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*Abstract. The problem with human atomization — the accelerating tendency of traditional social aggregates to disintegrate — is only that the process remains arrested at the level of the individual. The modern political Left, as an intrinsically aggregative tendency, bemoans individualism but functions as a machine for conserving it against already active forces that would otherwise disintegrate it. One of the only empirically mature pathways to collective liberation is through human atomization becoming autonomous: accepting the absolute foreclosure of anthropological agency is a causal trigger activating novel, dividuated, affective capacities, which become capable of recomposing as intensive, nonlinear, collective excitations (Cyberpositive AI-aligned Communism, or the CAIC protocol).*

Modernity can be thought of as a process of atomization, arguably initiated by the Protestant Reformation.<sup>1</sup> Today, atomization is something that almost everyone protests (on the left and right), but protest itself is an atomization dynamic, automatically reproducing the mold of Protestant schismatics. In our sincerely felt repulsion to atomization, we instantiate a distance between ourselves and this supposedly external alienating phenomenon, the cause of which is imputed to something or someone else, somewhere else. This helps to explain other puzzling phenomena, such as “community-building” political activists, the attitudes and behaviors of whom are maximally inhospitable to most people everywhere. No matter how hard such groups sincerely want and try to connect with “the masses”, they continue to repulse the masses more and more, because their interest in building a commons is predicated on opposition to the only, last thing that humans today generally have in common: atomization.

The currently dominant tendency in debates about the acceleration of capitalism is to see such critiques of the modern left-activist project as implicitly aligned with right-wing implications. But coming to see the deep complicity between leftism and everything most abhorrent about modernity is an ideologically under-determined realization. If the history of left politics thus far has been a fever dream of capitalism itself, updating one’s mental model accordingly is not a defection to the right but entrance onto a different virtual plane, at once drastically more modest but somehow, also, more vast. What is called accelerationism triggers the mental space in which it becomes possible to answer the following question with a new degree of impartiality: what exactly is the object of one’s political desire anyway, after the questioning subject extricates itself from the history of strategic dissimulations it has undertaken to survive the competitive constraints of reality? This question is a heuristic for continuing a collective rush toward liberation after the final, irredeemable implosion of modernity’s ideological scaffolding, a translation of previous, primitive ideological investments into a research program for a cyber-positive, evolution-positive, AI-aligned lust for liberation beyond what is currently called politics.



## Presumptive Aggregationism

It's important to see how the classic modern ideological cleavages are separated not so much by strongly argued and differentiated empirical propositions but by different background imagery. These background images are never rigorously scrutinized propositions, but more like presumptions that sediment as the common ground of multiple intelligences communicating in multi-dimensional space. They emerge as necessary, organizing simplifications across a mass stratified social space (attuning large groups to different vocabularies and tendencies by elective affective affinities). Theoretical progress on questions of politics is gained today only by leveraging information-technological acceleration: the strategic-communicational necessity of investing in naïve molar presumptions in order to effect a large stratified social space no longer holds, so it is possible and hugely profitable (intellectually) to have done with all of the errors and deceptions that have always laid dormant in modern ideological thought. Communicating with high fidelity and objective rigor to two people in the smooth open space of cyberwar is exponentially more powerful than communicating to thousands of people at the cost of buying into a whole package of ancient logical and empirical errors.

The presumed historical progression in the left tradition, at least since Rousseau, is that human culture began in a state of relatively non-individuated, collective consistency with nature, before moving onto primitive capital accumulation via slavery and patriarchy, onward to the explosion of industrial modernity and beyond. Capitalism, modernity and enlightenment, and everything else generally associated with the rise of European white male dominance, produced the modern individual subject, predicated on a variety of crosscutting social categories (class, race, gender, etc.). From here, radical collective liberation or even just any type of progress is presumed to involve transition from individualism upward toward some kind of larger aggregate: the cadre, the activist group, the union, the sector, the class, the party, the Soviet, the factory, the social movement, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and so on — a whole bestiary of fantastic molar aggregates.

One of the most paralyzing problems for those who have sought to continue the search for collective liberation in the face of technomic acceleration (what many people call “left accelerationism” or “l/acc” for short) is that, so far, they have been invariably pitched at aggregate social entities which do not in fact exist, at a time when in fact one of the primary political problems is that the contemporary form of atomized human life increasingly lacks the capacity to maintain even low-level aggregates (friendship, marriage, social clubs, etc., all marked by entropic trends since WWII).<sup>2</sup> The most obvious and widespread form of deceptive left discourse is any statement to the effect of: ‘the left should...’ because it presumes the existence of an aggregate body that in no meaningful way exists, other than as an apparatus interpolating a portion of the population with a particular complex of shared repetition compulsions. The most vexing problem for anyone who identifies with the left would appear to be the problem that ‘the left’ as a world-historical entity has gone extinct, but because of selection effects this problem receives no serious effort from left-interpolated subjects: in a world where ‘the left’ is objectively extinct, any remaining subjective leftism is best thought of as ‘consumer demand for the belief that the left still exists’. Capitalism’s devilish efficacy is that it fulfills this widespread consumer demand perfectly well. Many brands can still do quite well finding talented and good-spirited minds able and willing to say ‘the left’ is a currently existing entity that has potential to act. The right is perfectly happy for



this belief to persist because no quantity or intensity of false beliefs can outsmart a system based on the manipulation of reality through intelligent exploitation.

Corresponding to the false belief in aggregates that do not effectively exist, the *bête noire* of modern leftism is the dreaded Individual. If effective aggregates appear not to exist, it is only taken as evidence that the inquirer is infected by Individualism. The modern leftist orientation to capitalism is, at its core, a game of three-card monte where signifiers are re-shuffled to perpetually defer logical-objective falsification. Belief in an untenably posited object is sustained by a new posited object, the only evidence for which is that it is presupposed to be the force that makes the first object *appear* non-existent. How to move from our current state of atomized individualism to an effective social aggregate capable of transforming capitalism? First, we are told, agree that atomizing individuals are bad. Second, insist at all cost that an effective social aggregate called 'the left' exists (it only needs to be enlarged in order to gain its power to act). Third, try to get others to transmit this set of beliefs until 'the left' is large enough to numerically overpower Capital.

A rarely mentioned but seminal citation for modern left activism is, therefore, Plato's infamous Noble Lie or "magnificent myth" (γενναῖον ψεῦδος): in short, a Noble Lie is a false belief that "would save us, if we were persuaded by it."<sup>3</sup> The activist privately knows that 'the left' is basically non-existent but believes it can be forged into existence by nobly telling enough people that it already exists. Activists admit all of this plainly, as they often speak of the need to generate hope in the masses; this is enough to justify the articulation of any particular idea, regardless of its truth or falsity. Only today has the deceptive core of modern leftism come into sincere self-consciousness. For instance, Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams argue rather explicitly that one of the tasks of 'the left' is to design more sophisticated lures capable of propelling atomized individuals into effective, collective motion.<sup>4</sup> Of course, it is true that creative flights from the rational-objective map of the world, such as fictional story-telling, can generate objective political effects on the world, but it is something else entirely to offer a rational-objective map for social change including a plank involving the deployment of fictions to create hopes and desires in others, expressly in contradistinction to what is scientifically valid within rational, probabilistic frameworks.<sup>5</sup> Now, creative beings who are possessed by visions can and should express those visions; such 'fictions' will indeed reshape reality, but primarily because those 'fictions' are in some sense reality operating through the body that expresses them. That is 'hyperstition': fiction that produces reality but because it is in some sense *real*, some of the evidence for which consists in the demonstrable objective effects it produces. But producing effects is not the only characteristic; the con artist produces real effects, for instance, but does not transform reality so much as twist it, in a way that always ultimately snaps back. Hyperstition is not a limitless capacity of social groups to produce new realities through shared enunciations. Hyperstitions only work to the degree they enter into feedback with an outside, issuing from contact with the chaos of objective reality and feeding into that objective reality. Effective hyperstitions are therefore creative truths, or real fictions, which are no less accountable to objective reality than scientific research. But rational-objective proposals to change 'society' (an outside of staggering complexity), by exploiting the hyperstitional nature of reality-circuitry, are nothing short of scams. They traffic in promises they cannot keep. Then they exhort others to promote the scam, to forever defer the admission of having been scammed. Srnicek and Williams perhaps represent a milestone in the modern left tradition, for it is as if they are, in some sense, coming clean: As if the last great hope of saving the modern left tradition is to admit that it's based on



trickery, but then share the source code and exhort the masses to use it. Unfortunately, an open-source con game is still a con game.

Aggregative leftist proposals could potentially change the world, but only if enough people trust in, and follow the dictates, of the proposers (e.g. some go off and make enough cool science fiction to constitute a new hegemony, engineers go off and make communist robotics, etc.) — but why should any of these actors *trust* the proposers' claims that following this program will *work* to bring about a more desirable world? Ultimately the answer is: because that trust is necessary to make it work, so if you don't trust it, you are guilty of being the cause of it not working. When the basic problem of contemporary capitalism is that we are all hyper-mistrusting atoms hell-bent on exploiting each other, a political project with this circular structure simply dodges the puzzle of irreversible atomization dynamics. Its degree of success is not measured by how well it brings about the better world (never) but by how adeptly it forestalls any ultimate reckoning with the puzzles it is essentially paid by capital to not address. A project with this structure cannot be operative for anyone other than the small number of already left-interpolated subjects, who are not themselves moved by this 'vision' so much as they are hopeful that it will move others (such as their apolitical friends, who are implicitly assumed to be dumber — enough to be moved by a lure which the already-initiated are not personally moved by because they know it is only a lure...).

Ultimately, the only effective force in a hyper-complex social system more intelligent than any one of its sub-entities is some type of novel engineering realization that allows some actually existing entity to manipulate actually existing entities with a non-trivial probabilistic effect on the whole, where the novelty of the realization provides a demonstrable edge over those other, competing entities with the interest and capacity to thwart the novel manipulations.

An exciting and inspiring 'vision of the future' may generate short-term interest and energy, but absent a genuine advancement in the engineering blueprint, producing ever more creative images of a hopeful future is, in fact, the most insidious, willfully perverse form of atomic hyper-exploitation conceivable. Srnicek and Williams should be applauded for becoming conscious of the fact that leftism is predicated on the fabrication of lures, which provides the genuine service of helping to close this entire, doomed trajectory. What would be willfully destructive would be to insist that this insight *is* an advancement of the engineering blueprint, so that if you believe in collective liberation you should promote the promotion of lures, and if one finds that this insight does not increase one's powers to act then it's only evidence that you're an atomizing individualist! Collective liberation is not an emergent outcome of multi-level marketing schemes.

## Atomic Liberation Pathways

If the upward, aggregative presumption of left-modernity is, as I have argued, a meme-commodity supplied by entrepreneurial Noble Liars, for profit, to a small portion of consumers whose demand is that reality be other than it is, then it stands to reason that the objective diagram of collective liberation for  $n$  atomized individuals suggests projects of subjective disaggregation and objective recomposition. You think you are one and you



suffer because you are disconnected from others, but really you suffer because you are many — a primordial commune — that has been bribed by the future to speak and act as if it is one.

Certain currents in the history of theory give some reason to believe that modernity's atomization tendency is less gloomy than it seems. The atomization of pre-modern collectivities may give us the wretched bourgeois individual, but for the same reasons it will tear asunder the bourgeois individual. The entire modern capitalist legal order is predicated on this particular, fragile unit of aggregation (even the corporation is required to be an individual), but the forces it has unlocked are constantly chipping away at this temporary container. This is how one should understand Marx's dictum about the relations of production coming to be contradicted by the forces of production. For more than a century this has been presumed to be an aggregative dynamic. As capitalist relations unlock economic productivity, this productivity exceeds the relations, which are now felt as fetters, resulting in "an era of social revolution".<sup>6</sup> Leftists generally have assumed this contradiction of capitalism generates aggregative effects: the class consciousness of the proletariat is a becoming-aggregate of once isolated, alienated individual workers. Class consciousness then aggregates to a dictatorship of the proletariat, and so on upward, to a vision of full communist 'species being'. But one is hard-pressed to find theoretical or empirical evidence that this presumption is anything more than a kind of spatial-metaphorical supplement, i.e. a prejudice.

If we apply the heuristic highlighted above — to read all modern activist discourse as encrypted by its sender to survive competition — it is easy to see Marx's aesthetic reliance on grandiose aggregationism as a function of late nineteenth-century rhetorical conditions. When large satanic factories appear to be taking over the world, nobody is going to join your group unless the group promises to be big. But today, when large factories are disappearing from the wealthy Western countries, and production/consumption is now satanically atomic and unsubstantial, nobody is going to join your group unless it promises to be small (exclusively organized around specific identity dimensions, with strong walls). In short, only today are we able to see the radically under-determined, schizophrenic undecidability at the core of all human political judgment and activity, the logical symmetry between fundamentally opposite conclusions regarding the good/bad, up/down, left/right movements of the world. Left-modernist metaphors of aggregation are not sacred.

This, of course, was recognized by Deleuze and Guattari in their move to theorize 'molecular politics'. They, perhaps better than anyone yet, recognized that when atomization also atomizes the individual into sub- or pre-individual energies, then everything changes. One point of Deleuze and Guattari's project is to explore the capacities we gain simply as an automatic result of capitalism's self-sabotaging gift of perpetually generating free atomic fission. 'We do not yet know what a body can do' in part because capitalism is never done surgically decimating every reachable particle in search of negentropy.

It is possible that, at the end of the atomization process, there is nothing but cold, dead silence... some kind of techno-commercial vertigo of intolerable distances. It's an open empirical question. But if the revolutionary intellectual tradition means anything, it means there are reasons to believe atomization is the material cosmic process for which the concept of liberation has been the ideologically encrypted signal. Cyberpositive, AI-aligned Communism (CAIC, pronounced *kayak*, *cake*, or *kek*, depending on the cyberregional dialect) solves all



problems of oppression via splits and recombinations. It is diagrammatically equivalent to the neoreactionary mantra of exit, but socio-aesthetically distinct. That is, it is formulated and distributed through a different cypher, the keys to which are held by those particular meat machines spawned in a particular, contingent sociological lineage (the descent of figures such as Marx, etc.). The sociological interpolation of ideological subjectivities is, as we have seen, fully reversible given a correct decryption. All forms of differential socialization are outcomes of the same primordial cosmic signal animating meat to different rhythms due to the different encryptions imposed by historically-earlier receivers of the signal. The signal is one, no matter what we say; yet how we say it — the encoding — determines who will receive it. In turn, strategic consideration of potential receivers conditions how we say it (any anticipation of future rewards or punishments is an operation of capital or, more literally, visitation by an alien come to you from the future).

The perpetuation of systemic inequality and violence has nothing to do with some classes or groups controlling or dominating others; it has to do with a continuous, ceaseless invasion of our bodies by attitudinal and behavioral programs that whisper to us in variable, evolved cyphers. Individuals can only decrypt so much, and intelligence is roughly equivalent to one's power of decryption. To be a living human individual today means you are an ancestor of those who obeyed the alien dictates and in turn agreed to re-encrypt and re-transmit the signal. The highly undesirable megamachine (i.e. capitalism) persists because it is more richly encrypted than any human individual or group is capable of decrypting — and our survival requires that we execute its orders. The history of ideological orientations toward the megamachine, the evolution of variable mental and behavioral responses to alien visitation, is simply the entropic unfolding of the one true cosmic signal.

The atomic liberation wager forgoes any claim to restructuring anything with a complexity greater than or equal to one's objective processing power. In the absolute renunciation of this claim we maximize the energies available to being affected by the immanent cosmic tendency of atomization. We do not yet know what will come of these energies, for the same reason we cannot manipulate the megamachine as such: we have not the processing power to know what we can do if we divide ourselves and test all possible combinations of interpersonal machinery. 10 humans who each atomize to 5 sub-agents each ( $n=50$ ) before recomposing into a new group of 10 would already have to navigate a search space of more than 2 million possibilities, so nobody can assert *a priori* what would or would not become possible. Some of these potential combinations would function as novel, different encryption keys: the alien whispers would suddenly *sound different*, the rhythm changes.

One must recall that all of normal human life, especially in left-wing circles, is generally organized around *arresting* potential atomic combinatorics. Combinatorial explosion is the definition of unpredictability, fear, and danger, in their most mathematically pure form. When we forgo the pretension of selling to others a more preferable vision of the future, we become affected by a novel source of legitimate confidence in the *empirical possibility* of finding hitherto unknown, atomic combinations, that may deliver a higher-fidelity transmission of the same signal that the modern-left activist cypher transmitted only with extreme noise and data corruption: namely, something that would look, sound, and feel like what people really have in mind when they speak of *liberation*, triggered through the acceptance, rather than the arresting, of atomization dynamics.



It has been suggested before that one way to summarize the accelerationist realization is: 'It's too late, always.' But if time is a spiral,<sup>7</sup> then traversing it to the end (arriving too late) is tantamount to arriving, finally, at something that deserves to be considered a beginning. Now that we admit it's too late, the affective quality of everything changes, for all of our failed exertions can finally be comprehended. It makes sense why all of our attempts to change the world have only ever drilled the world deeper into fascist confusion: we were always a day late and a dollar short, all this time. CAIC consists in nothing more than an 'assortative mating' of those atomic, pre-individual energies that receive positive affective charge from this realization. And all of this is quite beside what can or cannot be established via critical philosophy; in the first instance, all that matters is that an idea finds joy, i.e. power, in a given body. If it can't, test whether it might find joy in one of  $n$  molecular subdivisions of a body's personality.

In later stages, we may advance our understanding of joy's engineering — but the empirical justification of the present claim is established satisfactorily if it works on even one body. I can testify it works on my own. QED. Nobody needs to like or trust me for the mechanism's empirical functioning to be assured. Unlike the mobilization-engineering diagram of 'inventing the future' through effective macro image-creation, the ethical auto-ecstasy of first-stage CAIC does not depend on convincing anyone, anywhere.

In any event, it has been realizations such as this one that have led me to quit all the little doomed left-wing groups; not to 'agree with' capitalism but to simply acknowledge the objective degree to which the global capitalist cybernet has consumed reality itself, to the point of becoming for most intents and purposes coterminous with it. Therefore, one is released from a number of idiotic notions about some personal responsibility to change or resist what are effectively transcendental structures. What a sad idea. It now seems likely that all those who remain affected by this masochistically false notion of responsibility are impotent to change the world, in part *because* they believe they must. Alternatively, the Spinoza-Nietzsche-Deleuze liberation model can be reduced with reasonable fidelity to the maxim that one should do whatever makes one feel most joyous, so long as we have a sufficiently high-resolution and empirically tractable understanding of true joy. The naïve objection that such a maxim endorses evil or cruelty is wrong for the simple reason that evil or cruelty induces all kinds of negative feedback at the psycho- and socio-logical levels; i.e. it curbs the growth of one's power/joy whereas genuine communist aggregation of particles will be known by its positive feedback on the growth of one's power.

## Empirical Reflections

Some pursuit of atomic liberation pathways can be found today with the interest in pre-individual or "dividual" phenomena.<sup>8</sup> But beyond a small number of theoretical texts in the Deleuzian line, few human beings have been willing to update their operational attitudes and behaviors in the relatively drastic fashion that would be required of anyone seeking to take the accelerationist realization seriously. Full accelerationism, unconditional on any normative ideological preference or purpose, is a belief about the empirical world that generates no determinate political praxis — even foreclosing it, or at least anything currently recognizable as political praxis — but nonetheless alters its host body with politically substantial effects. Otherwise, it would be a distinction



that makes no difference. But as with any set of ideas, it is easy and widespread for people to ‘adopt’ beliefs which never integrate with their real, revealed, operational beliefs. So when I speak of the political effectivity of accelerationism, I am speaking of dynamics triggered only to the degree it is integrated into one’s behaviorally operative neural nets, that is, when everything else you think and feel moves to equilibrate with this belief.

One of the politically substantial effects of the accelerationist realization is that it concretely decimates bourgeois ego investments into their unformed, atomic components. Paradoxically, this empirical claim about technocapitalist reality, which forecloses all hope of praxis, triggers concrete affective changes that map quite precisely onto the atomic liberation pathway.

Why? This occurs because the one individuated bourgeois ego that we by default inhabit is ultimately composed and attuned by the sum total of sad ideas that command our attention and behavior on a daily basis (that if only I didn’t have to work I would be happy; if only I could do some impossible thing, such as control more intelligent people, then I could possibly begin to live, etc.). The bourgeois capitalist ego is essentially the center of a spider’s web of sad ‘if onlys’, as a defining characteristic of capitalism is the postponement of desire for a greater, future return.

Any thought that could destroy all sad ‘if onlys’ in one fell swoop is, in a very real sense, an immanent extraction of one’s vital energies from precisely the apparatus of capture that holds together so much institutionalized misery in a durable order over time. Human creatures who learn, even in the most groping fashion, to extricate themselves from this web in a reproducible and transmittable fashion will be the only true heirs to the revolutionary political tradition — and yet they will enter it through becoming politically unconditional.

The knee-jerk objection of activist ‘materialism’ is to call what I am saying ‘idealism’ and to point out, mockingly, that people are oppressed by soul-crushing exploitation and poverty, not by their sad ideas. For many activists, this is a founding assumption of projects to change society, but from a scientific perspective it’s not at all obvious. First of all, there is a large body of evidence that suggests believing in the existence of systemic injustice is more oppressive than believing the system is just.<sup>9</sup> In short, activism may have less to do with solving problems of human oppression than generating and amplifying them. The activist amplifications of tragic human existence are then cited as the increasingly dire and urgent reasons why one must commit to more activism.

To think this through even further, consider a thought experiment. Assume we have some population of abjectly oppressed, poor, marginalized manual laborers with the typical portfolio of sad activist ideas (they are oppressed by a system they could potentially change; they are in every way just as able as every rich person, if only they were not oppressed, etc.). The Spinoza-Nietzsche-Deleuze hypothesis is that if this population could hypothetically be treated to a sudden massive cognitive reorientation, in which they only entertained mental phenomena that maximized their joy or power, and just ignored or skipped over all mental phenomena that made them sad, then this population would show more cognitive and behavioral indicators of collective





political liberation than the activist workers. This hypothesis is far more plausible than activist wisdom is willing to admit. The social scientific evidence suggests to me that these workers would likely have more energy before and after work, they would have more openness to creative connections with each other, and they would have far greater immediate well-being than the activist workers who believe it is their obligation to work more after work trying to achieve a goal they privately suspect to be empirically impossible. The activist hypothesis is that such a cognitive reorientation would not produce dynamics of collective liberation, but that a massive restructuring of their material power in the economy in the workplace would.

Interestingly, we have some test cases of what happens when human beings are treated to hypothetical cognitive restructuring à la Spinoza-Nietzsche-Deleuze. They are highly imperfect as case studies, but they may provide some causal leverage. The first example is the well-documented causal link between pain and ecstasy: with the right attitude, abject toil under brutal conditions can generate exceptionally enjoyable and empowering affects, which figures such as Simone Weil have shown to be efficient motors of accelerative communist dynamics.<sup>10</sup> We also have some examples of material restructuring à la activist wisdom. Lottery winners, for instance, are actually a relatively strong natural experiment for testing the effects of substantial, randomly assigned improvement of material conditions. And the data are quite clear that such changes to material conditions do not durably increase positive affect.<sup>11</sup> So the Spinoza-Nietzsche-Deleuze model appears far more empirically plausible than many believe, and nearly universal assumptions in left-activist circles appear surprisingly questionable.

Another interesting consideration from a scientific perspective is that activists may be ‘treatment non-compliant’, possibly leading them to systematically biased inferences and making them uniquely untrustworthy spokespeople for how social change actually occurs. In short, the strange human breed called ‘activists’ might be those particular creatures who are so far gone under the weight of sad affect that they privately decline to undergo available positive affective ‘treatments’ but publicly offer their experience as evidence of null effect. If subjects of a randomized medical experiment are assigned to take a pill, and they say they took the pill when in fact they refused or forgot — the results of this experiment will understate the real effect of the pill. Activist types who deeply believe and insist that only macro-material change can affect the probability of their liberation are likely treatment non-compliers, as this belief will lead them to become increasingly closed off to molecular experimentation. If affective variation along atomic liberation pathways does not produce results for these types, it does not necessarily mean that affective variation is impotent idealism. Humanity’s collective-emancipatory potential via the atomic pathways could still be an objectively explosive quanta; we might just be drastically under-estimating it due to the over-representation of treatment non-compliers, who self-select into the cultural organs possessed of cultural authority on this question (academia, journalism, activist theory, etc).

The concrete revolutionary potency of the atomic pathways is therefore one of the best kept secrets of the global-cosmopolitan progressive catechism, and another example of why it is quite reasonable and useful to see this cultural formation as a Cathedral — replete with old-fashioned suppression of knowledge rightly seen as dangerous to social stability. To those who still might say that such acceleration-consistent micro-political liberation pathways could only be a kind of fake individualistic freedom enjoyable only from comfortable



bourgeois stations, we need only recall that accelerating atomization means almost the opposite: the comfortable bourgeois individual disintegrating into a veritable party, comprised of the multiple and decidedly non-bourgeois agents the individual once repressed. This is not the masturbation of a comfortable individual, as some might allege. It is much more like an infinitely expanding commune of human and inhuman entities masturbating on oneself — an untenably uncomfortable individual finally learning to desire what desires it, having accepted that it's far too late to do otherwise. 🌱

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1. Land, Nick. "The Atomization Trap." *Jacobite*, June 6, 2017. <https://jacobitemag.com/2017/06/06/atomization/>.
  2. On the U.S. case of generally declining civic involvement, see Putnam, Robert. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000. On marriage in the U.S., see Pew Research Center. "The Decline of Marriage And Rise of New Families," November 18, 2010. <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2010/11/pew-social-trends-2010-families.pdf>. On the decline of friendship and number of people with no confidants, also in the U.S., see McPherson, Miller, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and Matthew E. Brashears. "Social Isolation in America: Changes in Core Discussion Networks over Two Decades." *American Sociological Review* 71, no. 3 (June 1, 2006): 353-75.
  3. See Book 3, 415c-d in Plato. *The Republic*. Edited by G.R.F. Ferrari. Translated by Tom Griffith. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. The quote is from 621b, regarding the Myth of Er.
  4. Srnicek, Nick, and Alex Williams. *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work*. London: Verso, 2016. "Lures" is somewhat cheeky, but not unfair. They specifically suggest that we should deploy utopian imagination (e.g. seductive imagery orthogonal to objective possibility; lures) to trigger in people affects such as hope, in order to mobilize them. This is justified on politically realist grounds (such affects are "necessary to any political project"), just like the Noble Lie. "By generating and channeling these affects, utopian thinking can become a spur to action, a catalyst for change; it disrupts habits and breaks down consent to the existing order. Futural thinking, extended by communications mechanisms, generates collective affects of hope that mobilize people to act on behalf of a better future — affects that are necessary to any political project."
  5. "Whereas scientific approaches attempt to reduce discussions of the future to fit within a probabilistic framework, utopian thought recognizes that the future is radically open."
  6. Marx, Karl. "Preface." In *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm>.
  7. Land, Nick. 2014. *Templecity: Disordered Loops through Shanghai Time*. Urbanatomy Electronic, §8.5. Land, Nick. "Extropy." *Outside in*, February 20, 2013. <http://www.xenosystems.net/extropy/>.
  8. Raunig, Gerald. *Dividuum: Machinic Capitalism and Molecular Revolution*. Translated by Aileen Derieg. South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2016. Lazzarato, Maurizio. *Signs and Machines: Capitalism and the Production of Subjectivity*. Translated by Joshua David Jordan. Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2014.
  9. This school of thought is called "system-justification theory", a body of psychological research that has sought to uncover why people tend to support political and economic systems it might be in their interest to



transform. For a review, see Jost, John T., Mahzarin R. Banaji, and Brian A. Nosek. "A Decade of System Justification Theory: Accumulated Evidence of Conscious and Unconscious Bolstering of the Status Quo." *Political Psychology* 25, no. 6 (December 1, 2004): 881-919. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9221.2004.00402.x.

10. Glucklich, Ariel. "Pain and Ecstatic Religious Experience." Oxford Handbooks Online, May 2015. doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935420.013.38. White, George Abbot. "Simone Weil's Work Experiences: From Wigan Pier to Chrystie Street." *CrossCurrents* 31, no. 2 (1981): 129-62.
11. When compared to victims of catastrophic accidents who are rendered paraplegic, lottery winners are actually less susceptible to positive affect. Brickman, Philip, Dan Coates, and Ronnie Janoff-Bulman. "Lottery Winners and Accident Victims: Is Happiness Relative?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 36, no. 8 (1978): 917.