THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

"Consolation, Delusions and Theory"

Peter Fuller, Jean Baudrillard and Victor Burgin - Solutions for the "Selfconscious subject", in Postmodernism ?

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by

John Carroll.

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Introduction

I wish to present this thesis in the form of four essays each dealing with specific issues that concern the subject who is informed that it lives in a period that is controversially called, "Postmodern". Because it is such a vague term and one that is difficult to define, I have attempted to investigate certain points raised by French and English intellectuals. "Postmodernism", cannot be discused without the involvement of French theory which has played a prominent role in defining what it is. Therefore I have used the critiques of Jean Francois Lyotard where necessary and in one essay I have attemped to analyse Jean Baudrillard's disarming of culture and rejection of the notion of "authenticity" and "individuality".

French theory is difficult to comprehend therefore in the parameter of British writing on culture and art, I have brought into contention aspects of the conflicting viewpoints of critic Peter Fuller and artist-theorist Victor Burgin. Both persons are controversial contributers to this debate, Fuller defends traditional values and practices in art, Burgin perpetuates, theory and demystification of certain dominant structures in both culture and society, which he regards as being inseperable. Both thinkers have abandoned Marxist theory which apparently is symptomatic of postmodernism, a general shift towards alternative theories such as psychoanalysis and deconstructionist theory by many thinkers on the "left".

The subject is extremly selfconcious of its styles and Culture and its past developments. Lyotard best describes this subject's position, it is surrounded all at once witnessing these developments but it is not entirely sure what to call it. The subject is based, according to the theorist, with the need to confront the "complexities", and maintain, "The Ancient Task for Survival". By this he means the conflict between the subjects psyche and body in its quest in coming to terms with technology and biological survival. Baudrillard dismisses the subject placing it on the same level as the "simulated", objects that surround it. The products of late capitalism which according to Baudrillard, the subject has lost control of, either in their production or meaning. Fuller and Burgin present a concern for the self concious and fragmentated subject, Fuller somehow argues for a unified subject in its "anciect task for survival ". Burgin argues for an understanding of the "Complexity", faced by the subject, whose possible "unity", is according to him a myth.

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In this thesis I intend to assume the role of this "self concious", subject and investigate some theories used, analysis made and solutions offered by these thinkers in relation to art and representation. Whether it be Fullers, "consolations in lost illusions", Baudrillards, "Delusion", or Burgins emphasis on "Theory", Chapter 1.

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The Selfconcious Postmodern Subject

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(1) There is no agreed definition of what "Postmodernism" is.

Despite the fact that as a term of reference which permeates much writing on art today it still remains an ambiguous and controversial term, whether it is used as a critique based on the condition of western society or used more specifically in cultural polemics such as in art theory. Broadly speaking postmodernism may be seen as the revaluation of the influences and structures of the enlightenment which are of European origin now in a "non-Eurocentric" age. One specific issue involves conflicting models of thought which argue for and against the notion and tradition of the "expressive self" and creation of the "Authentic" art object. These conflicting theories argue that art is either autonomus and historically transcadent or that art, its (2)production and the role of the artist is neither of these. One symptom of postmodernism is the task set before the self concious subject to redefine these issues which it believes modernism has failed to do. It must investigate and attempt to reconcile polarities which on one side wish to believe that art transcends ideology eg. the political, social and ecconomic, and the other which argues that art is mere ideology and must be treated only as a product of these factors, "Art is Art" and the opposing arguement which stresses that "Art is not art" are the basic components of this complex arguement.

The examples of such conflicting theories are numerous. The first advocating the "essential self" with a private psyche whose expression is of an organic origin and the second opposing view which argues that the "Self", is fragmented and structured within discourse. Such arguements exist within Marxism which has always found it difficult to accomadate an agreed "Aesthetic", "within its doctrines Bourgeouis aesthetics opposing Marxist aesthetics and humanist theory against deconstruction theory, all act as conflicting models of thought in this complex polemic. The dominant tradition the subject has inherited since the Enlightenment, is the "humanist" viewpoint with the individual as the center of subjectivity and creativity. These notions originate earlier in the Renaissance, but it is with eighteenth century Enlightenment values that the humanist tradition in the West derives most of its origins and structures. It's three prominent discourses of sciences, moralities and the Arts have however, been questioned, activated and subverted with more force and depth within twentieth century Modernism than at any time previous to this.

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Althueserian Marxism has reduced the subject to ideology and (3) opposing this Marcusean Marxism finds within the "Aesthetic Dimension", a transcedence that elevates both subject and art object beyond the economic and social restrictions normally set by traditional forms of Marxism. Another issue raised is the totalising effects of a single "universal language", or discourse which has been rejected and viewed with suspicion among deconstructionists. It is agreed that the attrocities of Stalin and Hitler's social ordering with its disasterous effects has its origins in the Enlightenment. Twentieth century psychoanalysis and structuralism has decentered the subject, subverting notions of centres of origin which imply ownership, property and power and share with Marxism an opposition to such factors which both perceive as being the force behind bourgeois and capitalist values. The arguements are complex within this polemic and are continuously undergoing redefinition.

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Modernism placed emphasis upon the notion af a universal sensibility and on the idea of chronological advance and progress as if in the form of a grand narrative. Sections of the Modernist Movement (which is used generally here) aspired according to Enlightenment values towards a totalising homogenous universal language with its origins in Reason, (Habermas regards modernity as a yet incomplete project where the three main enlightenment discourses, arts, science and morality may be realised through technology). In many modernist manifestoes the past technological advances were downgraded and pretensions to break radically with the past were claimed. Modernism at times aspired to restart almost as if at zero. Futurism advocated a secular dynamic and technological society based on speed and progress. Such totalising effects were however to be manipulated by Hitler and Stalin in their attempts at social reordering with the aid of technology. Dadaism which later influenced Pop Art in the sixties and Conceptualism of the seventies negated "bourgeois values" of the past creating a form of antiart, which was antiaesthetic and a critique of the tradition the twentieth century inherited. This inheritance contained residues of the Enlightenment and of Romanticism but was characterised and moulded chiefly by capitalism and the influences of the industrial production.

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Unlike modernism the postmodernist period does not carry the same optimism for progress. It is impossible to think of it in terms of the progressive optimism associated with the Enlightenment. Technology which has replaced industrial production carries no enlightened value and there is no utopian vision of progress, rather an uneasiness about (4) its possible consequences. According to Lyotard the belief in a grand

historical narrative and a chronological sense of order has now disappeared as well as any power to emancipate through gaining control of production as classic Marxism stresses. Technology does not respond to a demand based on human needs; it is no longer associated with the idea of progress but rather its development has its own momentum regardless of these needs. What Lyotard is saying is that just as a "natural utopia", is an impossibility, a "technological utopia", (as perceived in enlightenment terms) is also an impossibility. Lyotard concludes that the subject is fragmented and decentered, not in the sense that it is entirely disintegrated into oblivion but the selfconcious subject is confronted with the challenge of "complexity" and also with the "terrible ancient task for survival". The analysis of Lyotard is defensible but the difficulty with decentering is that it leaves us with the task of trying to reconcile a rigid discourse Which stresses that the subject exists in language with what is perhaps called the volatile amorphousness of biology; the individual condition that is the make up of each subject. Theory like Lyotards stresses that subjectivity now exists in society where the subject is no longer the center of it, which means that the subject can no longer trust a singular identity or have faith in one as in traditional humanism. This however may not be a necessary evil. Whereas Lyotard presents the antithesis of what liberal humanism advocates, it is not necessarily anti-humanitarian. Lyotard fears the possibility that there exists only one artificial identity that submits the subject to central control and totalitarian language. Lyotard argues for a hetrogenous system of artificial languages.

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Chapter 1.

Footnotes

The Selfconcious Postmodernist Subject (1) Jürgen Habermas and Francois Lyotard have played influential roles in recent debates on the exact definition of what "Postmodernism" is. Habermas believes that modernity is still an incomplete project which since the Enlightenment has still to be completed. The Enlightenment defined three autonomus spheres of reason: the Sciences, morality and the arts. Habermas believes that such discoveries may still be the fundamental structures within western society but they are structures which must be harmoniously integrated. He believes this may be achieved with the new information technologies.

Lyotard regarded as a "political postmodernist", is sceptical of such an idea of "social management" which he compares to deterministic French Enlightenment values and German idealistic fantasies. Habermas believes that the seperate realms of "experts", and "public" may be fused but Lyotard sees in this the possibilities of totalarianism and concencus under force. The "Scientific Social Management", of Hilter's idealism is proof of dangerous effects of Enlightenment values. Lyotard argues for a plurality of artificial languages rather than one universal language. (2)

There are numerous arguements for and against the autonomus aesthetic. In Marxism Louis Althusser reduced the aesthetic to ideology, in the marxist methaphor of "base-superstructure" the aesthetic as part of the superstructure may act in a reciprocal manner. It may influence the economic base but according to Althusser in the "last instance", the economic base influences everything. The humanist arguement ignores the social and economical arguing that the aesthetic transcends historical and social specifities. Theorising on such matters originates mainly among "left", thinkers however the humanist viewpoint may be argued for by F.R. Leavis, Kenneth Clark and Benedetto Croce who wrote extensively on the spiritual within expression and the aesthetic. Among "left" thinkers in English writing there are interesting conflicts between John Berger and Nicos Hadjinacalou, Terry Atkinson and Peter Fuller, Victor Burgin and Peter Fuller. In American debates parallel arguements are carried by Hal Foster and Carter Radcliffe.

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In the "Aesthetic dimension", Herbert Marcuse as a Marxist opposes the reductionism of Althusser. He writes of a "Menschlichkeit" (a concrete universal humanity) which no particular class can incorporate or economy determine. The aesthetic dimension he believes cannot be grounded in the world outlook of a particular class not even Marx's proletariat.

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"Defining the Postmodern", by Jean Francois Lyotard. London; Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1986 page 6. Chapter 2.

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The Romantic Individual And The Silent Majority

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(1) Jean Baudrillard's theories of "Simulation" and "simulacra", present difficulties when considering the validity of French theory. One of its weaknesses being its tendency to generalise at the expense of the particular. Baudrillard brings a definition of postmodernism to one logical if not extreme conclusion. He uses a platonic term, the "simulacra" in defining the fundamental changes since the Renaissance. Unlike the humanist or indeed the modernist affinity with the object, the essence to be found within it or with the specifity of materials, Baudrillard assumes the role of the iconoclist. He reveals his distrust of the object prefering to use a term like "simulacra" to define the historical and material devolopments of the past. Baudrillard reveals what is symptomatic of postmodernism, the subjects uncertainty of what technology can do considering it no longer caters exclusively and strictly for our human needs. Because of the loss of any "sense" reading in representation or of reading into it at all , Baudrillard describes the subject as being "manic". More correctly speaking he makes no reference to "subjects" or a "subject" but replaces it with generalised terms; "the masses", "the silent majority" and at times "the cultural bloodstock". This immediately brings into question not so much his analysis, but his use of rhetoric and the obvious fact that he ignores the specific and the particular. His account is by and large pessimistic, at times melancholic but always melodramatic. Baudrillard's historical analysis carries some validity and beneath the rhetoric his social and historical background lends credibility to this arguement.

Baudrillard writes that the first form of "counterfeit" or (3)"simulacra" was born in the Renaissance and was related to metaphysical questions of reality as opposed to appearances. This was the age of humanism and the humanist ideals of the Florentines. Theories emerge with the concious notion of what expression should be. It was a science that stressed that good painting centered upon the physical presence of the body and that the rendering of this affected and communicated with the mind. This made the spectator respond to the emotions depicted in the painting. Through physiognomy the artist should thoroughly study how to render emotions by means of gesture of facial expression or bodily expression. These conventions were proposed in a tableau or a compilation published with calculations and rules, Vasari writes -"Greatness of art, in one is born of diligence, in another of study, in this one of imitation, in that other of knowledge and the senses". Buudrillard comments correctly that the criteria for this sign finding was nature and was structured or the law of nature as the law of value.

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The second force of Simulacra according to Baudrillard was with the emergence of capitalism and industrialisation which introduced the "production order". Signs were no longer derivative from nature but from productivity, human production was based on market values ending what Marx defined as "primal labour" and the emergence of the "division of labour" and the consequences of "alienation". His models were the machine, energy and system of labour itself. The singular crafted form was replaced by the plural reproducible form of series. For Marx this meant the triumph of "exchange value" over "use value".

This was the age of capitalism, the use value in painting becomes (5) the exchange value in the easel painting. The notions of technological

progress, class struggle and alienation emerge with Bourgeois sensibility. It can be argued that modernism, its avant-gardes, its concepts and strategies for emancipation are constructs of this Bourgeois sensibility.

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Baudrillard concludes with the "age of simulation" which is his term for the postindustrial and postmodern period. The present condition where "power no longer exists in the means to production but in the powers of representation which is the code" the value or "primal production no longer exist in Baudrillard's critique of the (6) postindustrial technocratic society". Lyotard adds that "alienation" is no longer an issue whether it be from a Marxist, Romantic or Avantgarde modernist point of view. Marxism in this sense is equated with outmoded Romantism or Theology. This change is of course historically determined reflecting changes where impact is felt strongly in politics, economics and above all in cultural activities, mutating the structures of representation and registring the "gradual loss of the real and objective world". Baudrillard ironically asumes the role of the realist in arguing that "the real no longer exists". A sense of joyful nihilism and apocalyptic pessimism not unlike that of Nietzche

In the Renaissance philosiphy of humanism, 'its' humanist images were composed of representations of what was believed "real", by an (7) image of reality like Albertis "window", through which the spectator viewed the world. The origins of perspective resided in the mind but was based upon empirical observation in the natural world. In this sense it was the property of the self sufficient humanist individual, the subject. This, it was believed guaranteed a signifier (ie. the painting) which rendered truthfully what reality was. Truth was signified by the faithful rendering of nature by empirical observation. Nature was the core of this ideology and was the ultimate referent which corresponded with the belief that man could create an exact mirror reflection of what "reality" was. Baudrillard in a typical platonic fashion calls this the "Renaissance counterfeit".

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The Nineteenth Century however with it's industrial development wittnessed a desire towards a meaning which lay beyond natural (8) appearances and mirror doubles. Kants "Critique of Judgement" (9) aesthetics and Burkes "Sublime, are important developments and as a result of these the critic emerged responding to the mystery to be found in the object such as the painting. More correctly in Kantian terms he (the subject) regarded the painting as the manifestation of the nearest one could get to experiencing the sublime. In other words the painting was the agent of the "sublime" which is really above any cognitive evaluation. Baudelaire emerged as perhaps one of the first modern (10)critics claiming "modernity" with a form of criticism and writing that was as expressive as the paintings he described, those of Delacroix for example. His English counterpart was John Ruskin who not only championed Turner but did so much to raise the visual as an agent of the sublime to the same level as poetry which previously was respected as holding a higher place above painting, the former being regarded as a form of ill@stration. It is therefore no surprise that in postmodernism Peter Fuller has rediscovered Ruskin and heralds him as a pioneer of postmodernity, a pioneer of what Fuller calls "consolations in lost (11)illusions". (This will be explained at a later stage).

Politically speaking, Romanticism, in ways was a protest against profit seeking utilitarianism and exploiting capitalism. The subject in Marxist terms was alienated as a result of this condition and it is from Nineteeth Century Romanticism that the heroic artist emerges in all cultural activities and indeed to a lesser extent, the art critic. The (12) glorification of Delacroix as a modern artist by Baudelaire can be compared in Modernism with Greenbergs appraisal and criticism of (13) Pollock and Abstract Expressionism. Romanticism rebelled against the Enlightenmentnotion of reason and glorified the individuals dilemma. Revolution was directed against production in the form of violence and longing to return to natural values.

The individual dilemma constituted the "ego sublime", a sense of "godhood, and selfhood, in the heroic creator who battled against the elements of nature and the conditions inflicted upon him by society. In many ways the instrument of subversion against this society was the painting or the expressed idea through the painting as in the case of Turner and Delacroix.

By doubting the perfectibility of "Enlightenment man" and the logic of the universe the Romantic absurdly shares both the views of certain types of modernist (such as Dadaism and Surrealism) avantgardism and subversion in the Twentieth Century, but ironically with the detached apathy of Baudrillard. It is negating the reason of Enlightenment thought that Romanticism might find common ground with Baudrillard. But that is all because culture for the theorist is not revolutionary, it is weighed down by it's own history, it's pretensions, it's institutions and markets in postmodernism.

There is no heroic self in the society of simulacra. Baudrillard might share the same concern for the subject as Lyotard does in a society that is totalised under one central language controled by

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information technologies but his writings reveal more a detached proclaimation of apocalypse and profound pessimism. He accuses the "silent majority" of being the cause for it's own self destruction. There is no romantic outsider but a mass of characterless insiders. The tradition we have inherited and the structures we have formed in accordance with this are the mechanisms of thought that a deconstructionist like Lyotard might wish to penetrate and decompose. However Baudrillard appears to accept it with apathy and almost negative joy.

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The third party to emerge so far, Peter Fuller continues in many ways the residues of what emerged in the Enlightenment as a "Marxist of (14) sorts" and materialist he defends the "kernels of truth", to be found in (15) the art object which for him incite moments of "becoming". As a materialist he avoids terms that are parts of "bourgeois jargon", terms like "essence" or "transcendence" and maintains that through biological materialism he is not idealising personal expression (like Benedetto (16) Croce) but justifying these individual "kernels of truth". Fuller's arguement must be considered in the context of postmodernism with it's emphasis upon the fragmented subject and to use Baudrillard's term, wich the "implosion of meaning".

Romanticism gave modernism the critic, artist and the painting not as a mirror illistration but as a "symbol" which implied that the subject fused with the object. The painting communicated without any doubt it was believed on the basis of a spiritual rapport rather than by scientific cognition. The interpretation of the body as a vehicle of human expression deriving from an interpretation of Aristotles poetics in the Renaissance gave way to the Sublime and the influence of Kant. The twentieth Century emerged with developments in monopoly capitalism, notions of modernity and the avantgarde when painting moved towards a purified iconic art, self referential in which reference in the old sense was abandoned or minimalised and the problems and concerns of form and material were of prime issue. Fainting searched for it's own theme to be found within the limitations of it's own medium, in the (17)autonomy of it's form or in the "Significant Form", (Clive Bell).

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The shift from a emphasis on perceived phsylognomy to the body of the artist himself reaches it's apotheosis in a painter like Pollock Formalism therefore was perceived as the high language of modernism. However in postmodernism if Baudrillard's critique is to be accepted, this period does not imply "after" modernism or after the high language of modernism. It means the collapse of meaning and criticism which is replaced by simulation and the simulacra with . no inner depths or pretensions to carry meaning but is empty discourse where signs no longer refer to themselves. Can this be interpeted as Baudrillards formalism for the Eighties?, the self referential signifier?, A formalism that does not hint at any inner meaning or subjectivity?. The subject is totally implicated in the process, manipulates and is manipulated?.

In modernism the heroic self was either alienated or experienced a form of anxiety because the encounter of artist and object disposed him or divided him from himself, the late grey monochromes of Rothko could be interpreted as the personal romantic gesture brought to it's ultimate conclusion in the period of modernism. Rothko like his predecessors Turner and Delacroix placed emphasis on the individual private psyche, but Rothko brought it to it's extreme, abandoning nature he infused the

object with his subjectivity to the extent that he pushed representation to it's limits, perhaps to it's extreme, the end of representation. He in a sense was the culmination of the Romantic project. However in Baudrillard's critique representation is taken for granted in the society of the spectacle or the simulated society. The subject which is totally implicated and subsumed does not differ from the objects that surround him. Therefore using this analysis as a guideline (not as an absolute) it implies that if the world is populated, less by things than by simulacra and if everything including the fragmented subject exists only to be endlessly recomposed and resimulated, at this stage the distinction between representation and reality becomes irrelevant. Is Baudrillard correct?.

Chapter 2

Footnotes

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The Romantic Individual And The Silent Majority (1) Jean Baudrillard theories are published in simplified forms in two publications, "In the shadows of silent majorities" and in "Simulations" Burgin offers a sharp and concise definition of what the simulacra is, he writes that it is a copy of which there is no original

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See the "Beaubourg Effect - Implosion and deterance, where Baudrillard uses the cultural centre as a metaphor of western society and it's institutions. There are no individuals in Baudrillards masses, they consume and are being consumed. Following the Althusserian or Lacanian viewpoint, Baudrillard argues that the spectator recognises or consumes nothing but an imaginary ego in cultural artifacts. In "apocalyptic" fashion Baudrillard regards the consuming masses as being responsible for their own degeneration where culture is reduced to commodification. The Beaubourg is compared to a supermarket or to use his own term "Hypermarket".

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Jean Baudrillard, Simulations page 83 - 152.

(4)

In the context of this essay the justifications Fuller uses to defend his interpetation of the relative autonomy of the aesthetic may originate with the Florentines tableau with it primacy of the physiognomany in representation.

See also, "Towards a theory of expression", Art Monthly no. 36, 1980.

(5) John Berger presents an interesting Marxist analysis in simplified language on the commodification of the easel painting and it's consequences in <u>"Ways</u>

of Seeing", 1972.

(6) See I.C.A. Document. Documents 4 1986.

(7)

Alberti, Leone Battista, 1404 - 1472. Developed concepts of perspective as well as Paolo Ucello in Florence during the Renaissance.

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(8)

Kants Critique of Judgement. Kant Immanual 1724 - 1804. See Israel Knox. <u>The aesthetic theories of Kant, Hegal and Schopenhaver</u> New Jersey Humanities Press, 1986.

(9)

Edmund Burke "A Philosophical Engiry into the Origins of our Ideas of the sublime and beautiful", 1757.

(10) Baudelaire in "Modern Painters",

See "The painter of modern life and other essays", translated and edited by Jonathan Mayne, New York: Da Cape 1986.

(11)

Peter Fuller, <u>Images Of God.</u> Explains his reasons for believing this in essays "John Ruskin; A Radical Conservative" and "William Morris: A Conservationist Radical".

(12) Baudelaire in "Modern Painters"

(13) Clement Greenberg "The Avant-Garde and Kitsch" 1939.

(14)

Peter Fuller abandoned orthodox marxism, in 1980 his writings in "<u>Beyond</u> <u>the Crises in Art</u>", reveals his disillusionment with Althusserian Marxism and in 1982 not unlike Victor Burgin the residue of socio economic marxist analysis is replaced more by psychoanalysis. Fuller opting for Kleinian theory and Burgin for Freudian and Lacanian theory. In "Images of God" in 1984 and his subsequent activities published in "Art and Design", Fuller openly negates some of his former standing points as a Marxist.

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P. Fuller in "defence of Art" in "Beyond the crises in Art".

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Fuller writes that the body is the source of "authentic expression", which motivated by the imagination injects into the process feeling (expression).

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Clive Bell. See Jerome Stolnitz, <u>Aesthetics</u> Victor Burgin, Modernism in the Work of Art. <u>The End of Art Theory</u> 1986. Peter Fuller, Modernism and the Mother-Infant Relationship.

Art and Psychanalysis 1983.

Chapter 3. "Consolations" and "Delusions" Peter Fuller maintains that one reason why John Ruskin and William Morris can be regarded as postmodernists is the fact that they distrusted and feared the consequences of modernist technology in the Nineteenth Century, despite the fact that it was popularly embraced by Victorians in general. Ruskin advocated "A truth to nature", Morris a "Joy to nature" and "Joy in labour" and now in the postmodernist Eighties Fuller writes of and prescribes, what he calls "a consolation in lost illusions". What all these have in common is an underlying emphasis on man's necessity to preserve his links with nature and the biological roots in what are regarded as "difficult times". In the case of artistic production Marx best described such processes as "primal labour". Fuller calls this the defense and preservation of a form of "material expression" based on the imagination and the interaction of the body with materials.

Greenberg in his essay "The avantgarde and kitsch" wrote; "The failure of individuals to express their inwardness converts them into a mass whereby they are denoted as having in common merely their (2) membership in the human species of animal or sinner. Unlike the early optomism of Walter Benjamin who believed that art and technology could be reconciled (Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction), Greenberg by 1939 realised that the segration of a high art of expression or indeed a specific culture was gradually breaking down and was being swamped by mass media and kitsch culture. Kitsch as the product of capitalism and technology could annihilate what he believed modernism had strived for; a pure art form and the "autonomus painting". In other words a practise that aspired to a specifity and autonomy of statement based

upon it's own specific materials and within it's own limitations. A segrated high art which by narrowing and raising it would be "the expression of an absolute in which all relations and contradictions would either be resolved or be beside the point" Greenberg described this as "art for arts sake" and "pure poetry", stressing also that "subject matter or content would be something to be avoided like a plague". However he concluded his essay writing that "today we no longer look towards socialism for a new culture - as inevitably one will appear, once we do have socialism. Today we look to socialism simply (3) for the preservation of whatever living culture we have right now".

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Fuller has continuously condemned "the art for art's sake", of Greenberg as a failed project, one which did not by itself become an instrument of political ideology but used as ideology by the "freemarket enterprising capitalism" of the West, during the cold war in the fifties. More specifically his description of Pollock sums up his attitude on this issue, quoting John Berger, Fuller writes, "these gestures might be passionate and frenzied but to us they could mean no more than the tragic spectacle of a deaf mute trying to talk". He continues, "Pollock finally in desperation made his theme the (5)impossibility of finding a theme". In other words despite the fact that in his paintings a "Romantic, individual quest can be seen, it was according to Fuller a failed vision. Quoting Berger, Fuller summarises his dismissal of the Abstract expressionists. However it can be seen that there are similarities between Fullers "Lost consolations," in postmodernism and Greenbergs resolution concerning the preservation of (6)"whatever living culture we have right now" written at the end of Classic Modernism and at the onset of the second world war. The

"ancient task for survival, "becomes more relevant in Fuller because in the eighties he somehow shares a similar anxiety and pessimism. Not unlike Greenberg who feared that Kitsch would annihilate the rich symbolic dimension of collective life. The English critic jealously guards the traditional practices in fine art and opposes alternative media. Having negated the Conceptual Movement in the seventies he continues in the eighties to defend the traditional practices in a defensive manner as if they are under continous siege. Being committed to Marxist materialism in the seventies Fuller accused Greenberg of indulging in a form of intellectual élitism and of advocating an art that was both inverted and lacking any persuasive theory or "theme as in Pollocks case". Fuller accused Greenberg of indulging in a form of intellectual elitism to the extent that it promoted an art with pretensions to transcend historical specifities which is a direct violation of basic Marxist dialectic materialism. However Fullers "consolations in lost illusions," are a direct contradiction of what he implied earlier. There appears to be the same air of resignation or panic towards what the present holds, or towards what the future condition of art in society might be. As well as a longing to preserve what he believes has already been achieved there is an undercurrent of reaction in his writing. Fuller like his predecessors, Ruskin and Morris (and this could include Greenberg to a certain extent) share a longing for a symbolic order with its roots in nature which now because of the complexities of society is difficult if not even impossible to find except perhaps in a residual form of Romanticism.

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Fuller's "lost illusions", carry a longing for a security to be found in some organic society which he knows of course, is now an

impossibility. "If one comes to terms with oneself, it is possible to overcome the historic crisis in our response to nature, to begin again (8)and see. He ends several essays with the same conclusion", Having seen nature, to create illusory and genuinely consoling worlds again, based (9) on imaginative transformation". By this he obviously means the imagination stimulated by nature, which informs the body, the agent that transforms the material and manifests notions of "Consoling worlds", in objects such as paintings.

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By stating this many questions arise, does Fuller imply that it is necessary and perhaps even possible to reinstate the mysteries of nature via the process of empirical observation, not unlike that which Ruskin proposed in the nineteenth century in order to cope with a society lacking any symbolic order? That perhaps it may cut through, meaning "truth to nature,"the multitudes of ideologies and complex networks of postmodernist late capitalist society? Or does it simply mean that Fuller professes a panic stricken nostalgia?

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Fuller is not naieve and his essays explain the impossibilities of an organic society. He still insists however on what he calls, "the relatively constant elements of human experience and potentiality". The scientific and philosophical sources of Fullers argument come from the (11)anthropological philosophy of Sebastiano Timpanaro and development of (12)Kieinian psychoanalysis based upon the mother-infant relationship. Timpanaro argues as a materialist that man as a biological being, has remained essentially unchanged from the beginnings of civilisation to the present. Although he admits that the underlying biological conditions are mediated by socio-economic historical experience and it's cultural forms, "this mediation provides no basis for that still common

kind of reduction in which the biological is a mere datum...."Timpanaro insists that the biological preceeds everything, preceeds the base and (13) superstructure. This is the antithesis of Louis Althussers argument which emphasises the placing of everything, origins and all within the economic base. The economic base influences the superstructure of which idiology and art are a part. Althusser allows that the superstructure may influence the base in a reciprocal manner, i.e. that art may influence productivity, but in the "last instance" it is economics. Thus art isbut the representation of ideology and must be assessed in socio-economic terms. Timpanaro however places biology before the base and before the superstructure.

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Returning to Fuller, what is at issue here, is Fullers solutions as to how the subject must now confront the present condition in which it is immersed, a condition that has a "historical crisis with nature". (14)In an essay on Cecil Collins, the English painter, for example; Fuller argues that the spiritual element in his work must not be overlooked and be demythologised mechanically, (perhaps he means by Althusserian means) or rationally because such processes neglect what he calls the importance, of the continuation into adult life of childhood feelings of fusion and separation and of the capacity to mingle subjective and objective experiences, (which is the basis of Kleinian theory). He concludes his essay, "The consoling illusion of God has been pricked forever. Perhaps we have to learn to gaze like grown up children or like Collin's fool who can still sustain "moments of illusion" in which they (15)can see, and know not to challenge their wounded angels". Without Fullers materialist and psychoanalytic theory supporting his argument, this form of writing suggests nothing but rhetoric and a form of naive



idealism as a solution. On its own it presents nothing rational or decisive but a "consolation" which if accepted as gospel, is all the subject can now hope to preserve for itself. As a "consolation", a device used to soothe the victims injuries after suffering from shattered hopes and ideals it may work, but there is more a sense of melancholic mourning in Fullers statement. There is still something missing.

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Fullers solution to finding oneself within postmodernism lies with the recognition that tradition and apparently a sense of national identity must be preserved. Opposed to modernisms "Significant form, "(Clive Bell) and selfreferential painting of Greenbergs formalism. Fuller writes that, "The British tradition has consistently rejected those aspects of modernism which seem to lead away from nature, our artists have shown a preference for an aesthetic derived from imaginative responses to natural form rather than significant (16)form". There appears to be a sense of self congratulatory national approval and international dismissal in this statement. What Fuller attempts to do here is define a national character that boasts of its insularity and anti modernity while at the same time being postmodern. It is interesting to note that the postmodern society of simulation that Baudrillard writes of finds its apothessis in American technology and mass media culture. The irony lies in Baudrillards French theory which is best suited to describe this overwhelming American culture which because of market strategies has subsumed all of western society, his French theory equally applies to the manic technological progress in Japan. Therefore the selfconcious and confused reader may ask what is this "Postmodernism" ? Fuller informs the readers that it lies with the

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recognition of traditional values and with the realisation of an authentic British culture with it's roots in nature. "It's best artists may have used modernism but they have always remained for the better outside of it or indeed fiencely opposed to it (?) Fuller presents a form of Nationalism proud of it's insularity. Baudrillard on the other hand informs the readers that culture is disarmed and that there is an implosion of meaning and values. Baudrillard applies French Metaphysics to the overwhelming effects of American mass media culture. Fuller's postmodernism takes the form of a Regional insularity and opposing this Baudrillard writes of the totalising and Universal. effect of mass media manja

KUNNIN .

Two exhibitions in the Eighties reveal the ironies in defining the postmodern or how such exhibitions spurn both writers to do so. In Paris Jean Francois Lyotard organised the "Les Immaterieux", exhibition in the Pompidou (the Beaubourg) centre. In this exhibition Lyotard the writer Jorge Luis Borges metaphor of a universal library containing a heterogonous collection of languages. Lyotard fused art objects, electronic systems and representations with verbal accounts of postmodern theory. There was no segregation and each language form integrated and overlapped Lyotard's project in mind was not to alienate the already fragmented and decentered postmodern subject but to integrate it with all the other constructs of language. There was no differentiation between objects and the human body which according to poststructuralist thought is now electronically displaced within systems of codes and discourses. Biology and the physical senses are subsumed and manipulated by this electronic and artifical system. One exhibit revealed the possibilities of the manufacture of "human skin", this being

achieved synthetically. Another offered the possibilities of disrupting gender structures in society by the methods of genetic engineering, revealing that such systems can displace the biological roots of the body. With the negation of the concept of alienation Lyotard argued that the subject is not so much outside the system but within it. The subject must ask what is "it" within this system?. Rather than "what" is it against?. In other words who am I within this system ? Rather than according to Modernist and Vanguardism, "what am I up against?".

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The irony however was that this exhibition could be interpeted as the French intellectuals attempt to place American mass media culture within a French museum. It was like placing Theodor Adorno's nightmare of Los Angeles within the Beaubourg. Baudrillards writing is symptomatic of this irony when he compares the Beaubourg to an American supermarket or "hypermarket" as he perfered to call them.

The second exhibition was the "Paradise lost", exhibition in the Barbican Centre, London. It was an exhibition focusing on the works of the BritishNeo Romantic painters and the Neo Romantic culture that emerged in Britain during the thirties and the second world war. The period in question was 1935 to 1945. The impression one received from the exhibition was the glorification of the subject and the celebration of alienation and insularity. The Neo Romantics represent for Fuller the postmodernist condition, a longing for traditional values and an idealistic belief in an organic society. The works of Cecil Collins and John Craxton depict "Holy Innocents", and "Romantic Fools" embracing the modernism of Picasso and Surrealism with British Legend. The issue here is that Fuller is all too aware of the impossibilities of organic societies and the pitfalls of nostalgia and misguided nationalism. He however defends "British Pastoralism" as a possible criteria for defining the postmodern condition and that is by resorting to a form of reaction. During the war when Britain was under siege from the continent the "War Artists Advisory Committee", under the chairmanship of (Sir) Kenneth Clark use the "Adolescent", vision of the Neo-Romantics to depict heroic individuals and the lush pastorals as a weapon. The Neo-Romantics signified what was proud, nationalist and insular in a Britain under siege.

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Fuller has condemned the C.I.A. for promotind a "liberal, free subjective art" as expounded by capitalist ideologies of the Americans during the cold war in the fifties, now resorts to the Neo-(18)Romantics and pastoralism perhaps not in an overtly political way for he raises the pitfalls of such notions but attempts perpetuate "a British tradition" which is equally as ideological as "American painting" (abstract expression) in the cold war fifties. Like Ruskin who accused Whistler, the painter of placing "aesthesis" before the divine "theoria" by absorbing French impressionism and introducing it to a British (19)public, Fuller could be interpeted as defending a "tradition" under seige and a tradition he believes is isolationist, romantic and self sufficient. A Britian which is not under seige from Hitler and nazism (20)but French theory that intellectualises Americam mass media culture.

In some of the ruined paintings by John Piper or Paul Nash, these pictures are always devoid of human incident or real tortured war victims. Instead the ruins suggest that the destruction of the British cultural heritage in all it's invented glory was too profound to invite narrative treatment involving the human figure, they are fuelled by nostalgia and inclined towards melodrama. Fuller it must be stressed is fairly critical of the Neo-Romantics and he rightly points out that war artists such as Nash and Piper were like everyone, in the war but they were not part of it. They were safely distanced from the horrific realities. The big question concerning Fuller is why does he so jealously guard the traditional practices of painting ? The British tradition he defends consists of painting and sculpture and no alternative media are considered. Facing the complexities of the Postmodernity Fuller beleives in the preservation of painting as a segregated practise : a medium through which the subject may realise it's potentialities with biology and nature.

ALC: NO

John Craxton and Graham Sutherland may deserve respect as painters of nature but why does Fuller not consider a conceptual artist like Hamish (21) Fulton ? who is at odds with with the conceptual generation from which he emerged. He uses photography and language texts to document walking projects through the English landscape which evoke in him spiritual and romantic values not unlike those Ruskin wrote of during his walks through the "pastoral". The point raised here is that Fuller's defence of traditional mediums is valid if from a preservationist point of view, but if he advocates a segregation and elevation of these practises as "Kernels of (22) truth" and he deliberately negates photography or other mediums as lesser arts or not arts at all as in Conceptual art. His stand must be questioned.

In postmodernism there is a virtual stagnation of pure languages and the contamination of individual languages is practically inevitable, this cannot be denied, Greenberg realised this in his essay "Avant Garde and Kitech" written in 1939. However Fuller advocates firstly a distinct British tradition and like Ruskin who attacked Whistler he defends a insularity which he believes is the correct approach towards the

"complexity" of our time through one way only. This is achieved by resorting to a "tradition" and involving the traditional media only.

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It is not a question of moving from the old to the new and treating painting as a moribund practise with a preference for more advanced technological ways because technology may not carry an adequate solution either. But the segregation of art from the other media reveals vested intrests that lie outside of aesthetics. Greenberg's preservation of painting corresponds in ways with Fuller's defence against the overwhelming mass media culture which in fact permeates subsumes everyone in varying degrees Baudrillard correctly points out, "That power lies in representation not in production" added to this, it lies with those who have the means to exploit technology and can control these representations.

If Fuller ressorts to tradition and "consolations" then it is interesting to compare a defence of a "British tradition" with Baudrillard's intellectualisation of American culture. Fuller defends an isolationist approach like Ruskin against Whistler but as a materialist he holds a very uneasy position as a "left" thinker with Scruton who defends what he calls "the rights of Bourgeois Man". Fuller congratulates and cries wolf about tradition, Roger Scruton the conservtive thinker plays Ruskin when writes that it is one of the strengths of British culture, that (23)it has never produced sociological theories of itself. The "theory of itself" in question could be Lyotard or Baudrillard as far as Scrutonis concerned, "What is remarkable is that Paris has become the capital of European reaction; the entire trotskyite "alternative" is tainted by the (24)French exorbitation of language". Does Fuller therefore as a marxist and materialist of sorts react as reactionary towards the "complexities"? or is his "authentic" and "ancient task for survival" a valid point considering

such "relative human potentialities" are struggling to maintain their biological roots in nature ?

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An opposing view might argue that it is absurd to try and understand the world through the body and the physical senses of the subject because it interpets the world throught the media. In other words, unlike Timpanaros arguement, the subject knows more of it's biological constitution through the various medias and artifical languages than it does through any analytical or empirical analysis of its self. Unlike fifteen century humanism the body is no longer the measure of all things no more than nature the criteria for judgement. The gradual evolution away from the body is nearing its climax there is now the electronic displacement of the body. It's bodily senses no longer provide sufficient evidence of what reality is.

It can be argued that it is no longer necessary to build with the materials of the earth itself. Therefore is the "meta-dogma" (Scruton's term used to describe French theory) necessary a theory onto itself ? If Fuller is responsible for "Kernels truth" to be found in the traditional art practices exclusively, is Baudrillards theory pretentious ? and does it aspire to transcend the economic base ?

Baudrillard operates in the opposite fashion to Fuller, there are no "wounded angels" or "consolations" in his arguement. Whereas Fuller at times exaggerates the individual with rhetoric, Baudrillard only writes of "silent majorities" and the "cultural bloodstock". His detatched aloofness neglects the particular when he writes, "It can no longer be a question of expression or representation but only of the simulation of an unexpressable (25) social [theory] For a start Baudrillard makes no reference to persons (first, second, third singular or plural); he writes of the general, neglecting what is specific. The implications that he presents are that in the post-industrial technocratic society, the notion of the self and individual with imaginative faculties is now minaturised under the weight of it's own culture. The subject is involved in an unthinking assimilation rather than with any critical involvement in everything it does. The subject is therefore reduced to a consumer of ideas rather than a producer of ideas, "There is no longer any social signified to give force (26(to a political signifier".

Baudrillard writes the liberating violence (reason) of explosive revolution and progress symptomatic of modernism, is now replaced by the "implosion" of a culture which is passive melancholy. A society constantly consuming and unquestioning, "The silent majority is no longer social but (27)statistical and whose only mode of appearance is that of the survey". Meaning is no longer constructed or even mediated by the subject, consumption dominates all activity and there is a continuous reproduction of endless repetitions of meaningless signs and codes. The image the (28)mirror of reality, the symbol with meaning is replaced by the spectacle which has no value or meaning except within itself. Unlike the modernist "symbol" the "spectacle" is an empty sign. The subject is minaturised and is absorbed into a complex netword of endless ever present cycles of codes where the spectacle operates via the imagination causing facination that demands no evaluation or intelligent reading. Rather it makes the viewer whole at the price of submission and delusion. Therefore in Fuller there is "consolations in lost illusions" and in Baudrillard the spectacle that makes the viewer whole at the price of delusion. The fragmented and almost bodiless postmodernist subject has either "consolations" or "delusions"! Fuller offers an absorption into an "experience" that may resurrect or

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retrieve certain natural values and "truths" but these however must be absorbed in an detatched manner. In not attacking Collin's "angel" the subject may experience something but it must be sceptical of what it experiences because it may be only a "lost illusion" !. Rejecting the biological condition of the body Baudrillard in his detached manner and deterministic authority claims that "Everything is concentrated in the brain and it is in genetic codes which alone sum up the operational (27)defination of being". Does Fuller in his writing imply that there is "a theology of truth" and therefore perhaps an unexplained secrecy to which infact ideology still belongs ? Does Baudrillard present the subject with a "sacred text"; a joyful and nihilistic theory that passes in discourse as a type of transcendental gospel ? Baudrillard in one sense uncritically assumes the traditional role of the intellectual analyst of society, a prophet who visions the end of society. Like Marx he assumes the right to speak generally on behalf of the masses setting himself up as it's "conscience". He overlooks the possibilities that the subject may have to represent itself and is at least capable of manipulating the "ideological" conventions that suppress? the subject in the first place. He assumes that with the collapse of criticism and hermeneutics the audience and silent majority are reduced to unthinking multitudes. As the media extends it's sphere so does it come under the critical surveillance and usage of it's subjects even though access to these means are of course unequally distributed whereas Fuller presentsnothing but a soothing consolation.

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Baudrillard writes almost as if from the point of view of a confident theory and regardless of how "true", this theory may be, it gives the subject the impression that everyday life is a confusion waiting to be straightened, structured and rationalised. The subject who finds it's

individuality problematic may find both forms of rhetoric appealing and seductive, either the melancholic mourning of Fuller as either reaction or cause for hope, or in the seductive persuasion of Baudrillards detached rationalism which equally could be interpreted as a form of pessimism. By presenting the embattled individual struggling with the self and art, Fuller reduces criticism at times to the scale of private reminiscence charged with nostalgia and melodrama even sentmentality; his essay on Cecil Collins is a good example. Writing about another painter Leon Kossoff for example Fuller announces, "Bear withness to lived experience" and he continues, "Kessoff is engaged in a solipsistic painterly expressionistic search, but he redeems himself from suicidal engulfment within himself by his" "inside out", mode if looking for his own subjectivity through a stubbornly (30)empiricist practise". In this situation the form of criticism acts more as a barrier or an obstacle to the object it is meant to describe, it is perhaps more expressive than the painting itself. It assume also that the viewer will share the intrepretation of the critic whose rhetoric and alluring signifigances in this case acts as a form of remedy to be absorped when viewing Kossoff. The critic's remedy carries such ingredients as "suicidal engulfment and "Solipsistic painterly searches". Without such writing it is doubtful if such feelings could ever be emitted from the painting; the actual object itself.

Baudrillard on the otherhand presupposes without explaining the actual mechanisms or constitutions involved with the subject. The subject is seen as unproblematically filling the subjects position created by ideology. Fuller in the past even as a more committed marxist comdemned such reductionist approaches best exemplified by Louis Althusser who writes that aesthetic experience is not central to the individual, but is the

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manifestations of the effects of ideology upon the subject. Althusser implying that the aesthetic experience and tradition the subject has inherited (in this bourgeois humanist) is nothing more than the pleasure by the observer when it recognises itself in a picture's visual ideology. In other words when it's imagery ego is projected in an image. The problem with rigid theory and discourse is as Fuller has correctly pointed out is "it's tendency to ignore the specifities or minute textures of the work "[3]" itself. It could be clarified however that unlike the critic, the theorist is interested in not so much what the work means but what it does. It is in danger of becoming a deterministic theory

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What is suspect about Baudrillard's simulacra is that with it's slick surface and smooth mass produced exterior like the textured organic painting, a product of the human agency, with it's authentic brush stroke etc. it too hints at having inner depths. This by the very fact that it really affirms what it wishes to negate officially thanks to persuasive theory. Chapter 3.

"Consolations" and "Delusions"

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(1)

"Images of God", essays in "Ruskin a Radical Conservative", William Monris, "a conservationist radical", and "Mother Nature".

(2)

Clement Greenberg, "The Avant Garde and Kitsch", 1939.

(3)

Theodor Adorno once blamed the Enlightenment for the creation of a megapolis like Los Angeles with it's complex urban structures and kitsch culture. He shared with Greenberg a contempt for mass media culture and kitsch.

Adorno realised that the notion of a fundamentally oppositional art is very like a "liberal humanist" bourgeois conciousness of freedom, but he insists that "Art is not social only because it derives its material content from society. Rather it is social because it stands in opposition to society. Now this opposition art can mount only when it has become autonomus". How is this possible if Greenberg said the same and in ways it was swamped by Kitsch ? "Rather than obeying existing social norms and thus proving itself to be "socially useful" - art criticised society by just being there. "What Adorno is saying to fellow Marxists is that tendency art (Zdanov - type) art which is "useful" has not the power as the assumed autonomus or useless object. "The fact that it is there", is the most effective weapon.

Adorno writes that "serious art was that which negated the negativity of reality through negation, inherent intricacy and difficulty of the art work". Opposed to obvious mass media imagery which demand no intelligent reading, Fullers support of Collins may be interpeted as an effective



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subversion of what is more acceptable in postmodernism, the tendency of many artists have of appropriating from the mass medias to make critical social comments.

(4) Beyond the crises in art.

(5) ibid page

(6)

Clement Greenberg, "The avant-garde and kitsch"", 1959.

(7)

See Lyotards essay in the I.C.A. document on <u>Postmodernism</u>. In this document Lyotard describes the postmodern subject as being split between a need to face up to the "complexities" of advanced technological society and a need to preserve it's biological links, "the ancient task for survival see also <u>Driftworks</u>". New York Semiotext(e).

(8)

See works on "Peter Blake", "Cecil Collins", and "Auerbach versus Clemente", in "Images of God".

(9) ibid.

(10)

In his three major publications, "<u>Beyond the crises in Art", "Art and</u> <u>Psychonalysis", and "Images of God</u>". Fuller stresses the importance of the biological before the socio and economic. To support his arguement he uses the psychoanalysis of Melanie Klein and the British "object-relations", school which followed Klein. Writers of this school include Donald Winicott and Charles Rycroft. He also borrows extensively from the



philosophical and anthropological works of the Marxist materialist,

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It is interesting to note that the philosophical anthropology of Timpanaro rejects psychoanalysis because it relates to certain meanings that exist outside the material. Timpanaro writes, "It is not only the social relations between men, but also the relations between men and nature that give rise to scientific and philosophical reflection and to artistic expression quoted in Peter Fuller, Art and Psychoanalysis." ibid page 245

(12)

In his defence of the "Romantic" individual such as Collins and Auerbach, Fuller uses the "Mother Infant," relationship. "It is since Romanticism that art has become a quest for a home that the artist believes he possesed in his childhood, and which assumes in his eyes the character of a paradise lost through his own fault". See Art and psychoanalysis "Venus and the mother-infant relationship". This theory also underlies the "British Neo Romantics", quest for innocence and the pastoral.

(13)

Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the state apparatus".

(14)

"Images of God" essay titled, "Cecil Collins: Fallen Angels". Pages 124-129.

(15) ibid page 129.

(16)

Art and Design; "British twentleth Century paintings".



(17)

Herbert Read saw in the "neo romantics", a role for the free and anarchaic poet and painter. A posessor of what Read calls, "That invaluable commodity, "solitude" in the age of communitarian imparratives and a world at war".

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Cecil Collins according to Peter Goffin had the "functional rights of a priest", and that the artist was "a spirit moving in a world that is at once younger and more archaic". Goffin writes that Collins was both a "Holy innocence", and "Archaic Fool", comparing him with John Bunyans "Holy Pilgrim" (Pilgrims progress). See the British neo romantic publication and periodical, "counterpoint", 1944.

(18)

It would be incorrect to claim that Fuller is totally absorbed by the nostalgia and nationalism of the Neo Romantics. In several essays in "<u>Images of God</u>", "Neo Romanticism, a Defense of English Pastoralism", Page 83 - 91 and in the "arts of war", pages 205 - 210, he raises the pitfalls of British Neo Romanticism and its use by Thatcherism and conservative publicity during the Falklands confilct.

(19)

Ruskin verses Whistler. Various accounts of this famous conflict between critic and artist exist. The famous account of Ruskin accusing "Whistler" of flinging a pot of paint into the publics faces, can be compared with the sarcasm of Fuller towards Leon Golub "The Avant Garde Again" in <u>Art And</u> <u>Design 1987</u>. In "where was the art of the seventies ?" in "<u>Beyond the</u> <u>Crises in Art"</u>, where he accuses Victor Burgin of being "a Bougereau of our times", and the entire Conceptional Art Movement of "indulging in the pornography of despair".



See John Rajchman, "The Postmodern Museum" Art in America October 1985 for an English translation of aspects in catalogue. The "Les Immaterieux", exhibition in the Beaubourg Paris.

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(21)

Hamish Fulton (B 1945). His art is about being out on the land and experiencing the landscape by walking through it. At some time during a walk which may be long and strenuous, Fulton decides that a particular view, which he photographs contains the quintessence of his feelings about the walk. He presents his work in The form of photographs. See, M. Auping, The morality of Landscape, Art in America, Feb. 1983.

(22)

"Kernels of truth", - Peter Fuller writes, "Today I think it is important to defend a materialist version of the kernal of truth within" Bourgeois Aesthetics", than to support the rabid left idealism purveyed by many of those who areeither monsterous offspring of Bergers "Ways of Seeing" are at least producTs of the same culture common ancestor". Peter Fuller, Ways of Seeing a re-evaluation, 1980.

(23)

The Salisbury Review is edited by Roger Scruton Jan. 1985. Scruton has produced a series of studies based on "left wing", thinker using what he calls "Conservative Criteria".

"Thinkers of the left", The Salisbury Review, a quaterly for conservative "thought

(24) ibid

(25)In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities ... or the end of the Social and







Chapter 4. Investigating Victor Burgin and Peter Fuller.

Peter Fuller. Segregated Theory and Segregated Tradition ? In the last essay one major question arose, why does Fuller wish to segregate the traditional fine art practices from other media ? A perfect (1) example is with Hamish Fulton who is perhaps at odds with more "political" conceptual artists. He uses photography and texts as a medium to communicate a spiritual and romantic attachment to landscape. His work is based on situating the body and mind in landspace and by the art of walking he records his spiritual and conceptual responses. The landscape involved on many occasions has been in England where apparently Fuller and his predecessor Ruskin derive their "values". Fulton follows the line of romantic English landscape "walkers", a long history which can be traced (2) from Thomas Traherne to William Blake, Samuel Palmer, and John Ruskin.

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Fuller continues to defend the "physiognomy" behind expression and the use of more traditional mediums. The body according to Fuller holds the priveleged place in the hierarchy of representations as does the rendering of it with traditional practices. Therefore if Fuller's argument is to be accepted does it mean that if an artist like Fulton wishes to convey **a** romantic notion about the landscape he must abandon the phototext in preference to painting? By photography, text and topographical illustration Fulton records memories of the human act of walking. It is no surprise that even today the topographical landscape does not share the high status attributed to the more conventional and established approach, the single view grasping the essence through illusionistic perspective. The comparison is almost akin to Ruskin's rejection of Turner's early topographical illustrations in favour of his later atmospheric works. The







former is still regarded as a practical illustration in comparison with the oil painting. Fuller in turn rejects the use of photography and text. Before Fuller is accused any further it must be stressed that he rejects contemporary moves in painting towards the "Iydll", or "Pastoral". The obivious examples are his objection of the "Brotherhood of Ruralists", and particulary the work of Peter Blake. However a possible clue in attempting to answer the original question may lie with the argument presented by Victor Burgin.

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Burgin emerged in the seventies as a conceptual artist presenting like many other artists of that generation a critque of the art object. His role in the post-modernist polemic differs very much from Fuller's. Burgin presents a complete antithesis to Fuller's argument, being diametrically opposed to the status painting still holds in western society.

He differs in many respects from Fuller being both artist and theorist, a role which is more radical than the traditionalist one Fuller follows ie the critic who writes or indeed "thinks" for the artist. What is at issue here is not a comparison between both persons but with the theory they use either in defence or against the art object.

In response to Fuller's defence of traditional values and practices Burgin uses Lacanian phychoanalysis and the historical and social critiques of Jacques Derrida. Summing up simply, Burgin describes the status of painting as being "overdetermined", a form of market fetishism in a society which is according to Lacan, "phallocentric", and Derrida "Logocentric".

According to Lacan the dominant language symbol in western society is "phallocentric", which means that language and the power of representation is male dominanted. The gender divisions in society are structured on male dominance thus making all discourses "patriachal". Lacan argues that the



preconcious phychic bisexuality of the infant is gradually moulded into this symbolic order where it's unconscious is divided according to it's (4) gender structures. Derrida's "logocentrism", carries a similar critique of the dominant structures in western society which to use "deconstructionist" terminology is both patriarcha! and eurocentric. Derrida writes of the higher status given by society to the spoken word ever since Plato's time over the written word. Derrida attacks the humanist tradition which emphasises that all questions of meaning are to be referred to a privileged origin and the view of man as in full and spontaneous possession of himself and of his own expression. Burgin uses Derrida's argument on the "authentic" object using the French theorists' criticism of what he calls the "metaphysics of presence". In logocentrism faith is derived from what is present, the spoken word is purer than the received and written word and this may be applied to art where the object is trusted more than the concept; the idea. This is not Burgin's argument nor is it solely Derridas, rather it is an issue that has been present in western thought since Plato's time. From Plato to conceptual art of the seventies Plato distrusted the object or simulacrum and he also distrusted the written word. "The prime symbol of true belief, is the word invisible and heard. The prime symbol of false belief is the image, visible and seen". A puritanical view of conceptual art advocates that language and ideas are the true essence of art and that visual experiences and the sensory devices are secondary and perhaps inessential. Plato opposed Aristotle, the iconoclist (6) opposed the iconophile, events of the counter reformation and most recently in twentieth century avantgardism . Dadaism and it's more recent offspring, the various conceptualist projects of the seventies opposed the traditional practises.

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Burgin shareswith Fuller a strong criticism of modernism especially the high modernist language of formalism as in abstract expressionism. He also shares with Fuller a distaste for the rise of "neo-expressionism" except at this point both diverge, Burgin's project advocates theory in investigating what he calls, "the politics of representation". Fuller as explained earlier argues for traditional values. It is interesting to note that Burgin's rhetoric is as sharp as Fullers, if he has softened by calling painting in the eighties as being "overdetermined", from calling it "The anachronistic daubing of coloured mud on fabric", in the seventies, he calls Greenberg's abstract expressionism, "The apotheosis of fethism". His solutions for the postmodernist subject does not lie in retrieving lost illusions and consolations". He writes that, "The post-modernist subject must live with the fact that not only are it's languages "arbitrary", but it is itself an "effect" of language, a precipitate of the very symbolic order of which the humanist subject supposed itself to be master. This being a complete rejection of humanism and of the biological theory Fuller advocates. For Burgin the subject exists within discourse whereas Fuller argues for a "relativity", where there are elements (aesthetic and biological) that proceed and transcend these constructs. Fuller argues, "Aesthetic quality is not some figment constructed material transformations in paint, canvas and pictorial conventions. The (8) "

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outside the work through discourse, ideology or promotional opportunism. Rather it is realised or not as the case may be through capacity to recognise it however, appears to be rooted in a genetically variable ability for intuitive judgement. In this case Fuller argues with the traditional assumption that ideology is a "false consciousness", to be transcended if at least relatively, whereas Burgin argues that "Ideology is



neither consciousness nor false consciousnessbut profoundly unconscious". Thus explaining his use of psychoanalysis rather than using a sociohistorical analysis preferred by Marxist theorists. Nearing the end of the seventies it is interesting to note that both have abandoned Marxism in favour of psychoanalysis considering both have operated "on the left" as thinkers. Both have rejected a left wing "Romanticism", Burgin especially rejects the notion of the autonomous expressive individual as in humanism and equally the notion of parity. The romantic myth of the people; the proletariat and the projection of an alternative society to the one we have at present is according to Burgin a phallacy.

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In this argument Burgin dismisses the human agency as the origins of a "unique" statement, because of market strageties and fashion trends he perhaps correctly writes that there is a form of "fethism", behind the object, the icon or authentic object. He argues correctly that the painting is drained of it's symbolic value, which passes to it's purchaser in the form of prestige in exchange for investment value. This cannot be denied or indeed be ignored. He continues to say that "It's essential substance is congealed with "creativity" which too by the same "magic", of communion becomes the property of it's purchaser". He sums up by saying (10)"The market is behind nothing, it is in everything". Is Burgin cynical ? Not necessarily, art is political, art is a commodity but not only. The question is, can the uneasy and selfconscious subject, get any fulfillment from a painting without being burdened this excess but necessarily true "baggage" ? Is it possible to enjoy and choose to ignore these factors ? Is there a defference between cultural value and economic value ? It is ironic that Burgin uses a representation of a painting in his own

critique of representation in "Preparation for office at night", and

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abandons what is for him the more traditional use of text. This piece reveals a considerable change or shift in emphasis concerning certain aspects of his previous work. The irony is obvious Burgin abandoned fine art "painting", in the late sixties and became a prominent conceptual artist in the late sixties and early seventies. During the seventies he called painting, "the anachronistic daubing of coloured mud on woven (12)fabric", and recently in post-modernism he has called Greenberg's formalism, "the apotheosis of fetishism in the visual arts in the modern (13)period", implying that painting as a fine art practise is "overdetermined". Like many conceptual artists, Burgin abandoned the "anachronistic" practise of painting in the seventies but now in the eighties he appropriates the painting to make a critique of representation. The rise of "neoexpressionism", in the eighties was in many respects a reaction to the "conceptualist" approach to art in the seventies. Perhaps one reason why painting reemerged in the eighties was that there was a public whose expressive possibilities were already were already reduced and reified. Unlike painting, conceptualism offered little in terms of consolation or a critical reflection on this process. In many ways the puritanical dogma of conceptualism banned the expressive gesture and the use of the painting as a possible means to cure or approach any form of social unfulfillment. Burgin's argument that market strategies have rekindled the public's taste for the "painting" may have a certain truth but is it necessary to call this a form of "commodity fethism" and nothing more ?

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There have been problems and contradictions with conceptualism as well. The critique of the object implied a refusal of the commodity status and as an idea it advocated that art could be common property and language the most available form as in documents etc. However with the decline of

Greenbergian formalism conceptual art and it's language was left without an articulated theory to oppose. During the seventies it became in this sense a potential totalitarian practise, a potential form of puritanism that neglected any other art practise. In post-modernism it is now realise that there is now no purified and dominant art practise, all mediums integrate and overlap. It is a pluralism that must be carefully controlled. The biggest dilemma with conceptual art was with it's meduim or presence which like the painting was prone to commodification. The conceptual documentation was recuperated and exchanged in the market. Just as (14)political artists like Hans Haacke, mimicked the corporate logo, so "conceptual art", the last truly international art movement ended up in ways reproducing the technological rationality of international corporate and state capitalist beaurocrasy. Burgin like Haacke must accept the inevitability of recuperation of the political statement, it's absorption by the salon without allowing it to exclude some kind of critical or subversive potential. In other words as artists, theorists or activists, whatever descriptions they fit, they must operate within the system.

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Burgins stragety or project can be read in this piece, instead of using text he uses the pictogram to simplify his statement directing it as a critique of the portrayal of gender difference in contemporary society. (15) The pictogram has no authentic origin, as a signifier it does carry traces of any human or "authentic" gestural mark. Traces of the human agency is avoided just as thew use of photography avoids any pretension of direct bodily contact which Burgin belives is now over valourised in this age of complex technology. The pictogram is for Burgin a trademark than a gesture with authentic pretensions. This point about the pictogram is important because as a representation it reveals what is symptomatic of late

C APPENDIX

capitalism, the triumph of "exchange value" over "use value" and the dominant role of representation over production. As a representation it may be Burgin's interpretation on the one hand of the anachronism of painting as a practise today, and the dominance of the simulated, mass produced corporate loge over the human gesture whose origin derives from the body. The power of simulation over the human gesture, corporate sign permeates the publics psyche more so than a painterly gesture by Pollock for example. The Coca-Cola logo is more universly recognised than Pollock's gesture in paint but Pollock's "trademark" is by no means obscure. It has been appropriated by successive artists who have wished to reveal how it's myth has been converted into capital. The pop artists Roy Lichtenstein and Robert Rauschenberg have produced paintings derivative of abstract expression with a critical intention underlying them. "Art and (16)Language" have investigated the use of the Pollock gesturism ideology for example Burgin continues a direct subsersion of the previous status and cultural or capital value allocated to the "primal product". The second and most obivious point is it's use in representing the gender structures in society, as a signifies it is used to depict the structural social roles of both sexes. Burgin raises the question if it is possible to create either a natural or biological signifier thus undermining the dominant order behind representation.

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Burgin perhaps has abandoned text for two reasons, the first being the realisation that not only does language and image integrate and influence each other but this is only one aspect that has been developed, there are broader remiotic issues that must be investigated such as the influence of established order in reading. The questioning of the grand narrative within reading, cinema, languages and history. The questioning of A to Z,

reading from left to right, the film or narrative with beginning and end are at issue in postmodernism of it should more correctly be added that certain developments within modernism that emerged that were overshadowed are now being raised again as opposed to the more obvious. and dominant forms. The influence of the Dadaists and the Russian productivist sesthetics were important not only in the shaping of early conceptualism but also continue to influence Burgin's photography.

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The second and more obvious point is as Burgin is probably only too aware that phototext work has it's contradictions, it is prone to commodification as any other object. The use of a photo image and corresponding text be it a contradictory text or whatever the case may be, is now a genre and is absorbed in a society that tolerates. Like any style in representation when the genre becomes norm there is always a salon available. Burgin however is not naieve as to believe that he is now one step ahead and more original because this is what he is opposed to; the notion of "originality", which as well as the marketable notion of "quality", is a predicate with financial connotations. As a practitioner political intentions he has realised since the seventies that "parity", in (17)visual presetation is as naieve and defunct as the aim of "social realism". The society in which we live is complex and hermenutics, extremely intricate it is to psychoanalysis that Burgin looks in order to investigate ideology and the politics of representation.

In "Preparation for the office at night", Burgin abandons the use of "social real type", situations in favour of a theatrical simulation. He employs the devices of illusion to present his critique. Using freudian terminology he attempts to analyse how representation such as Hopper's, "office at night" presents this gender structure. He dislocates the



priveleged, one sided view of the voyeurs visual engagement with "object of desire". He subverts the "disavowal" involved in voyeurism; I (male , (18) spectator) know very well I (imagined man) am engrossed in my work. The object of desire in this sense or as portrayed in Hopper's painting is a secretary and the voyeur patriachal boss. The patriachal to be undermined could be the photographer or the painter who produces work in this "Eurocentric", and "Phallocentric", society? Burgin writes that the phallocentric and Oedipal dominance in representation must be restructured, "the possibility for this lies precisely in the fact of a shared pre oedipal sexuality of men and women, the recognition of sexuality as a construct, subject to social and historical change; the recognition of the body as not simply given, as essence, in nature but as constantly (19)reproduced and revived in discourse". Hence the voyeurism in Hopper's painting as described by Burgin maybe reinterpreted as involving the disavowel in market fetishism behind the painting as commodity. Burgin's argument is that the object is the last place to find meaning it does not lie within or behind the object but in the ideology that moulds our perception of it. Just as the office boss desires are fuelled by the unconcious; the absence, his attention is directed at the secretary the presence. However there is no direct observation or rapport between both persons, the unconcious is not but it is still present. Apply this to Burgins arguement and it becomes clear; that there is no such thing as a direct resonance or response between spectator and the art object. There is so much in the absence; the unconcious which is permeated by ideology, that dilutes any possible meaning to be derived from the object. Burgin's arguement is a strong one, it is like attending an exhibition and realising that a possible understanding of the work there may only be achieved by the

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realisation of how persuasive theory or ctiticism moulds our perception of [20] the exhibits. It leads to the speculation that Tom Wolfe has often made and other crutucs, that is, that the artist illustrates the theorist or critic. Whereas high modernism such as formalism decreed a self referential art form, in postmodernism art which lacks a persuasive has no effect at all. In fact it is possible that the self referential object never existed at all, is it possible to think of Pollock without Greenberg ? Another question this thim must be pointed to Burgin, how valid or effective is his theory of a possible bisexuality of vision within discourse ? Burgin for a start does realise that the photographic or artist-theorist is infact a p rvayer of contradiction. The camera might negate traces of the human agency and exercise the "ghostly logos of the author as structural origin in the work. "It is a possible arguement that the monocular vision behind the camera is not only voyeuristic but bourgeois and privileged. Just as the seventeenth century aristocrat surveyed the topography of his lands, just as Alberti regarded himself as the origins of perspective, Burgin does realise that he is not exempt from the either. The only answer to this point is as stated early in this essay, Burgin operates within ideology whereas Fuller attempts to transcend it to realitivity".

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How valid is this "bisexual vision", within discourse ? It is a failed science like many other discourses? can it be applied other than within the academic institute ? If it exists within discourse surley it is a segrated discourse, one that operates within the confines of intellectural debates in colleges and polytechs. As already explained Burgin rejects the phallacy of popuar vision versus elitism, but is that enough ? Who really investigates these discourses ? if aspects of Lacan (and the theorist has

problems withfeminist points of view) cannot be applied in public it must surley be a segrated discourse. In the rejection of popular vision an easy way out, with a theory which negates elitism but at the same time is inevitably segrated ? If Fuller segregates the fine arts jealously, Burgin is perhaps not as extreme as this but he cannot deny that discourse if elaborated and developed does not cater for the multitudes. Burgin might respond, "The bad news is that I am a construct of this patriachal, Oedipal, logocentric idology, but the good news is that I know this. (21) And then what must be done? Burgin is a "selfconcious postmodern subject," and operates cleverly as an art beaurocrat. He deliberately manipulates the state apparatus to communicate his theories, photography, text, the museum and education. Hans Heacke sums up the role of, "art beaurocrat," "The dialectics of conciousness are bolstered by their potential for financial speculation. Artists as much as their supporters and their enemies, no matter what ideological colouration, are unwittingly partners in the artsyndrome and relate to each other dialectically. They participate jointly in the maintenance of the ideological make up of their [22] society. Their work within that frame, set the frame and are being framed."

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Therefore if Burgin as a "post studio,"artist argues that there can be no basic social change of any permanence without a restructuring of the perception of the consequences of sexual difference. Is it a pessimistic but realistic point of view to believe that all he may achieve is a small perhaps "subversive," insertion into the cracks of this huge system, order, society (or whatever term prefered) in which we live? Which in turn becomes a polite gesture of protest, an insertion that is nothing more than an intellectualidea. A retreat into a subjective realm?

What is the "self concious, "subject to do when considering opposing theories such as Fuller and Burgin for example? It is interesting that Burgin informs the subject that it is fragmented. The use of Freud and Lacan in his argument places emphasis on what is absent and fragmented. Fullers use of Klein and "Object relations," defends what is present and advocates a unity which is more in line with humanism but which he argues is both psychoanalytical and materialist.

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In fethism according to Freud, the object serves in place of the penis with which the child would endow the woman, (the fact of the incompleteness, "threatening the childs own self coherence.) The fetished object is doubly charged with signifigance, as guarantor of completeness and as a memory of lack. Burgin argues that the photograph or painting stands to the subject viewer as does the fetished object, "it is to be looked at; the look gives pleasure; it affirms an existence beyond itself; it simultaneously denies the presence of that existence." (23) In the Oedipal struggle the obsession is patriachal and the subject is fragmented and in fethism it must negate and yet affirm the presence of an object. If Freudian analysis is used there is a preoccupation of the object associated with loss. Therefore to make this inquiry dialectic it is interesting to pose Fullers use of Klein as a possible contender.

Freud tended to ignore the "Infant-Mother, "relationship and elaborated on the Oedipal struggle against the father, its repression and consequences resulting in a fragmenting and decentering of the individual subject. In basic terms Kleinian psychoanalysis stresses the eventual unification of the subject and its necessity to be reparative afterthe experience of fragmentation. Fuller uses the subsequent theories of the "Object-relations," school (24) to argue that with the "Mother-



infant relationship," (25) the object is not so much related with fethism but with a striving for complete unity between subject and object. Is it therefore necessary to be paranoid of the object as extreme puritanical conceptualism might imply? that appreciation is ideological and a fethism? or that the subject recognises nothing but its imaginary ego placed in ideology when appreciating the object. How valid is the philosophical anthropology of Timpanaro or the "biologism" of E.O Williams (26) as used by Fuller? Is it a quasi-science? Fuller writes in defence of the "Venus de Milo, " "Timpanaro argued not just that the socio historic was penetrated by the biological, but that the latter was itself enmeshed within the physical. There are sculptural elements which are not just class transcedent, in that they pertain to areas of the experience of reality which are common to all those who have given bodies. Such elements are also in my view gender transcedent." (27) Comparing Fullers defence of the Venus de Milo with Burgins secretary in Hoppers painting many questions arise. Is it possible that such elements transcend the fact that the writings of the Venus de Milo and the criteria of judgement used is that of the white Eurocentric race? Classical art has been used as an instrument and weapon by many historical ideologies, the stoicism of the French Republic and the enlightenment project in the late eighteenth century, the pomposity of

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European Imperialism and more recently in the Fascist Kitch of Mussolini and Hitler are proof of this not to mention in Mass Media advertisment. Is it possible that the biological and relative constants that Fuller writes of carry the strengths they implies in this polemic, the biologism of Timpanaro or E.O Williams ? It can be argued that gender succumbs to technological manipulations as transexual operations open up possibilities or in reach of creating either a "third sex", or a total confusion in

gender structure. Fuller's defence of the objects rest upon what Lyotard calls, the "ancient tasks for survival", a defence of the bodily senses. But a oppesed to this the natural identity of the subject according to Freud and deconstructionist thinkers is now fragmented. The body is dislocated and the bodily senses as Fuller desribes no longer provide sufficient evidence of what reality is. They are complex constructs from which is created the artificial world in which love, Burgin's possible response to Fullers; that there is so much complexity in this sphere that indicates and dilutes the possible meaning in the object.

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But is it correct to tag the subject with the catagory of being a naive construct of "Liberal Humanism" of it rejects mechanistic solutions to selfhood as perscribed in some deconstruction theory. It is difficult to reconcile such theory with whatever residues of biology there might exist ?

Focusing on the process in art it can be ergued that whereas ideogical use values are imbodied in the product and art object it is not necessarily so in the processes. Ideas have autonomy but if they are to be manifested in objects, they must compromise because all madiums are permeated by ideology. Using Marxist terminology does "use value" and "primal production" exist despite the fact that is late capitalism "exchange value" has triumphed over "use value"? Does it at least exist in a residual form ? Human production is infused with feeling, a feeling for the process and for the material worked upon. Therefore aesthetic values and craft skills the producer activates during the process are not ideological, but the product is ideological. Once the object leaves the studio it is permeated and subsumed by market values and commodification. The problem arises in criticism as Fuller correctly points out when a puritanical rejection of the traditional mediums is proclaimed. Even John Bergers, Fullers early

[28] mentor in "Ways of Seeing", rejected the "oil painting" because of it market connotations writing that it desired their religious intention behind the idea of the Holy Magadalen. The problems with the ideological object may perhaps be confronted when considering Kant .

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Kants notion of universal disinterestedness and subjective disposition behind the aesthetic only emerge with the product, which is a consumers point point of view may be distorted. If Burgin perhaps correctly points out that the human agency, the "primal production", is over valorised in market strategies this does not imply that they should be rejected entirely. There is pleasure in the process and in the product which cannot be desired but admittedly there is the enivatabality of exchange and corporate exploitation outside the powers of the artist.

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The selfconcious subject has a psychic reality and a biological reality, both are difficult to control in advanced societies. Complexity must be challenged and used but also the ancient (biological) task for survival cannot be entirely rejected. Does Burgin retreat into segregated theory just as Fuller guards his segrated traditions ?

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Chapter 4

Investigating Peter Fuller and Victor Burgin Segragated tradition and segregated theory ?

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Hamish Fulton- See Hayward Annual 1979, pages 86,87. (2)John Ruskin- See Kenneth Clark, Ruskin Today pages 83-91. (3) Peter Fuller, Images of God. Fuller is spectical of the painter Blake in "Peter" Blake, Un certain art Anglais. "Pages 116-124"

Lacan "Mirror image", Between the sixth and eighteenth month, the infant, which experiences its body fragmented and uncentered projects its potential unity in the form of an ideal "Self" upon other bodies and upon its own image and reflection in a mirror. It doesn't distinguish itself from others but rather assures that it is the other. Therefore in this image of itself beared upon others it reasures a recognition of itself in an imaginary order. This order is a misrecognition. See Jacquec Lacan, "The Mirror - phase as formative of the function of the I". New left Review, no. 51 Sep. 1968.

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Plato - For a generalised description of Plato's philosophy see Munroe. C. Beardsley. See theories from classical Greece to the present University of Alabama Press, 1966.

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Calvin verses Ignatius Loyola. In Calvins Institutes of the Christian religion: "to make visible representation of the Deity is a brutal stupidity and to represent God by means of a visable simulation is a perverse thing, the conclusion is that one should or represent only those things that are visably apparent". Opposing this the Catholics ideology of

Loyola decrees in his "Spiritual Exercise" picture is an imaginative representation of the physical place where the event ot be contemplated occurs.... We are instructed to imagine in the image, the touch, sound and smell of these imaginary scenes ... "quoted in David Brett", the Reformation and the practice of art", Circa Magazine, Volume no. 26, Jan. 1986 Page 23.

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Victor Burgin, "The End of Art Theory, page 49".

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"Images of God". Fuller repeates this arguement in several essays, "Auerbach verses Clemente". In "Beyond the Crisis in Art" and in Art Monthly 1980. This quote "Auerbach verses Clemente", page 61 in Images of God.

(9) Victor Burgin. The End Of Art Theory.

(10)ibid

(11)

Victor Burgin. Between pages 184 - 186.

Burgin uses the painting of American painter Edward Hopper first because of the subject matter in "office at night", and secondly perhaps because of his new popularity as a type of proto; postmodernist. Burgin explores the situation of "Desire within Law", where in patriachal society the boss believes his desires for the secretary legitimate according to gender structure, in this case his intimidating voyeurism is regarded as being feasible irregardless of the womans feelings.

(13) Victor Burgin, The End of Art Theory. See the important essay, "the absence of presence; conceptualism and postmodernisms pages 29 - 50.
(14) Hans Haacke; Haackes "Real time Social System", was used to subvert and investigate urban and tennent exploitation by a landlord who was believed to be a possible benifactor to the Guggenheim Muuseum. In 1971 Haacke revealed his name in the documentation but had to compromise with the museum and change "Shapolskys", name to something fictitious. In the eighties the museum tolerates and subsumes the radical the radical contert of his statments. Parodies and satires on Ronald Reagan the Saatchis and Margaret Thatcher are now tolerated. See <u>Studio International</u>. July; August 1971 and Leo Steinberg on Hans Haacke in <u>Unfinished Eusiness</u>, the new Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, M.I.T. Press.

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980 March; April" 1976, page 148.

The Pictogram: An isotype or pictogram is a diagramatic picture used in statistical infrmation. Neurath, a contemporary of Freud desired "a universally unambigious picture language.

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Art and Language. See <u>Style In Form, Mannerism: A Theory of Culture,</u> New Show Vancouver Art Gallery. March 1982 pages 16, 17. Art and Language are; Charles Harrison, Michael Baldwin and Mel Ramsden.

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Victor Burgin. See interview Tony Godfrey, <u>Block no. 7</u> 1982. Burgin discuses the problems of placing the poster in the museum and in the

Victor Brugin, "socialist formalism, Studio International volume 191, no.



street. His possession poster, "What does Possession mean to you ?" 7% of our population own 84% of of our wealth". Puzzled the public and failed by and large to commuincate with the public in Newcastle Upon Tyne. Summer

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Victor Burgin. Between page 184.

ibid page 84. Originally printed in Block 7, 1972. Response to John Bird.

Tom Wolfe: The Painted Word,

Victor Burgin. Between page 85.

Hana Haacke: "Radical Attitudes to the Gallery", New York, May 1977.

Victor Burgin. End Of Art Theory, See the essays "The Absence of Presence: Conceptualism" and postmodernism pages 29-50. "The End Of Art Theory" pages 141 - 204.

Peter Fuller. Art and Psychoanalysis, Fuller uses the psychoanalysis of Melanie Klein and the subsequent elaborations made by the British "Object Relations", school D. W. Winnicott and Charles Rycroft.

Peter Fuller. Art and Psychoanalysis.

"The Rise of Modernism and the Mother-Infant relationship". Page 130 - 177.

E. O. Williams, concept of biophilia is based on necessity on the spirit

within Nature. "Biophilia", "Nature a refuge of Spirit", quoted in "An Alternative View", <u>British Twenteth Century Art. Art and Design</u>, 1987.

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(27) Peter Fuller - <u>Art and Psychoanalysis</u>, "The Venus and Internal Objects", page 105.

(28) John Berger. <u>Ways of Seeing</u>, page 21.

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It is extremely difficult to sum up in basic and simple terms what exactly is the present condition, predicament or even crisis in postmodernism. Lyotard writes that the main issue concerns the subject who must confront both the "complexities", of the various structures in society and yet maintains it's "Ancient task for survival". In other words the subject must face the complexities of technology while at the same time maintain biological links with nature. I have attempted to use the ideas of Burgin and Fuller to illistrate this issue. Burgin, I associate with "Complexity", and Fuller with "the Ancient Task for Survival". Jean Baudrillard assumes the role of the nihilist rejecting the role of a constructive subject and disarming culture of its power or possible potentialsto Communicate meaning.

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Conclusion

IS there is a Crisis ?

There are obvious pitfalls in Fullers segregation of the traditional practices in fine art. He guards jealously and it is perhaps deceiving to believe that one is defending a just tradition when in fact it is nothing but reaction to possible change and narrow bitterness. Burgin also realises that if there is a market fethism behind the art object there is also the possibility of it being replaced by "sacred dogma", an indulgence with theory onto itself. The over determined icon can be replaced by the "sacred dogma", the possibilities of a form of puritanism rejecting the subjects faculty to make objects or art. Even more important is the "joyful nihilism", of Baudrillard in rejecting the already fragmented subject who is very self concious of its place and role in advanced society.

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Does the subject accept the detached pessimism of Baudrillard ? Accept

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Fuller's consolution in "lost illusions", a form of secular religion, or an attempt to perpetuatediscourse as Burgin suggests ? Perhaps the most optimistic view lies with Lyotard who advocates a heterogeniety of languages rather than one absolute dogma. The self concious subject is all at once surrounded but it is still unsure, is it a crisis ? or a better understanding of its place and of itself in this period of time ?

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