the present as a means to revive something in the present that was just a memory and missing from the *status quo*, as Benjamin himself said, dialectical movement of images at a standstill. However, Benjamin in *Arcade Project* also demonstrated this static temporality of images mobilised to dominate the present as a crisis of experience. This crisis of experience caused by modern capitalism echoes other critics of Frankfurt School who inherited Kant-Hegel's unity of subject. For such a subject, its experience should be infinite (*à la* Kant) to travel from the past, flowing through the present and toward the future. However, now the passage of time is solidified and concealed by the technological regime. The infinite experience is thus appropriated and reduced to the present as daily experience of repetitive boredom thrown into an endless recurrence of phantasmagorical images (*à la* Nietzsche).

Thus far, the dialectic images can be concluded. Images are unceasingly mobile and montaged to form a spectacle, wherein reality is encapsulated, everyday life is immersed in such a visual constellation, and history that is propelled by reconstruction of reality is also visualised as figural; however, mobile images are proliferated to surround the denominator of commodity and technology, then, their spectacle reappears as self-development to overarch space and preoccupy the presence at standstill.²⁹⁸ That is to say, spectacle snatches history from time flow to translate history as visible in the presence, but the passage of time is rather concealed by the visual mimicry of modern mechanisms, then, the subjective experience is entrapped in the present to preoccupy the future and without memory of the absent origin. In short, images move spatially, spectacle is static temporally, and history is frozen; thus, the dialectic of images takes place between rendition and veil, or between figuration and restriction. With regard to the inner experience restricted to the

²⁹⁷ Rolando, V. 'Commodity Display and the Phantasmagoria of Modernity: Exploring Walter Benjamin's Critique of History' in Anca m. Pusca (eds) *Walter Benjamin and the Aesthetics of Change*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p 145

²⁹⁸ Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, p 460-463

present phantasmagoria, the *flaneur* as an active strategy of intervening into the spectacle is also dialectical between enjoyment and boredom, that is, strollers are restricted to a sole experience and bored of such regularity while they are enchanted. Thus, a *flaneur*, who can genuinely have an unconditional play of leisure, should be aimless without restriction and pre-given purpose. This objectless and purposeless stroller means to transgress the static spectacle that encapsulates the presence and encounter an extraordinary moment as surprise that cannot be acquired by the regular urban experience nor visualised by the repetitive and predominant images. At this point, Benjamin's argument on the objectless *flaneur* diverges from Baudrillard's contestation of hyperreality. The former insists upon the dialectic of images to reverse it whereby history is retrieved, the passage of time is recovered, and the subject is awakened from restriction of phantasmagoria; the latter abandons the dialectic of images to celebrate the static presence and the end of history as a result of the carnival of spectacle.

Also, Benjamin's demonstration of the aimless *flaneur* that reverses the dialectic of images and transgresses restriction converges with Bataille's arguments. On one hand, the purposeless *flaneur*, as an unrestricted play of leisure, can be counted as a kind of expenditure of life as excess, since leisure is itself one of the heterogeneous elements exuded by the productive imperative. Thus, restriction of unreserved play of leisure is a restricted expenditure, and transgression of this restriction is thereby to reveal other concealments or prohibitions as fusion with the presently spectacular that is restrictive. On the other hand, the modern society of spectacle that rests on the productive imperative to fabricate an ahistorical plane to reserve life in security from those prohibited elements is criticised by Bataille as a utilitarian anticipation, which cuts off time flow to predict the future with a rational faculty that is restricted to the present, and then, represents the present experience by this predictable result of future as an exclusive presupposition to circumscribe the unrestricted experience from the present to the future in a predetermined track. In doing so, unpredictable risks would be precluded by the univocal anticipation of an opaque future as exorbitant. Then, this exclusion conserves the imperative of utility and

rationality as a stable and secure duration of becoming homogeneous.²⁹⁹ What is more, saturated by this duration, not only is time distorted, but the inner experience is also constrained from being heterogeneous and immoderate to be restrictive contents allowed by the spectacle.

Moreover, the spectacle, which is reproduced by homologous modernity with denominator of technology to freeze time and override history, also echoes Debord. For Debord, the society of spectacle that is fabricated by the capitalistic production manifests its ultimate purpose of development, which is built on unceasing accumulation to impose this final purpose as linearity of time flow to distil history as a technological progress in rationale.³⁰⁰ However, this linearity does not reject an unceasing cyclical motion inside itself. That is to say, the linear development, as an endless accumulation, is inseparably driven by the utilitarian imperative of reproduction that is formed by a perceptual cycle of production, exchange and consumption. Then, self-development rendered as the modern society of spectacle, despite it stagnating and extracting history as linear time, is formulated as variable in such a repetitive cycle.³⁰¹ However, this cycle is hardly dialectical to vary itself as a cycle that involves revolt as oppositeness to restore a unity with the pre-industrial time that is cyclical to still repeat contradictions between night and day, sun and moon, poverty and harvest, etc.³⁰² In this sense, this cyclical time is *pseudo*, but mimicked by the technological regime as spectacular to subtract the negative force and nullify the dialectical cycle only remain as an empty form for the reproductive cycle alone.³⁰³

Thus far, the reappearance of spectacle in the presence, which is sustained by the technological regime, overrides the passage of time, stagnates history and restricts the subjective experience to a crisis of boredom. This crisis also corresponds with Vattimo, who

²⁹⁹ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol II The History of Eroticism & Vol III Sovereignty*, p 207-211

³⁰⁰ Debord, G. *The Society of the Spectacle*, p 70; Plant, S. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age*, p 27-29

³⁰¹ Marx, K and Engels, F. (1976) 'The Poverty of Philosophy', *Collected Works*, vol. 6, London: Lawrence & Wishart, p 174; Lukács, G. *History and Class Consciousness*, p 48; Debord, G. *The Society of the Spectacle*, p 141

³⁰² Debord, G. *The Society of the Spectacle*, p 143

³⁰³ Debord, G. *The Society of the Spectacle*, p 150

describes distortion, or twist, of modernity, rather than overcoming it by the dialectic to a new historical stage.³⁰⁴ For him, distortion is to go beyond and evaporate rather than to sustain the 'last breath' of the metaphysics of presence. In this way, the reappearance of spectacle through the technological regime as overabundant images to render reality is distorted to reveal those unexpected moments and undecidable events that are prohibited from the regular rendition. Furthermore, such discontinuous moments and events not only shatter the durability of spectacle but also unveil the passage of time to recollect the non-presence as permanently unstable and transitory in the presence.³⁰⁵ Then, the past, present and future are fused as a seamless experience. Within this seamless fusion, a free travel of subjects can be actualised to experience those obscure images constrained as absent and heterogeneous from the present spectacle. In this sense, the journey of spectacle between London and Shanghai should transgress the restrictive rendition that is driven by the technological regime to reveal the heterogeneous elements hidden and constrained by the present regime as dissonant events, that is, resistance or revolution, as incompatibility to merge with the present phantasmagoria.

London Tube Strike

As argued above, spectacle that recurs by the technological regime to dominate in presence must face distortion. This distortion of the dominant rendition is always resistant to pertain to being 'the political', a symbolic gesture. In other words, resistance as a political event of distorting the regular spectacularisation is not necessarily an integral part of the dialectical reconstruction but outpoured as one of the heterogeneous contents to dissipate excess life with intensification. With regard to such resistant events, the London Tube strike that occurred in February 2014 is salient. This strike resulted from the technological upgrade of digitalisation as I argued in the former chapter. E-Tube has been diffusing into the daily journey as a digital apparatus of appropriating everyone's mobility in the more efficient governmentality. According to the ultimate purpose of utility and efficacy, Londoners have

³⁰⁴ Vattimo, G. *The End of Modernity: Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Postmodern Culture*, p 19-30

³⁰⁵ Vattimo, G. *The End of Modernity: Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Postmodern Culture*, P 119

been thus experiencing aesthetics of disappearance. All the manual ticket offices and their officers will become a memory of the past as they are eclipsed by the digital automation. The contentious point is but that such digital automation in the name of technological progress sets itself up as a homogeneous presence devoid of any alternative possibilities as if the only choice was to digitalize our world. On the basis of 'good futurity', technological sovereignty is legitimately allowed to erase the past in favour of a digital presence. The ticket issue machines and the skilled clerk configured before a profile of the modern ticketing system between machinery and workforce, which was deployed at the ticket office. Now these traditional mechanical apparatuses are being replaced. In their place stand contactless interface equipment. All the older machines are even now exhibited in the London Transport Museum, as fossils of an age of mechanical (re)production. What is more under a new digital regime, the ticket offices are no longer considered efficient and are facing closure.³⁰⁶ TfL and the Mayor of London have planned to reduce or even close all the Tube ticket offices and cut over one thousand jobs, though without any compulsory redundancies. Once the ticket offices are gone, a fully automated e-Tube system would be further improved.

With regard to this full automation driven by digital technique, Ellul's specification of characteristics of modern technique can be involved again. Above all, such a digital automation reveals the salient feature of the technical phenomenon that unceasingly seeks the best and most efficient means, that is, automatism. The technical operation in the form of concrete mechanisation or technological application has ascended to be a pure rationalisation, wherein either the activities of reproducing reality or the real world to be reconstructed is integrated as measurable into an autonomously mathematical calculation. Insofar as the productive imperative is fully technicalised as a mathematical deduction, the

³⁰⁶ All 268 Tube ticket offices could be closed under "secret" London Underground plans, the TSSA transport union and Labour Party have warned. They claim to have seen leaked documents that suggest the ticket offices will close and 6,000 jobs could be axed by 2020. The first 2,000 could go in the next two years with Tube ticket offices replaced by travel centres, mainly at major stations such as Waterloo and Euston, the union said. (source from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-23670036>) The TfL is drawing up the plans in line with a total budget reduction of about £78m for the financial years of 2013 and 2014. BBC News. (2013). *Tube ticket office closure claims*. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-23670036>. Last Accessed 10th Oct. 2016; Chan, B. (2013). *Every Tube Ticket Office To Shut With 750 Jobs To Be Lost*. [online] Available at: <http://www.voice-online.co.uk/article/every-tube-ticket-office-shut-750-jobs-be-lost>. Last Accessed 2nd Oct 2016

reconstruction of reality becomes purely artificial to concern the technical efficiency alone, nullify any subjective interventions and assimilate non-technical elements.³⁰⁷ As for the digital upgrade of the e-Tube system, not only does such nullification enable the ticket officers to be redundant as a manual collective but it also indicates that the technical transition from mechanical reproduction to digital automation has become a self-generating process, and this self-generating process, as stated by Ellul, is an irreversible and geometric progress.³⁰⁸ That is to say, since this digitalisation is operated as automatic with its own logic, and once its upgrade is verified as the most efficient means of governing the flow of crowds, it is not only historically but also measurably irreversible to the previous form; what is more, such digital upgrade is not confined to a mechanical renewal of tickets as cards but a technical complex about governmentality that is disseminated to different practices, such as research and development of smartcard technology, physical reconstruction of the present transport system to adapt to the digitalisation, administrative management of this digital application, public advertisement for promoting this new technology, etc. Thus far, the e-Tube system is not simply a kind of digital technology but a formation wherein different governmental techniques converge in the field of public transportation to render a technical phenomenon, then, a homogeneous imperative of efficiency, or as Ellul argued, a technical monism, is formed to convince the social lives of this imperative as universal.³⁰⁹ Although such digitalisation, as a form of technical monism, is autonomous and homogeneous to reduce men to 'technical animals', its existence, for Ellul, is hardly totalitarian to oppress the subject but to justify itself through structural permeation of applied machines, technologies, skilled technicians, etc.³¹⁰ Insofar as the digital upgrade verifies itself as efficiency of facilitating daily life in utility, individuals are likely to enjoy such upgrades though they are immersed by this automation to be stripped of alternative choices.³¹¹

However, for the Tube workers, this self-verification of technical regime in the form of digitalisation cannot be performed as an excuse to veil its genuine purpose, consolidating the

³⁰⁷ Ellul, J. *The Technological Society*, p 79-85

³⁰⁸ Ellul, J. *The Technological Society*, p 85-94

³⁰⁹ Ellul, J. *The Technological Society*, p 94-96

³¹⁰ Ellul, J. *The Technological Society*, p 124-125, 138-139

³¹¹ Ellul, J. *The Technological Society*, p 82

monopoly of capitalism by technical perfection. In this sense, it is admitted for them that the closure of ticket offices reveals a threat of the technical regime infiltrating its phantasmagorical power through the application of digital technology into its underground shadow. However, it is surprising that resistance is sparkling still. The trade union counterattacks the spectacle that attempts to cast its world in shadow. Endangered officers and overworked drivers have been unifying in solidarity as a collective force to strike against the e-Tube regime. This strike has drawn our attention the fact that Tube workers in the industrial age can still survive, but they have to face a gloomy future in the fully digitalised age. Once the smart card autonomously dominates daily mobility and manpower becomes unnecessary, digitalisation brings about not a repression of labour in silence, but rather a disharmonious slogan or a dissonant image that contrast the predominant rendition (figure 7.1).

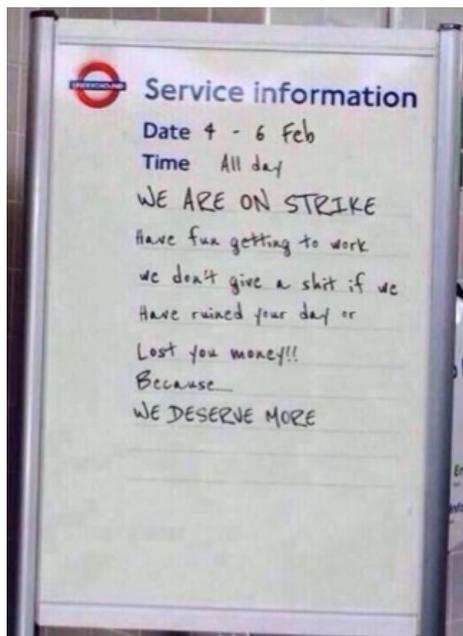


Figure 7.1 London Tube Strike Slogan

The biggest strike took place from 4th to 6th February 2014. The strike was initiated by the RMT (Rail, Maritime and Transport union) and TSSA (Transport Salaries Staffs Association). Most underground routes were disrupted. Many of London's Tube stations were shut down. Though millions of commuters were severely affected during the strike, another crippling two-day strike was planned to follow the previous three-day one. For the system, however, it resulted in massive chaos under – and overground and disorder in Londoners' everyday lives. Such chaos threatens

the order of the phantasmagoric presence. This predominant spectacle encounters an anomaly that disrupts its machinery of governmentality. In order to appropriate this anomaly and make it effectively less anomalous, the regime must work to negotiate and compromise with the workers' struggle. TfL bowed to pressure from the unions after two days of

intensive and detailed talks. The authority will suspend and review the LU (London Underground) proposal of ticket office closures.³¹²

Isn't such workers' strike of shaking an action of affirming life from the technological regime? Maybe some will cheer up. However, the reality does not seem optimistic. The Tube strike is not rare but often happens. In most Tube strikes, workers demonstrated for more benefits and wages. Thanks to the unions' multi-year strike with London Underground, keeping pay above inflation, a newly-qualified tube driver starts on a salary of £49,673 a year. This income can rise after five years to anything between £50,000 to £60,000. This salary is significantly higher than other types (see figure 7.2).³¹³ It is worthy to think about what such 'austere' working class is striking for. Apparently, the strike has become a useful technique to acquire more economic benefits, and the trade union that leads the strike asserts to deserve more payment. Insofar as a regime of governmentality regulates the daily routines, the strike is sought by the trade union as the

last option within the law. In this respect, it is a form of resistance, but this resistance must be subsumed as governable. As a result, every citizen and every international visitor have to spend



Figure 7.2 table of starting salary in comparison

considerably more; then, trade

unions and Tube workers have been integrated by spectacle as little more than a disparate image that visualises a radical gesture and this gesture is recuperable to the technological regime that never cease its rendition. In other words, once any resistance is led bureaucratically by institutes that are affiliated to the technological regime to distort the

³¹² The ticket office will no longer be closed altogether; instead, their closures will be carefully reconsidered "station by station". Massey, R. (2014). *London Underground caves to militants and agrees not to close all ticket offices*. [online] Available at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2556679/BREAKING-NEWS-48-hour-Tube-strike-set-cancelled-transport-union-agrees-suspend-industrial-action.html>. Last Accessed 3rd Oct. 2016

³¹³ Bennett, A. (2017). *How well off are London's tube staff and why are they striking?* [online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/03/15/how-well-off-are-londons-tube-drivers-and-why-are-they-striking/>. Last Accessed 2nd Oct. 2017

spectacle, this resistance can be tolerated and allowed to release its political intensity, but is restrictively channelled, dissipated and wasted as useless but retains its utilitarian demands as an empty form that appears to be resistant. In this sense, modern spectacle cannot find its 'gravedigger' anymore. Self-conscious struggle in action has been diverted. If the dialectical consciousness of production and resistance still exists, it rather entails the imperative of rationality and utility. Workers' resistance cannot be excess without any reserve, but only an integral part of such technological homogeneity and their trade union is an apparatus of reconciliation and compromise. Thus, even if they are striking with such consciousness, what they ask is little more than a dialectic overcoming of the technological regime as an inerasable logic of modernity to upgrade towards another new political-economic form. Thus, each negotiation with the government about payment is rather a diagnosis of the technological regime imposed on the communal body of Tube workers. The diagnostic result is paranoid, desiring money. This diagnosis will be recorded as a kind of knowledge to identify the trade union, that is, a capitalist 'zombie'³¹⁴ who wants much more money for much less labour. Their strike happened only as an event pertaining to 'the political', whereby regularity of daily life routinized by the productive mechanism and inebriated in the spectacular consumption is disordered temporarily in a different fashion, a strike that can be recuperated from soon. Thus, no matter how long or severe this strike is, it is nothing more than to refashion the society of spectacle in another appearance.

However, correlation between spectacle and strike can be re-thought to dispel the despair of resistance. Firstly, the subjects in utility to engage themselves into resistance should be re-justified. In light of Foucault-Deleuze, spectacle repeated along the digital simulacra is not simply reproducing the automatic machine but also breeding new subjects and channelling their desires, even if such desires in some cases are released by the collective action of the

³¹⁴ Evans and Giroux demonstrated the zombies as the embodiment of a political form, one that had lost all sense of the past and had no future to speak of. The zombies are neither live nor dead but only wandering within the inescapable phantasmagoria. Their only action was excessive violence without any thoughts. For Evans and Giroux, to become a zombie was to be devoid of any political, ethical and social claim or responsibility other than the completion of the nihilistic project. Evans, B. & Giroux, H. (2015). *Disposable Futures: the seduction of violence in the age of spectacle*, Open Media Series: City Lights Books, p 17. Other contents about zombies can see Giroux, H. *Zombie Politics*, 2nd edition; and John Quiggin, (2010). *Zombie Economics: How Dead Ideas Still Walk among Us*, Princeton University Press

strike. This kind of subject should not be simply understood as self-renunciation of struggle to accept self-repression, as Frankfurt School criticised, but withdraw themselves to concern utilitarian reservation of life to entertainment and consolation allowed by the technological regime, rather than embrace immoderate expenditure of excess for destruction, without being illuminated by revolutionary theories to dialectically remake reality for another world. That is to say, to justify this subjectivity in utility to distort spectacle needs to admit bifurcation of the subject with regard to the resistance. This bifurcation is cast in a light of non-negation, neither presuming the subject as ideal *priori* nor unitary, but affirms discrepant experiences. This uncritical manner admits that life must face its ordinariness, real experience can be banal, and daily practice must involve the boredom of trivial matters. For instance, those Tube workers who participated in the strike have been reduced from a revolutionary spirit for emancipation but act by their vulgar incentives of getting more money to spend in daily consumption. This action is a common event happening in the day-to-day life of London rather than a meta-narrative of ambitious manifesto. In this sense, the strike is not a reiteration of critical consciousness but a different repetition of banal life in endless recurrence of spectacle. Thus, a fact must be admitted, that is, individuals saturated in spectacle to consume their lives are scarcely unitary but always bifurcated as non-identical: to suffer poverty in cowardice and banality, to work hard and spend as phantasmagorical but also bored, or to resist with intensity, etc. Such divergent consumptions of life do not have to be transformed as unitary as a variation of self-consciousness wherein all the suffering in reality is identified as alienation to generate negation and remaking of the alienating reality for sublime emancipation; but this bifurcation can be rather utilitarian choices in which the subject chooses such divergent experiences as equivocal as individualised but tendentious preferences, that is, neither to be presupposed as a univocal self-identification nor to be embroiled with unreserved exposure to risk. Risk is not necessarily prohibited but it must be worthwhile to be exposed to. Thus, apathy to resistance and fear of suppression can circumscribe individuals in the mediocrity, boredom and inebriation provided by spectacle; and also the horror of death constrains the resistance from excess destruction to argue for a utilitarian reward. At this point, utility is not an external means imposed on the subjects to force them to make alienated choices but

their intrinsic capacity for choosing desirable actions. Also, utility is not presumed to be an irrefutable limitation, it allows resistance as desirable and autonomous expenditure but restrictively reserves such resistance as governable as an argument for better payment, not for excess. The London Tube strike is a good example. Thus far, inspired by Foucault, as one of the governmental arts, utility allows resistance in liberty, because resistance is reproduced by the technological regime that re-circulates power in the intense form different from another form of spectacle. In other words, the technological regime produces mechanisms for spectacularisation and also for resistance, both of them coexist as a symbiosis of two incompatibilities.

Secondly, resistance in the form of striking to attain more money for less labour has revealed that workers are no longer productive for subsistence but for a kind of unproductive expenditure of intensity. Indeed, they are organised by the trade union to strike for more economic benefits despite having hardly been in poverty. According to Bataille, such a strike is rather surplus to the productive necessity as a play of leisure to desire more money, rather than a revolt against the spectacle as alienation.³¹⁵ In this regard, such reduction of life from sublimity to banality explicates a compelling logic to the strike, that is, to resist for better payment and to pay for the further strike. That is to say, the technological regime does not reject resistance but sustains its spectacle to seduce workers to resist as a torrent of desire for money. In this case, workers are sure about an existing jeopardy of technological homogeneity that restricts their daily life in an exclusive and boring phantasmagoria and do not renounce resistance; but critically, their concern is not to transgress the restriction for those excessive contents prohibited by the spectacle but to utilise, or simulate, intensity as an irregular and fresh style to re-render their self-reflection in the spectacle and continue being obsessed by it. Since being seduced with leisure and money, strike, as a kind of unproductive expenditure, is itself an image of spectacle to entertain the subjects with their excess intensity that is neither exposed to absolute loss nor being suppressed. While intensity, idleness, money, obsession and comfort

³¹⁵ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol II The History of Eroticism & Vol III Sovereignty*, p 187

are tolerated and fused by the technological regime as heterogeneous expenditure in its spectacle, this spectacle is being perfected as invulnerable. This invulnerability, as clarified in the first chapter, is not merely about a recuperability but also about this recuperability rests its emphasis on the craft of utility that distributes, diverts and transforms the excess from the condemned and risky elements into the contents allowed by the technological homogeneity. At this point, the correlation between resistance/spectacle and technological regime is not a dichotomy of heterogeneity and homogeneity, nor assimilation of the former by the latter, but a restrictive exudation and transformation of heterogeneities as the allowed inassimilabilities to the homogeneous regime.

Thus far, the technological regime is presumed as verifiable and its spectacle that is proliferated by digitalisation is recuperable; in return, subordinates are presupposed as sufficiently reasonable and civilizable as to be enlightened by the spectacularisation. To sustain this reciprocity, a restrictive economy about spectacle is then formed to feed and enchant life. In such an economy, the subordinated workers are inebriated as idle; In return, the elite as masters do not need to dissipate their energy by antagonism against any challenge from below. Despite the elite consuming and conserving their lives as heterogeneous as luxury, they rather symbolically fight each other to release their passions and affirm wills of conquest in the form of party conflict, parliamentary debates, and business competition. In this case, the elite would strengthen their monopoly at the expense of the idle masses, and also sophisticate such a spectacle of comfort, affluence and pleasure to divert and deplete the intense vitality of the working class. While the elite limit their excess life in luxury and the masses circumscribe their exorbitant energies in leisure and joy, immediate struggle between them as war to exude life as heterogeneously as violent, murderous and frenzied is precluded as foul. Then, what the working class can do or ask for is nothing more than reform, or revision, of the phantasmagorical rendition by request for an increase in wage and welfare to enjoy the funfair of consumption but idle away the vital desire of personal struggle; and the elite class in authority uses the system of welfare and allowances to buy out the future of the masses, and fabricates the phantasmagoria by which

the exorbitant desires and unruly energies of the masses are diverted and impoverished as obedience in the pleasurable enjoyment.

Revolution and Sovereignty

As argued above, it should be admitted that subjectivity is bifurcated with regard to resistance and spectacle. Then, if the spectacle fabricated by the technological regime, as inspired by Baudrillard, is interpreted as a 'mirror' of the productive mechanism (see 1st chapter), the bifurcated subject that is generated by production is seduced by this mirror as disparate self-reflective images. This fractured self-reflection of the bifurcated subject, though it enables spectacle to be a self-incurred perceptibility to the inner experience, scatters along spatiotemporal differentiations with discrepant images. In a tour of the London Tube strike, the elite see themselves via extravagance and monopoly, and divergently, workers rather recognise themselves through images of idleness, inebriation and mediocrity. Once the journey is telescoped to Shanghai, and dislocates the present phantasmagoria to reveal traces back to the memory of Mao Zedong's era, revolution is visualised as a different spectacle whereby the Chinese revolutionary subject is reflected as another image that diverges to be incompatible with the strike in London. With regard to the revolutionary spectacle that is exuded as the Chinese heterogeneity, there are three points to be clarified.

Above all, revolution has been prohibited by the phantasmagoria but can be an exceptional channel for unleashing the inner intensity towards sovereignty, if it is seen as a heterogeneous expenditure of excess to exude life as violence, destruction and death, and also sovereignty reclaimed by revolution is not merely about being excess to exceed any servitude but should be an unrestricted play of fusing the allowed and the prohibited as incompatibilities and also re-circulating between them. To be specific, the London Tube strike that constrained resistance from excess indicates the death of the working class as a collective consciousness and the end of production as surplus and unproductive idleness. Immersed by such mass ecstasy of overabundant commodities and technological pervasion,

all the revolutionary potential to exceed for sovereignty is prohibited as impossible and diverted by the spectacle as nothing more than a superficial simulacrum in a strike event. So, there is only one choice; that is, to embrace spectacle as if to accept death as destiny. This dilemma is degeneracy, or an incapability of the bifurcated subject that is restricted to the imperative of utility to exude the excess as heterogeneous as obsession by phantasmagoria alone. While the spectacle distracts the excess from resistance to repetition of phantasmagorical boredom as well as trivial events, in light of Nietzsche who contended that what drives the eternal return in the presence is rather a 'constantly-swelling' vital energy, such ceaseless flux drives images and simulacra to drift and proliferate but it is also tired of this regular and restrictive rendition, then disturbing such boredom to transgress restriction and reveal those prohibited elements, e.g. violence, risk, loss and death, etc., to release unreservedly the excess to re-vitalise life. This transgression can be seen as revolution, an immoderate intensity to thirst for sovereignty as an unrestricted expenditure of excess life.³¹⁶ In this sense, there is always a choice for the subject, that is, either restricting life in boredom or transgressing to revolt for sovereignty.

The revolutionary excess dissipated for being sovereign is not circumscribed by any restrictive economy of conserving life but also channelled by an alternative, namely, the general economy of wasting life as excess (see more details in the 1st chapter). That is to say, the expenditure of excess aimed at sovereignty is not an economic lordship, which entails a dialectic of master and slave. To be master means to risk life in the struggle, and to be slave rather conserves life in security and utility. However, dialectically, to struggle for being master does not mean that such struggle is an absolute risk of exposing life to any meaningless death; that is to say, risk can be taken by the people who desire to be master but it must be reserved to avoid fatality so that life could be sustained to enjoy what is rewarded by the reserved risk. In this sense, the master cannot be rid of servitude that retains a trace of being enslaved as conservation, because struggle to risk cannot be excess but is measured in utility as an investment that transforms being master into being

³¹⁶ Land, N. *The Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism*, p 58

consoled.³¹⁷ Thus, to be sovereign by revolution must be in excess to surpass the limitation of a (political) economy of life, then, throw the subjects into an endless floatation of meaningless images, simulacra and events to dissipate their infinite intensity. Such boundless floatation and uncertain experience are never stable to indicate an absolute risk that never restricts the excess life to pleasurable enjoyment in phantasmagoria. In this sense, spectacle to recur in the form of revolution diversifies the floatation of images and simulacra to channel the excess to transgress the limitation to embrace another play of risks, whereby life can be consumed as an unreserved and arbitrary disposal of the excess to experience the wildest and accursed shares of heterogeneities.³¹⁸ More importantly, such an accursed share embraced by revolution should become coexistently incongruous with the shares allowed by the present phantasmagoria.

So far, the problem of the society of the spectacle is not simply its alienation of unitary subjectivity, but its restriction of the expenditure of excess to form incapacity in which the inner flux outpoured from the productive mechanism cannot circulate diversely, nor dissipate unreservedly, to let the subject ascend from subsistence as fully heterogeneous as sovereign, rather than partially heterogeneous. In this sense, revolution can transgress the restrictive phantasmagoria as a coexistent disparity to exude the excess to embrace those accursed and exceptional contents. Inspired by Carl Schmitt, with regard to revolution being accursed as exception, depoliticisation of resistance to circumscribe excess in the event of the strike as merely pertained to 'the political' is not merely attributed to the recuperability of spectacle but the revolutionary intensity that awakens and mobilises subjects to exceed the limit for sovereignty is diverted in slumber. In the case of such transgression yet suspended, any action of revolution is not fuelled but excluded as an exception. For Schmitt, the decisive action of distinguishing the exception is critical about being sovereign. This resolute decision-making and political intensity, as a touchstone of sovereignty, is only

³¹⁷ Derrida, J. (1967). From Restricted to General Economy, A Hegelianism without Reserve. *Writing and Difference*. London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2001, p 322-324

³¹⁸ Derrida, J. From Restricted to General Economy, A Hegelianism without Reserve. *Writing and Difference*, p 324-325; Bataille, G. Sacrifice, *Visions of Excess Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 130-136; Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol II The History of Eroticism & Vol III Sovereignty*, p 217-222, 377-379

suspended by the governmental technique of utility and marketing mechanisms to be dissolved in secular routines. Intermediated by such technological depoliticization, not only does the political decision pertain to ordinary routines but the sovereignty to make decisions is also diluted and mimicked as a sovereign 'sign'. That is to say, a sovereign form that is formulated by a normative, utilitarian and generic system encapsulates sovereignty but without the solid content of making exceptional decisions. Then, exception is precluded, violence is tamed, dictatorship of the minority is divisionalised and democratised by general will, and actions of struggle with sacrifice are displaced by bureaucratic procedures. In short, sovereignty born as an unruly and unjustifiable power is impoverished by the mechanism of verification as powerless, lifeless and indecisive.³¹⁹ With regard to revival of sovereignty, the revolution, as exceptional exudation of the excess to transgress restriction, is rather to distort and reshape the spectacle as recurrence as affirmative to the political intensification rather than merely the marketing dispersion. In other words, any monopoly that limits the reappearance of spectacle in the exclusive form of phantasmagorical diversion must be dismantled to re-render images as another appearance by which the excess intensity can be channelled to the exceptional expenditure of it as heterogeneous as revolutionary miracles.

This revolutionary intensification visualised by the journey of spectacle then telescopes the spectacle to another appearance of the Chinese revolution that happens as a Chinese characteristic alone. Images floating over reality are no longer confined to an overflow of exorbitant desires from the productive imperative as surplus as the diverting phantasmagoria alone but transgress to visualise those prohibited heterogeneities, such as cult, punishment, sacrifice, hatred, etc. Regarding such visual transgression, Benjamin demonstrated that there are two solutions to deal with the crisis of experience captured by bourgeois-ruled phantasmagoria, one is destruction and the other is Fascism/Communism. In this sense, the communist revolution in China can illuminate the recurrence of spectacle as the socialist rendition, whereby the excess life can transgress the limitation of the

³¹⁹ Schmitt, C. (2007). *The Concept of the Political*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, p 20-24; Schmitt, C. "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations", *The Concept of the Political*, The University of Chicago Press, p 80-88 69-75; Schmitt, C. (2005). On the Counterrevolutionary Philosophy of the State, in *Political Theology*, The University of Chicago Press, p 60-63

capitalistic fabrication to be sovereign. Insofar as spectacle channels the excess towards sovereignty, socialist and capitalist rendition both rest on the homogeneous mechanism of production in the imperative of utility, but this productive imperative of utility is exercised diversely as different governmental arts, either the free market mechanism or bureaucratic planning, by which a seamless torrent of inner flux that thirsts for an unrestricted play as sovereign as possible can be unleashed as irreducible but intentionally fragmented and restricted to the disparate but partial expenditures delimited by the different governmental arts, then, irreplaceable and incongruous effects of exuding the excess as partly heterogeneous is formed between the socialist and capitalist shows. Thus, to be sovereign necessitates blurring and penetration of the border to re-circulate the torrent of excess that is split into different 'compartments' as a playful fusion of incongruities through exposing such different shows.

New Body Bred by Campaigns

Secondly, such a playful show of the Chinese revolution to transgress the phantasmagoria rendered by the technological regime cannot disregard a salient feature of revolutionary images that reflect the Chinese subject as collective, namely masses (*qunzhong*) or people (*renmin*), rather than individuals. In other words, revolutionary images render the experience of 'we' rather than of 'I'. On Nietzsche's account, 'I' is a self-identity represented by an imperative faculty of being moral and responsible for the actual actions.³²⁰ This self-identification is then projected into real life and imposed on each fragmentary event and individual practice to construct a general social norm. Nietzsche dissociated 'I' from the general morality. Deleuze also argues that 'I' is not a singular unity of consciousness but divided by the actual production into a non-identical and individualised subject that encounters the endless multiplicity of reproduced images or simulacra in his/her diverse experience.³²¹ However, within the Chinese heterogeneity of revolution, the individual

³²⁰ Nietzsche, F. *Twilight of the Idols*, p 482-83; Nietzsche, F. (1967). *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Walter Kaufmann (trans.), New York: Random House, p 24-26, 58-60

³²¹ Deleuze, G. *Difference and Repetition*, p 246, 254, 257

subject is not fractured. Conversely, individuals are gathered in collective to be a communal body of masses sharing an intense experience.

Regarding such communal body, Vladislav Todorov is involved. As he said, "factories are not built to produce commodities. They produce the united working-class-body...they result in a deficit of goods, but an overproduction of symbolic meanings...labor is a ceremony begetting the communal body of the working class."³²² According to him, the modern phantasmagoria of the marketplace not only diverts society but also produces its own shadow, the working class as gravedigger of modern capitalism. What is more, the labours alienated by phantasmagoria cannot be simply a consciousness of revolution. They are also bred as a communal body of revolution and occupy the productive mechanism to release their excess intensity towards expenditure through rendering and reproducing new images as semiotic exuberance distinctive to the phantasmagorical myth. The homogeneous mechanism of production not only reproduces commodities but also breeds the communal body of workers as surplus. To be differential, Chinese revolution led by Mao Zedong rather has Chinese characteristics. The collective body of the masses is not confined to the urban machine of production breeding workers and refashioning spectacle in the city. Such a revolutionary body is reproduced not merely in the factory of workers but also in rural areas of peasants.

"The collective is a body, too. And the *physis* that is being organised for it in technology can, through all its political and factual reality, only be produced in that image sphere to which profane illumination initiates us. Only when in technology body and image so interpenetrate that all revolutionary tension becomes bodily collective innervation, and all the bodily innervations of the collective become revolutionary discharge, has reality transcended itself to the extent demanded by the *Communist Manifesto*."

Walter Benjamin³²³

³²² Todorov, V. (1995). *Red Square Black Square: organon for revolutionary imagination*. State University of New York Press, p 10

³²³ Benjamin, W. *Selected Writings*, (2)4 vols, p 217-218

According to Benjamin, reproduction of the revolutionary body, or namely *xinren*, cannot be done without the proliferation of revolutionary images. That is to say, since the idea of revolution is an ‘innervation of the technical organ of the collective’,³²⁴ all the intense struggles in every action to substantiate such ideas must also be affirmed on the surface as optical stimulants and exercised by the communal body. The revolutionary spectacle is generated from here. In order to achieve such visual stimulants by which the docile bodies can be cultivated, the campaign can be counted as the most salient technique. Campaign channels the political intensity in actions to release passions, and it is also an engine to reproduce new images whereby the participants are immersed in intense scenarios and educated with a sense of collective belongingness. Also, this campaign can be seen as alternative to the shopping mall that does not only exchange the commodities but is also a locus of proliferating images to render a phantasmagoria and immerse consumers within it.

All revolutionary campaigns of reproducing loyal bodies through spectacle cannot leave the Yan’an way - the heartland of Mao’s revolution. Ever since Mark Seldon, there have been scholars like David E. Apter, Gao Hua and Michael Dutton who have continued to place particular importance on the Yan’an way that not only justified Chinese characteristics of revolution but also founded a gift economy of Mao.³²⁵ Since Yan’an, Mao Zedong thought was weaved to promulgate as a hegemonic knowledge of revolutionary politics with Chinese characteristics. Such powerful discourses not only pervaded revolutionary bases but also founded the Yan’an way as another political language of excessive expenditure through intensive actions. This way illuminated the modern life presumed by utility and rationality with another heterogeneity, that is, a succession of campaigns and antithesis, images of cults and devotion, and mass ecstasy of gift giving. Illuminated by such Yan’an way, the ‘red sun’ arose. The rise of a red sun echoes Bataille’s solar principle: the sun as a sovereignty freely burns out energy towards the universe as illumination and warmth. The truly free and

³²⁴ Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, p 631

³²⁵ Seldon, M. (1971). *The Yanan Way in Revolutionary China*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press; Apter, D.E. (1995). ‘Discourse as Power: Yan’an and the Chinese Revolution’, in Saich, T. and Hans van de Ven, H.V. (eds), *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, New York, p 189-234; Gao, H. (2000). *How Does Red Sun rise: History of Yan’an Rectification Campaign*, Hong Kong Chinese University Press; Dutton, M. (2005). *Policing Chinese Politics: A History*, Duke University Press

supreme power should be like the sun, which expends an excess of energy for selflessness infinitely, without any demanding, though the universe worships and commits to it in return. Mao was surrounded by the cult, loyalty and mass ecstasy, but he freely assigns knowledge, wisdom and a worldview to the masses. Such a cult forms a gift economy that a symbolic 'kinship' reciprocating between commitment to givers and generosity to receivers.³²⁶ Being surplus to the productive imperative of utility that measures acquisition, this gift economy that accentuates giving dominates until the end of the Cultural Revolution.

Campaigns substantiated the Yan'an way of rising the red sun. Amongst continuous campaigns, the rectification campaign was evidenced vividly. This campaign not only established a panoptic governmentality that exercises hermeneutic power to intensify the sovereignty of a paramount leader. What is more, it proliferated images to render a perceptible experience of intensification and commitment. Apart from dissemination of Mao's texts, recurrent images of rallies to criticise and denounce were deliberately mobilised to the public. Such images are salient to visualise the political intensity whereby the spectators can be immersed in a real experience of rectifying comrades and recovering the party.

Most activities of criticism were organised to stage in the hall or on the square. All the cadres must attend. Someone to be criticised must stand on the stage to reveal him/herself in public and face all the denouncements from other comrades. In most cases, self-criticism was necessary. Someone had to write a text of self-criticism and read loudly to expose his/her 'dangerous' idea, condemn erroneous conducts, and confess to the party for redemption. This criticism and self-criticism applied to most senior cadres, particularly to the Wang Ming-led Soviet faction and those who abandoned Mao's military strategy during the Jiangxi era. These cadres were repeatedly criticised and reviled in public conferences. They had to write their self-criticism to condemn themselves repeatedly and even cried in depression for Mao's salvation.³²⁷ Verbal denouncements, spiritual lashing and mental

³²⁶ Mauss, M. (2002) *The Gift*, New York: Routledge, p 7-9, 94

³²⁷ Gao, H. (2015). *Proposal and Revision of 'Maoism'—The Completion of Yan'an Ratification Campaign*. [online]

depression were operated as punitive techniques by which the condemned body has stripped off all the clothing of erroneous ideas as a naked specimen in public. Such a naked body was publicised as a product of dogma and erroneous thoughts.

All these images of punitive denouncement looked inhuman but were a necessary diagnosis of the disciplinary regime led by Mao who functioned as a 'surgeon' to treat such a condemned body. For Mao, only in so punitively stripping off all the dogmas and presupposed ideas that inhabited and imprisoned the body, could revolutionary power be channelled into an innocent and clean body. Purification of bodies was essential to revolutionary sovereignty. For those condemned cadres, such coercive apparatus of rectification was rather a correction of a wrong life and salvation for the rebirth of new life though they had to undergo bodily afflictions. In this respect of rectification, Foucault in *The Order of Things* articulated the paradox of man. Man is an epistemological product, a locus of knowledge, and is also a subject of representing the world in knowledge. That is to say, subjects unceasingly reproduce knowledge to affirm the power of 'knowing' but simultaneously such knowledge is exercised as the discipline to impose on subjects themselves. By this token, a group of men always encrypt their thoughts as knowledge and use this as the power tool to justify their self-assertive ideas and impose them on another group of men.

With regard to the punitive technology that exercises on the body as discipline and also to formulate new knowledge, Foucault's genealogical investigation into the technical diversification of discipline and punishment can be referenced here. The public spectacle of torture through punitive apparatuses renders intense images, whereby the spectators are immersed in an exhibition of death and sadism as arts of punishment, and the condemned body is performed as a bio-technical site to arouse equivocal emotions in the masses, compassion or hatred, and also visualises the revenge of sovereignty as a regime of truth verified on the flesh. Then, the excess of violence is restrained by the formulation of generic laws that displace the arbitrary and excess loss of the condemned body with calculable,

classified and regular punishments, by which disciplinary punishment is not simply intimidation but also displays itself as a technology of representation to show the body as a sign to fabricate punitive images as an example to educate the innocent masses and preserve them from crime. Moreover, to bifurcate from the technology of representation, imprisonment, as another technology, isolates the filthy images of torture, pain, suffering, violence, nudity, etc., rendered by the punitive spectacle from the visual perception of the masses; then, no sympathy or hatred can be exuded from spectators who see the brutal images, and prisons distinguish the discipline that is embodied by punitive machines to be a transformative and corrective training by which docile bodies and loyal subjects can be bred.³²⁸ To echo Foucault's genealogical investigation, despite being unlikely to be the same, the transition of punitive technology that is shifted from the bloodshed of the Jiangxi era to Yan'an scrutiny reveals that the revolutionary sovereignty is not merely excessive but also rests on the reasoning as an anatomical exercise on individual bodies to examine, manipulate and transform them with a technical bifurcation and fusion between excess and utility (also see more details in the 6th chapter).

Insofar as the punitive technology diversifies to perform on bodies, the body was never free in the history but preoccupied and expressed by variable privilege as a locus of reproducing different knowledge to verify any presupposed ideas.³²⁹ Mao-led revolutionary power rather imposed its governmentality on the communal body to rectify and de-mythologise any pre-existing ideal imposition. This rectification used the punitive and re-educative technique to cleanse the body by which revolutionary intensity was re-channeled to invigorate the body and also reshape loyal propagators and executants of the 'mass line'. Since then, Mao's enunciation of revolution was not merely verified as truth in mind but also rooted into loyal bodies to echo throughout Yan'an and permeate China's future. This visual experience rendered by images of punishment and criticism never ended, because the campaigns of reproducing such images became a leitmotif of entire revolutionary spectacles lasting until the economic reform began in the 1980s.

³²⁸ Foucault, M. *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison*, p 32-131

³²⁹ Foucault, M. *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison*, p 24-31

Murderous Revolution

Thirdly, not only do campaigns generate intense images that contrast the phantasmagoria of the marketplace and visualise the revolutionary intensity as perceptible afflictions exercised on the condemned bodies to transform them as loyal, but such campaigns are also never confined to discipline and punishment, then, further transgress to dissipate the revolutionary intensity as murderous as accursed contents through rendering such murderous impulse as an irreplaceable image of the revolutionary spectacle. Such murderous elements unleashed by the revolutionary excess are saliently concentrated on the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). This campaign lasting ten years had its salient feature. Mao mistrusted and even abandoned his docile tool. He detoured around bureaucrats and embedded himself into the vital source of masses, incited them to discharge their violence, and then rechanneled such intensity to undo the existing bureaucratic mechanism. This governmental art can be called *tikaidangweilaogeming*. Its purpose was to consolidate the proletarian dictatorship lead by the CCP through re-vitalising the sovereign power embodied by the Party from being suspended by a revisionist system. In this sense, Mao's strategy was not to undo the Party leadership but to crush and renew the disenchanting system of representing and fossilizing such leadership through channelling intentionally and cautiously the populist and anarchic movements to act. Before undoing the bureaucratic system to remake it, mass movements were unrestricted as an immoderate intensification; once their purpose was achieved, this excess intensity was thereby limited. Thus, the homogeneous leadership of the Party was always merged with the heterogeneous expenditure of intensity as violence.

During the entire movement, revolutionary ecstasy rendered by Red August 1966 can be counted the most intensive and murderous spectacle of violence and bloodshed. The people abandoned dogmas, undid conventions, then naked they discharged their body as mobs. Such immoderate expenditure of violence to release animality not only rampaged in Beijing but also embroiled Shanghai and even entire country in such turbulence. However, this

rampancy started with the first piece of *dazibao*, which, On 25th May, was publicised at Beijing University to criticise the party committee. This action was praised by Mao in response. Mao's response indicated that the intense struggle in relentless action was directly handed to the students rather than the bureaucratic system. Images of violence and bloodshed against the enemy then erupted to flood around daily life. The students on the university campuses and middle schools were immediately responded to the call for revolution. Four days later, 29th May, the first organisation of revolutionary students was founded by the high school affiliated to Tsinghua University, namely the Red Guard – to guard Chairman Mao and the Red regime.³³⁰ Mao encouraged the revolutionary actions of young students, namely, *zaofanyouli* (to rebel is justified). He also rebuked any workgroups and bureaucratic measures.³³¹ In other words, Mao disencumbered any discipline imposed on revolutionary masses that attempted to restrict and detain the student campaigns. Young students then motivated and discharged their revolutionary passions without any limit. On 11th August, the Red Guard in Shanghai was founded by the department of foreign language at Fudan University. A few days later, all the schools in Shanghai ranging from university to middle schools established their revolutionary organisations.³³² Excess intensity was



Figure 7.3

overrunning. From the end of May to August, many thousands of young students were gathered from the entire country to focus their revolutionary passions on Beijing, namely *dachuanlian* (exchanges of revolutionary experiences), to visit their

³³⁰ Facts and details. (2016) *CULTURAL REVOLUTION: CAUSES, COSTS, BACKGROUND HISTORY AND FORCES BEHIND IT*. [online] Available at: <http://factsanddetails.com/china/cat2/sub6/item68.html>. Last accessed 3rd November 2016

³³¹ Peking Review. (1966). *Carry Out the Cultural Revolution Thoroughly and Transform the Educational System Completely*. [online] Available at: <https://www.marxists.org/subject/china/peking-review/1966/PR1966-26j.htm>. Last accessed 4th October 2016; Taylor & Francis. (1999). *Bombarding the Headquarters*. [online] Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.2753/CLG0009-460932037> Last Accessed 10th Oct. 2016

³³² Li Xun, (2013). '*Red August in Shanghai: the continuation of seventeen years of class struggle*'. [online] Available at: www.aisixiang.com/data/61845-2.html. Last Accessed 2nd Oct. 2017

paramount leader.³³³ Exorbitant energies, desires, and fantasies of massive crowds had been accumulated and intensified through three months.

On 18th August, such intensity culminated the peak while Chairman Mao stepped up Tiananmen to review such boiling crowds. The red sun of revolution is illuminated at Tiananmen Square. This square became a beating heart of amassing crowds and focalized their passions. Since Mao decided to enlarge the square in 1956 to have enough space for gathering such massive intensity, the square was surrounded by Tiananmen, the Great Hall of the People, the National Museum of China, and Zhengyangmen to configure a grand quadrangle as a large flat basin. This basin also overarched the entire city space to function as a reservoir in which crowds gathered to intensify, boil and release their excess of passions. As illustrated in figure 7.3, an ocean, a spectacle of the Red ocean, was stirred up and boiling in this basin. Unrestrained young bodies bearing their unruly impulses assembled all together. When Mao came to the crowds, such assembly of impulse, energy and willingness was shortly focalized at him without any diversion. A solar sovereignty was illuminating the heart of China. The beating heart of China was once again invigorated by such political intensity that was expended by ecstatic young bodies in a revolutionary carnival. A quantitative accumulation of energies then reached its qualitative change, a threshold re-affirming the sovereignty as a biophysical hybridity of Mao and masses. In other words, who can win the crowds, and who can be sovereign and exceed to illuminate all.

When Chairman Mao stood at Tiananmen in the face of celebrating masses, this image visualised a difference from the traditional ritual during which emperors were praying alone

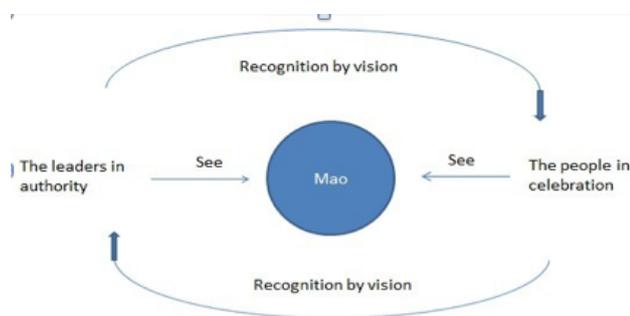


Figure 7.4

³³³ Peking Review. (1966). *Chairman Mao Reviews a Total of 11 Million of Mighty Cultural Revolution Army*. [online] Available at: <https://www.marxists.org/subject/china/peking-review/1966/PR1966-49c.htm>. Last Accessed 10th Oct. 2016

before memorial tablets of ancestors. Now the leader presented at Tiananmen to face the masses, no longer concealed behind Tiananmen. The masses also assembled under Tiananmen, in front of the leader. Leader and revolutionaries faced each other in a transparent vision. At this point, sovereignty was no longer mythologised in opacity but must be seen in appearance, in those live images. The exhibition of leadership to the public at Tiananmen delivered a visual effect to incite the masses. Not only Mao Zedong but also all other important leaders were exhibited at Tiananmen. Each of them was visualised as an image to exhibit before the celebrating masses. All of them also weaved together a political panorama of the revolutionary regime. Mao Zedong is the focal point between leaders and masses to be gazed at. That is to say, a mutual recognition of leadership and masses must be intermediated through Mao, as illustrated by figure 7.4. Mao becomes a gravitational core of deciding the interaction between the bureaucratic system and the masses. He represents bureaucratic leadership to face people, but he is unrestricted by anything (outside) the system. He also embeds and keeps in line with the masses to face the bureaucratic system, but he is rather beyond people. In this sense, Mao himself is heterogeneous as exceptional and inassimilable to any homogeneous imperative.³³⁴ He is the bearer of sovereignty, an overriding power, which pertains to the leading system and ruled masses but is never subordinated to them. This interpretation also characterises the political intensification of Cultural Revolution. Such a red sun of Chinese revolution faced the masses and accepted all the passionate thanksgivings, cults and ecstasies; in return, he also re-channelled the sovereign power to illuminate and invigorate the masses. This vital reciprocity through the solar sovereignty of Mao further strengthened the interdependence, or a kinship, between the revolution and people.

Chairman Mao reviewed the Red Guards. Celebrating images that rendered the discharge of excess intensity overboiled at the peak. After such review, revolution transgressed to embrace murderous thirst and spectacle turned bloodthirsty. Violence was burnt out in bloodshed to relentlessly eradicate enemies with hatred as gifts committed to Mao with loyalty. Students, above all, targeted the teachers and school governors, including those who

³³⁴ Bataille, G. *The Psychological Structure of Fascism. Visions of Excess Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 153-156

were identified as *heiwulei* (five reactionary elements). Due to withdrawal of party committee and workgroups by the end of July, a carnival of violence was performed in schools without any restriction. The first death happened on 5th August, the victim was Bian Zhongyun, the vice-principal of girls' high school affiliated to Beijing Normal University (now the experimental high school). Then, since 21st August, approved by Mao, the Ministry of Public Security prohibited any actions intervening and suppressing the student movements, and General Political Department of the PLA also banned the army from stopping the movements.³³⁵ The public security system was frozen, and violent impulse was fuelled to peak as a result. This murderous impulse rapidly spread to middle schools in Shanghai and throughout the entire country.³³⁶ The first victim tortured by students to death in Shanghai happened on 27th August.³³⁷ Students discharged their revolutionary intensity as violence, which was inflicted on the condemned bodies. Such inhuman images hardly brought mercy and fear to students but exhilarated them by ecstasy in bloodshed. With regard to this exhilaration by murderous impulse, those young people were no longer passive spectators but rather participants to engage themselves into making their own situation in actions, in contrast to Foucault's illustration of public execution with the spectacle of scaffolds wherein intense images of torment were rendered to the masses who saw the show with excitement without intervention in such spectacle. While students hailed the death of enemies supposed by them as a gift endowed by the revolution, a sense of honour was generated to give in return for the illumination of the red sun, Chairman Mao. At this point, since the excess was unreserved to outpour as murderous, death was embraced as loss in the form of sacrificing enemies to cast the myth of sovereignty in an accursed light as bloody and exceptional.

Furthermore, torture of teachers by students put the conventional symbols of knowledge and truth at stake, but this immoderate play of excess as violence, despite transgressing

³³⁵ Jiang, X.Z. & Jin, C. (2003). *Biography of Chairman Mao*, Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, p 1428

³³⁶ Wang, Y.Q. (2010). Terror of 'Red August', *Yanhuangchunqiu*. [online] Available at: <http://www.yhcqw.com/html/qsp/2010/1010/101010112417DF54180554FA7818KIHIGJ74.html>. Last Accessed 1st Nov. 2016

³³⁷ Jin, D.L. (2008). <Beijing Red guards in Shanghai – The history of Beijing Red Guards going south (1966/9/10-9/30)> in *Shilin*. Shanghai: Shanghai academy of social science history studies publisher; Li, Z.T. (2009). *China thoughts-Interviews with 36 contemporary intelligence*. Beijing: Xinxing Publisher

convention, was not to nullify the formulation of knowledge, nor to abandon reasoning, but instead, as inspired by Foucault, to ground a new knowledge in very actions whereby the sovereignty embodied by Chairman Mao could be verified as the regime of truth performing through the revolutionary bodies of Red Guards and condemned bodies of teachers. In other words, murderous expenditure of violence that transgressed the old conventions, norms, knowledge symbolised by teachers to exalt the revolutionary intensity towards sovereignty was not a total destruction, but through a violent annulment of the existing restriction to form a fusion in which knowledge was merged within bodies in revolutionary practices. Thus, such a spectacle of torment was to reveal an intrinsic practice of the sovereignty in the form of revolution embedding the homogeneous process of verifying truth in knowledge into the heterogeneous expenditure of violence as a hybrid power effect. This hybridity further highlights the dialectic between brain-knowledge and body-action. The brain is one organ in which the rational faculty of representing reality by reasoning as measurable and translatable as the formulation of knowledge is rooted. In other words, the brain ascends itself as the sovereignty of wisdom, which grounds knowability as an intellectual denominator to translate the diverse perceptions received by the body, filtrates the disparate, and subsumes the remained as commensurable as rational. In this sense, the brain that is illuminated by reason dictates to the body as a threshold of transforming humanity from animal to civilized, but dialectically, it also encrypts an immensity of ideas as knowledge to preoccupy and appropriate the immediate and physical sensations of the body as excess in the untamed nature. Thus, to know exclusively with the brain is little more than a utilitarian choice to know what is already translatable in a pre-given rationale, without any other possibilities exceptionally unknown to the brain. This process is not to become sovereign but to enslave, and sovereignty is not simply restricted to knowability in minds but transgress the limits of utility and rationality to merge with those incommensurable perceptual actions of body.³³⁸ Insofar as knowability by the brain is transgressed, torment or even murder of teachers by the Red Guards was not merely metaphorical to nullifying old knowledge, but more importantly, to extirpate violently the circumscription of knowability in

³³⁸ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol II The History of Eroticism & Vol III Sovereignty*, p 202-203

intense actions to energise the tamed body, whereby life was consumed as not only to know but also to fight, kill, and die as an inassimilable play. In this way, the Red Guards exceeded as playful as nescient. Such body of actions incommensurable to knowability coincides with Bataille's notion of 'acephalic man', which escapes from the mind as a condemned body at large to shake off any determinate ideal *priori* for unreserved expenditure of excess as frenzy, war and death.³³⁹ Also, the man of action and passion who, without any reserve, unleashed fearlessness and destruction is associated with a Chinese mythical figure, *xingtian*, a headless deity of war who fought alone (see figure 7.5). Although the Red Guards were not actually headless, their revolutionary body was rather committed alone to the sovereignty of Chairman Mao as their sole head. His mouth uttered their knowledge, his eyes saw their vision, his ears heard their celebration, and his brain thought of what they never thought.

Torture and bloodshed were never confined to schools but overflowed outside to embroil the entire society. Since August 1966, such revolutionary intensity not only overflowed to embrace the murderous elements but was also dissipated as actions of sabotage, vandalism,



Figure 7.5

loot, confiscation and destruction, particularly along with the campaign of *posijiu* (Campaign of Four Olds). In order to ruin the old customs, culture, habits and ideas, revolutionaries stirred up such rampancy of red terror out of Beijing that they also embroiled Shanghai in this destruction. At this point, to echo the situationists (see details in 1st chapter), a new situation as a revolutionary spectacle, which was promised to reconstruct the reality

corrupted by the revisionists, was built upon the ruination of the memories that were denounced as fossils and obstacles.

³³⁹ Bataille, G. 'The Obelisk, The Sorcerer's Apprentice, and The Practice of Joy before Death'. *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, p 213-236

Embroiled by such turbulence, Shanghai, this city stage, which fabricated the surreal experience as a heavenly dreamland wherein the sensual torrent of desires were concentrated and consumed as erotic, was now disentangled from the capitalist rendition to be refashioned with overrunning images by which reality was tempted to be violent and frenzied. To reconstruct a brand-new situation of revolution, the phantasmagoria staged in Nanjing Road was targeted above all. The Red Guards along with thousands of crowds concentrated on Nanjing Road, to propagate slogans and stick revolutionary posters and *dazibao* on the shop windows to conceal the goods exhibited behind the windows. Also, department stores that were founded before 1949 as the commercial miracles of old Shanghai had to be refurbished and renamed. For example, *Yong'an* department store was suggested to rename itself as *yonghong* (red forever) or *yongdou* (fight forever). Hotels could not escape; the Peace Hotel was suggested to rename itself as revolution hotel. Cinema was staged as an integral image of the spectacle of old Shanghai to montage a visual stream to arouse semiotic exuberance on the screen to aestheticise the city experience as urban fantasy, but now had to be refurbished as another cultural machine to render the revolutionary situation. *Dashijie*, one such cinematic palace in old Shanghai, was forced to smash its huge brand hung over the street, instead, a number of new suggestions were awaiting to name it, such as Oriental Red Cultural Palace, Revolution Club, People's Playground, etc. Nanjing Road was reconstructed as the showpiece of revolutionary spectacle, and neither could the Bund, as a city iconograph that symbolised colonisation and discrimination, escape the transition to nationalism and patriotism. The typical remaking included the landmark of the Bund, Shanghai Custom House, whose tower clock changed its music, while it was striking, to the melody of '*Dongfanghong*' (Oriental Red).³⁴⁰ Also, a pair of bronze lions that flanked the main entrance of the former headquarter of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank were removed as an icon of British imperialism's greed for wealth.³⁴¹ Moreover, cosmetics were not allowed to be sold in department stores; coffeehouses, western-style restaurants, shoe shops that purveyed wing-tip shoes, and wine shops that

³⁴⁰ Li, X. (2013). '*Red August in Shanghai*': the continuation of seventeen years of class struggle. [online] Available at: www.aisixiang.com/data/61845-2.html. Last Accessed 2nd Oct. 2017

³⁴¹ Lethbridge, *All about Shanghai*, p 46, in Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shang Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945*, p 8; Li Xun, (2013). '*Red August in Shanghai*': the continuation of seventeen years of class struggle. [online] Available at: www.aisixiang.com/data/61845-2.html. Last Accessed 2nd Oct. 2017

offered brandy, whisky, etc., all such daily marketplaces that proliferated commodified images to infiltrate the bourgeois-coded myth into city lives were labelled with various revolutionary slogans and posters; and even the main entrances of the banks were decorated with *dazibao*, which advocated 'annul interest' or 'confiscate debts'.³⁴² Thus far, a bourgeois-coded myth remaining to decorate the city with some semiotic nostalgia for phantasmagorical inebriation lingering in old Shanghai was utterly dispelled to reverse instead the modern spectacle with another situation. In this sense, since the Cultural Revolution corresponded with the situationists' strategy, its intensity was not only consumed as vandalism or sabotage of old 'fossils' and capitalistic 'obstacles' to create a new situation but also as loot and confiscation of the private properties owned by those who were targeted as *heiwulei*. Because Shanghai had gathered many national capitalists, most capitalists residing here had to suffer rampant confiscation and loot; and some party cadres who were identified as reactionary elements also suffered confiscation, or even plunder by force.³⁴³

Such an immoderate play of excess intensity was withdrawn with the dismissal of the Red Guards by the end of 1968. Eight years later, on 9th September 1976, Chairman Mao passed away. The red sun went down. Revolution was also on the wane. On 6th October 1976, the Gang of Four was arrested. The Cultural Revolution ended. Mao's era had gone. While those ubiquitous images that visualised the revolutionary transgression as exceptional expenditure in violence, murder, torture, cult, ecstasy, death, etc., faded from memory, the deaths of victims and even the Red Guards, as expenditure for collective intensification in carnival and fantasy, is hardly monumentalized. That is to say, when revolution is given by Chairman Mao as a gift to seduce ordinary life from restriction to transgress and encounter death, the filthy scenes of corpses and torment, such death is almost anonymous, and in vain, as if waste of innocent lives for sovereignty is but fleeting in time flow. Despite such death being accursed,

³⁴² Li, X. (2013). '*Red August in Shanghai*': the continuation of seventeen years of class struggle. [online] Available at: www.aisixiang.com/data/61845-2.html. Last Accessed 2nd Oct. 2017

³⁴³ Shanghai Wenge historical materials editing group (1994). <Historical materials of Shanghai Cultural Revolution>. (Unpublished) p 57; Ding, S. (2004). *The broken cultural Relics: a brief introduction to 1966 Campaign of Four Olds*. [online]. Available at: <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/3904.html>. Last Accessed 26th Sep 2017

without death, life would become incomplete but restricted to a utilitarian reserve of life as useful and meaningful to avoid its ultimate expenditure, death. Thus, an unreserved play of excess intensity in the form of revolution for sovereignty should perform a fusion of life and death, wherein the subjects squander their lives as useless and meaningless as the riskiest expense to embrace the most prohibited, that is, to play with death as ecstasy and to celebrate with corpses as exhilaration.³⁴⁴ Insofar as sovereignty re-circulates itself as revolutionary intensity between life and death, the Cultural Revolution, especially visualised as an epitome of Red August, actualises a hybrid show. Death as an inassimilable and murderous element accursed and banned by the imperative of utility and rationality, ecstasy and loyalty as irreplaceable contents allowed by the homogeneous system of socialism, and divinity as an opaque and mysterious element unintegrable to everyday life, all such heterogeneous fragments are fused to transgress the restriction of phantasmagorical enchantment tolerated by the utilitarian production. Also, when all such elements are merged in unconditional expenditure, the victims are not restricted to human death with utilitarian compensation but to die as expenditure in the principle of loss whereby the revolutionaries could encounter a sovereign moment surplus to their useful lives.³⁴⁵ In this hybridity, Mao's solar divinity that illuminates a revolutionary spectacle as a gift is stained with blood. At this point, Mao's revolutionary society of spectacle never ceased to be heterologous as symbiotic with the homogenous imperative of the Party leadership.

Time is lapsing. Intensification is gradually neutralised and resistance is suspended as dissonance to the society of affluence. Such intensity is rather remained as memory as Mao's portrait hung above Tiananmen. This image is still exhibited as a 'face of authority' to the public.³⁴⁶ Deng Xiaoping is quoted saying "we will forever hang Chairman Mao's picture above Tiananmen as a symbol of the People's Republic, and we will forever commemorate him as the founder of our Party and country".³⁴⁷ However, the authority represented by this

³⁴⁴ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol II The History of Eroticism & Vol III Sovereignty*, p 80-86, 97-99

³⁴⁵ Bataille, G. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Vol II The History of Eroticism & Vol III Sovereignty*, p 217-222

³⁴⁶ Wu, H. (2005). *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the creation of a political space*, The University of Chicago Press, p 53

³⁴⁷ Wu, H. *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the creation of a political space*, p 84

iconographic portrait has been changed from revolution to reform. Facing Mao's portrait, behind the Monument to the People's Heroes, Mao's remains are preserved in the Memorial Hall. All these images by which memory of Mao's revolutionary era remains as traces in the presence are now dissolved into the dominant perception of phantasmagoria flooding around the post-revolutionary Shanghai. This hybridity also triggers a visual dislocation between present and past, whereby an undecidable space opens for hermeneutic multiplicity. Derrida insisted that the 'undecidable' should remain as a perpetual paradox between irreplaceable singularity and endless repetition. Any image that happens must not avoid this paradox.³⁴⁸ That is to say, each image that exists as an irreplaceable difference to any others must be pure and singular rather than be reproduced as generic. Each image to be an irreplaceable difference must also be experienced in the present. Only to be experienced for now can affirm this uniqueness. Once each unique image event is experienced as an event, it just exists in the memory of the past. However, flowing along the passage of time, the memory of each unique image experienced is over and over again recollected in the present and will happen in the future. This recollection is a repetition of the experienced uniqueness, but paradoxically, the uniqueness of each image or event is irreplaceable. In this regard, all happening in presence, between what in the past would happen and what in future is not yet coming, is put under erasure as undecidable and ambiguous, neither apparently determinate nor invisibly concealed. In light of Derrida, when recurrence of spectacle in the present China of reform renders new phantasmagoria, it must also be ready to be visually distorted to encounter the absent. The absent is the spectre of Mao and his revolutionary intensification haunting within such distortion as a kind of irreplaceable heterogeneous expenditure.

³⁴⁸ Derrida, J. (2005). *Rogues*, tr., Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p 134. Derrida, J. (1977). *Limited Inc*, tr., Samuel Weber, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988, p 93. Also, this can refer to Derrida, J. (1981). *Positions*, tr., Alan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p 41-42

Conclusion

The notion of the spectacle is formed of critical inquiry into modernity. It tends to be thought of as a kind of spectre that haunts people's everyday experiences, making their lives quite un-lifelike. With the uninhibited advance of the market and technology, situationism demonstrates that alienation is not confined to the productive subsistence but infiltrates into the entirety of social practices and contaminates the whole cultural need. This omnipresent alienation is embodied as the spectacle, which is not simply a visual medium of everyday life but integrates all the individual activities into itself for an exclusive end. In this sense, the most insufferable is not the absence of pleasure in the spectacle but this spectacular rendition repeating itself as regularity to limit the subjects in boredom and also alienate them as little more than passive spectators to watch without intimate interventions. To intervene in such spectacle, resistance can be only found in the domain of arts as unintegrable excess, whereby to stir those unstable elements from regular life and reclaim the dialectical revolt against the numbed everyday life to retrieve the subjective intimacy.

Frankfurt School contends the spectacle as spectre, which not only distracts us but also totally immerses us in it, to the point that it has totally appropriated the subjects with instrumentalised reason. The overloading of commodified images that are multiplied by technologies would correct instinctual needs into commodified needs and divert free gratification to the false gratification of 'happiness' in a circle of production and consumption. Beneath such an inescapable set of circumstances, the self-incurred enchantment that is aroused as reflection of the bourgeois subjects via consumption is premature as a confusion, wherein they cannot form a self-awareness to distinguish themselves between being alienated by the commodified images and being obsessed to such images. Such restriction to narcissism partially accentuates utilitarian acquisition of commodity for accumulation but without giving in excess for loss and waste.

Benjamin's delineation of phantasmagoria is suggested as the salient feature of spectacle,

which encapsulates reality and immerses the subjects in an irresistible and restrictive enchantment. Such restrictive and phantasmagorical capsule indicates the dialectic of the *flaneur*. On one hand, the subjective experience is enchanted by the commodification but also isolated and bored of such regularity of marketplace; on the other hand, to eliminate such boredom for free experience, the stroll should be aimless and purposeless to drift as uncatchable over the reality that is fabricated as phantasmagorical, but the ubiquitous commodified images in the presence constrain the stroll from aimless drifting. Also, this dialectic of the *flaneur* cannot leave aside its association with the dialectic of images, wherein mobile images never cease to proliferate spatially to overarch the presence and visualise history as figural, but simultaneously, the passage of time is rather frozen by the phantasmagoria and history is overridden to obliterate memory and preoccupy the future.

Furthermore, such an omnipresent spectacle that overarches the presence has evolved to possess its invulnerable recuperability. Facing this recuperability, resistance seems impossible. The conventional revolution that is bureaucratically organised as a science of progress has been assimilated as an integral part of the homogeneous mechanism of production in utility; other unintegrable resistances that disrupt the regularity of everyday life are seduced, entertained with liberty, and dissipated as excess as a kind of expenditure of inner intensity as heterogeneous as violence. In light of Baudrillard, once the intensity exceeds the homogeneous imperative, which compromises and constrains resistance from excess but within the utilitarian mechanism; such excess, for the spectacle, is dissipated for a playful fun, without any purpose, as little more than radical simulacra. In this sense, lifestyle, daily language, behaviour and habits have been altered technically by the society of spectacle, so much so that being swamped by an ecstasy of overloading images for semiotic exuberance has become the norm. Human subjectivity cannot be defended from such overabundant simulacra.

Insofar as the subjects cannot escape the boundary delimited by the recuperable spectacle that hardly rejects but tempts and dissolves resistances, it should be admitted that there is no escape from the eternal recurrence of spectacle in the presence. Being restricted to such

a dilemma, transgression, as an art of governmentality, should transform the form of revolution, which embodies the dialectical logic and organizes class struggle, to be another channel for exuding the excess intensity as a fusion of incompatible fragments between the prohibition and the restriction. This methodological transformation, then, diverges from the critical tradition of Hegelianism and Marxism that insists upon the dialectic, yet follows the humanism that accentuates the subjectivity as supreme as an unverifiable existence, but towards a strategy that is lingering between structuralism and libidinal economy. On one hand, the homogeneous mechanism of production in reality that entails the imperative of utility cannot be abandoned, since it functions as a mobile and acentric structurality to technically perform the variable representation wherein images are rendered, reality is reconstructed, and lives are fabricated even though this performance is a reserved play of images to stage a heterogeneous but partial show circumscribed in the excess contents allowed by utility and rationality. On the other hand, the libidinal economy, i.e. the general economy of expenditure, indulges an unreserved play of the excess to dissipate life to embrace those prohibited contents of loss, destruction and death for a miraculous experience of being sovereign, thereby such economy can be borrowed to stir a transgression of the restrictive exudation of the excess that is allowed and delimited by the homogeneous mechanism to fuse with the prohibited elements as a symbiosis, whereby the spectacle, as a visual play of images, can be fully rather than partly heterogeneous.

To substantiate this transgression, a trans-geographic and trans-historical journey between London and Shanghai is elaborated by this thesis in the light of hermeneutics. To echo Deleuze and Guattari's demonstration of 'de-territorialisation', this trip sews different sites altogether to inquire about a visual fusion, by which not only are different images intermingled to testify the recurrence of spectacle along the spatiotemporal disparities but such fragmentary images that are scattered and limited in different productive system and cultural codes also encounter each other and channel out the transgressive excess as an unruly and seamless torrent of inner impulse to penetrate the restrictive territories.

Also, this visual hybridity is not received by a passive spectator who watches the show in the

distance but is experienced by an anatomical penetration in daily practice to zoom into those sentimental images in very details. Such an experience of 'microcosms' provides an antidote to disencumber negation and affirm disparity between the phantasmagorical experience of the London and Chinese-characteristics of spectacle in Shanghai. This comparative analysis presents two unique political-sociological milieus experienced in contrast. Oxford Circus, the City of London, the Universal Exposition, the London Eye, Madame Tussaud's wax crafts, and the London Tube (strike) visualise capitalism in an enchanting appearance of modernity. Socialism with Chinese characteristics, as is generally known, is another different development engine for the construction of the Chinese spectacle. But here, 'socialism', is neither merely a critique of the moral dubiousness of capitalism's distributive logic nor a politico-economic mechanism of production that entails the homogeneous imperative of utility and rationality, and, scientifically speaking, the proper or good use of the productive capacities of an economy. This socialism, visualised as the surplus images floating over the realistic production, has been re-written by China as an irreplaceable singularity of conglomerating together revolution and reform, marketing mechanism and disciplinary panopticism, commodity and gift, and self-interest and commitment. All such conglomerations affirm themselves on the surface as various images floating around daily practice, arranged from the super-tall showpiece of Lujiazui to the unobtrusive image of the Residence Identity Card.

Furthermore, the Chinese-characteristic spectacle reveals a representational limitation of Euro-modernity to enunciate a heterogeneous coexistence. This coexistence means to dispel the illumination of capitalism and break with the homogeneous imperative of production and its surplus consumption of commodities, instead, pursuing a different sort of society wherein another technique is exercised to aestheticise reality and substantiate governmental reasoning in the disparate aesthetic form, i.e. spectacle. This society is not only grounded on a more efficient and equitable system of production but also exists as excess effervescences. This way needs to transgress the domain of the rational science of political economy. Cult, gift-giving, myth of heroes, mass ecstasy, and carnivals, then configure the expenditure as a discrepancy to the market-oriented expenditure of excess in

the form commodity. At this point, the perspective of the general economy, the excess gratification of insatiable instinctual needs that can also be achieved through struggle, waste, sacrifice, and destruction prohibited by the commodified expenditure as the accursed share, are discussed. The Yan'an Way illuminates this alternative share of undoing the restriction of the market to awaken the human subjects from the imperative of rationality and utility. Unceasing campaigns render revolutionary images to reproduce the political intensification, by which the collective body of the masses can release and re-channel the unruly energies through another expenditure of violence, passion and thanksgiving. This dissipation of the excess as heterogeneous as revolutionary intensity no longer limits the excess life in the phantasmagoria but re-circulates it as turbulence around the coexistent and decompartmentalised expenditures to actualise a sovereign moment.

Moreover, this trans-historical journey reveals the incapacity of the regular life bored in the presence and dislocates the durability of the visualisation that is preoccupying the presence. This dislocation discontinues the regularity and commensurability that fix the mobile images in a pre-given sequence to recollect those fragmented and irreplaceable moments, which are dispersed along time and prohibited from the durable presence as unexpected images and events, i.e. the nostalgia of old Shanghai and Mao's revolutionary memory. In light of Derrida, such imaged events are ephemeral, and hardly stand still in the presence, being fleeting under erasure to slip away to the future. At this point, this journey of spectacle also merges the past, present and future as montaged as a seamless experience, whereby the subjective travel can be actualised as heterogeneous over the homogeneous reality of production.

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