Interpassive Anti-aesthetic

David Khan

This paper explores the implications of Robert Pfaller's conception of interpassivity with reference to a predominantly Lacanian perspective on subjectivisation. In so doing, the aim is to engender a conversation encompassing art criticism, cultural theory, and psychoanalysis. The reference to an "Interpassive Anti-aesthetic" is intended to suggest how considerations of interpassivity present challenges to the humanist-metaphysical prejudices and phantasms of the Western tradition. Specifically, it is suggested that interpassive phenomena expose as illusory (i) the presumed agency and autonomy of art subjects and art objects, (ii) the supposed emancipatory and democratic potentials of interactive and participatory artworks, and (iii) the ideological underpinnings of postmodernism — particularly insofar as the postmodern is defined in terms of its opposition to the modern. In accordance with Pfaller's contention that interpassivity involves "selective contact with a thing in order, in exchange, to entirely escape that very thing", on which basis, "Interpassivity is thus a strategy of escaping identification and consequently subjectivisation", two primary moments of interpassivity are elucidated: interpassivity-as-delegation and interpassivity-as-resistance. The paper presents an understanding of the twofold nature of interpassivity in terms of the psychoanalytic treatment – specifically, the Lacanian proposition that "the experience of the fundamental phantasy becomes the drive" for the "subject who has traversed the radical phantasy". In keeping with Pfaller's original

intentions for interpassivity to provide a way of reflecting critically on arts discourse in the mid-1990s, these theoretical considerations on interpassivity and subjectivisation are applied to Nicholas Bourriaud's promotion of relational aesthetics and relational art, as well as objections to this advocacy raised by Claire Bishop.

Why Interpassivity?

In the introductory chapter to his recent collection of essays, *Interpassivity: The Aesthetics of Delegated Enjoyment* (2017), Robert Pfaller recalls that he proposed the concept of interpassivity in 1996 — initially as a way of reflecting critically on a contemporary artworld dominated by the discourse of interactivity, with its associated rhetoric espousing the desirability of audience participation in the arts. In the first instance, Pfaller formulated interpassivity for artists "who were responding in complete panic to the pressures of interactivity, obsessively pondering about how to and whether they could include the audience in their work". Considered as a kind of inverse correlate of interactivity, interpassivity was intended to give artists the means to "create a space of distance that would enable a more detached observation" of the cultural field in which they were enmeshed.[1] As originally conceived, then, interpassivity functioned as a critical tool by which artists might negotiate the contemporary cultural field and so become, if not more genuinely emancipated, then at least more aware of the manner of their entanglement within the potentially oppressive discourses of interactivity and participation. However, reflecting on the situation of the 1990s from a present day perspective, Pfaller observes that the "interactivity hype" has largely evaporated (if not, necessarily, investment in the notion of participation per se) — a happenstance accompanied by a widening of the theoretical scope of interpassivity. With the benefit of this expanded viewpoint, it is apparent how, in the context of postmodernism and new media, the discourses of interactivity and participation constituted a "revival of very old wishes and utopias, which had become unquestioned facts".[2] As suggested by the impetus of Pfaller's discussion in the chapter entitled "Against Participation", among the most persistent myths, in this regard, is the idea that art has the

power to promote genuinely democratic and emancipated social conditions in which people might enjoy more complete degrees of self-realisation and individual freedom. Pfaller's instrumental point is that, insofar as it invests in myths of this kind, the rhetoric of participation in the arts and elsewhere is little more than a collection of "hollow phrases" that "feign solutions" to a problem (i.e., the lack of social emancipation) it actually creates through "the affirmative commissioning of individuals under the conditions of postmodern ideology".[3] This demonstrates how, latterly, the concept of interpassivity has come to resonate more strongly with the concerns of cultural theory insofar as it provides a perspective from which to explore the ideological bases of postmodernism. In other words, considerations of interpassivity are of utility in exposing the degree to which postmodernism — even as it defines itself in terms of its opposition to modernism and modernist myths — is itself precisely an investment in myth (if not a perpetuation of the very modernist myths to which it is, ostensibly, opposed).

But *what* is interpassivity and how might we explore its implications most effectively? As we shall see, Pfaller offers a twofold definition such that interpassive behaviours and structures (i) bear witness to a double delegation of one's enjoyment and belief such that other people or things are taken to enjoy and/or believe in one's place, and (ii) constitute strategies for resisting or escaping identification/subjectivisation. The terminology employed immediately confronts the reader with a variety of potential ambiguities—if not outright contradictions. How, precisely, should we interpret the suggestion that interpassive phenomena involve other people, other subjects—even other *objects*—enjoying or believing *for* us? From whose perspective is this enjoyment/belief registered? Do the other people *know* that they have been delegated the roles of enjoying or believing? In what way can inanimate objects be said to "enjoy" or "believe"? "Where", in any event, do knowledge and belief "reside"? Given that subjectivisation names that process to which individuals are subjected and by which they become subjects – i.e., a process by which *individual* agency and sufficiency is defined in terms of a relationship with something *other* – is it entirely tenable to speak of interpassivity in terms

of the delegations and resistances of the *one*? Even if we allow that what we call "agency" and "activity" is inherently *inter*subjective – a matter of subjective *relativity* as opposed to subjective *essence* – is there not a troubling terminological difficulty in designating the *activities* of delegation and/or resistance as inter*passive*? In raising these questions, it is not our intention to suggest that the notion of interpassivity is, necessarily, incoherent. On the contrary, our position is that the critical utility of interpassivity obtains precisely *by virtue of* its apparent ambiguities and contradictions. Making sense of interpassivity demands that we confront and challenge various humanist-metaphysical prejudices and preconceptions vis à vis subjectivity – the exemplary symptom of which (in a Western context, at least) would seem to be the persistent reification of the powers and privileges of the self-conscious individual – the phantasm of the essential self, presumed to be entirely present and transparent to itself in acts of thinking and knowing.

Notwithstanding the seeming infelicity or imprecision of certain turns of phrase that may accompany a superficial reading of *Interpassivity* (and, of course, we understand that various concessions need to be made in the name of readability, and it is to Pfaller's credit that he is eminently readable), our perspective is that a more considered assessment of this text makes it clear that precisely such challenges to the tradition of humanist, metaphysical thought are implicit in Pfaller's presentation of interpassive structures and behaviours. Indeed, his preoccupation with the *aesthetics* of interpassivity notwithstanding, to the extent Pfaller confronts the reader with challenges of this kind, we might be justified in speaking of the *anti*-aesthetic dimension of interpassivity: an "interpassive anti-aesthetic" if you will. The anti-humanist, anti-metaphysical flavour of Pfaller's commentary is evident from his appeals to Louis Althusser's conception of subjective " 'interpellation' " and Gianni Vattimo's critique of the "theoretical humanist paradigm of 'reappropriation' ".[4] Delving further into the writing of Althusser and Vattimo, respectively, we find two basic theoretical perspectives that commend themselves for the interrogation of interpassivity – namely, the conceptions of subjectivity proper to the thought of, on the one hand, Jacques Lacan, and on the other hand,

Martin Heidegger. In what follows, the challenges interpassivity presents to humanist-metaphysical conceptions of subjectivity will be explored mainly with reference to Lacanian theory, thereby echoing the appeals Pfaller himself makes to psychoanalysis – not to mention the positions taken by instrumental co-commentators such as Slavoj Žižek and Mladen Dolar. On occasion, however, it will be useful to appeal to Heideggerian ideas and, in any event, it seems reasonable to suggest that any thorough-going commentary on humanist-metaphysical prejudices will take place in view of Heidegger's call for a *destruktion* of Western metaphysics as ontotheology – i.e., the challenging of discourses that are excessively essentialist, absolutist, or totalising. Furthermore, it will be assumed that readers possess, at least, a passing familiarity with the theory engaged with therein – but in the name of promoting conversations across scholarly disciplines, our interpretations of key concepts will be supported by reasonably comprehensive references. Bearing these considerations in mind, let us begin by considering interpassivity-as-delegation and then proceed to an inspection of interpassivity-as-resistance.

Interpassivity-as-delegation

In the opening paragraph of Pfaller's text, it is proposed that interpassivity is a "mostly unacknowledged form of cultural behaviour" that "entails letting others *consume* in your place" – where "others" encompasses "other people, animals, machines, etc." Pfaller subsequently identifies a range of interpassive behaviours or phenomena that include, for example, delegating to other people the task of consuming one's drinks, to recording or copying devices the task of watching films or reading books in one's place, to "ritual machines" (e.g., the Tibetan prayer wheel) the tasks of praying or believing for one, and to the laugh tracks accompanying TV sitcoms and the like the task of expressing amusement.[5] As Pfaller acknowledges, the examples of the Tibetan prayer wheel and "canned laughter" on TV are introduced by Žižek in *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989). Here, Žižek refers to the "objective status of belief" – i.e., the manner by which belief designates something "radically exterior, embodied in the practical, effective procedure of

people" as opposed to the usual presupposition that belief reflects or expresses that which is interior or essential to subjects.[6] Žižek points out that his account is, itself, indebted to Lacan's brief discussion, in *Seminar VII*, of the role played by the Chorus in classical plays. Here, Lacan observes how the Chorus performs the task of emotional involvement on behalf of the weary theatre-goer: "Your emotions are taken charge of by the healthy order displayed on the stage. The Chorus takes care of them. The emotional commentary is done for you... The Chorus will feel in your stead."[7] Also relevant, in this context, is the discussion of "*la claque*" in Dolar's essay "The Enjoying Machine" (2001). As Dolar relates, *la claque* is a longstanding feature of traditional European theatre whereby audience participants are hired to provide applause and other responses in their capacity as behavioural guides or supplements to the paying audience. The claque, therefore, performs a role directly analogous to that of the Greek Chorus, but does so in the audience space rather than on stage.[8]

In light of these examples of interpassivity-as-delegation, Pfaller suggests that interpassive behaviours "are grounded in the preference of particular subjects for *delegating their enjoyment* rather than having it themselves". Ostensibly, this implies that "interpassive people delegate precisely those things that they *enjoy* doing [...] Rather than letting others *work* for them, they let them *enjoy* for them [...] they delegate *passivity* to others rather than *activity*".[9] Subsequently, Pfaller elaborates the nature of interpassive behaviours with reference to the example of the intellectual who derives satisfaction merely by photocopying texts in a library – texts that may end up never being read. The interpassive dimension obtains insofar as the act or enjoyment of reading is delegated to the photocopy machine or process. In Pfaller's view, this reveals to what extent "interpassive behaviour is always necessarily linked with a seeming miniature staging of the act of enjoyment. With the help of the photocopier, intellectuals played at reading in libraries."[10] In effect, the delegations proper to interpassive behaviours or phenomena result in performances whereby the interpassive *individual* plays at, models, or pantomimes a presumably enjoyable activity through *another* subject or object. In the field of object-based art, the performance in question

involves delegating to the *art object* the act or enjoyment of *observation*. This pantomime is proper to what, in the second chapter of his book, Pfaller terms "interpassive art" – which is to say, "traditional ('object-centred') arts" exemplified by the "masterpiece [that] would observe itself, relieving the observers of this task (or pleasure)."[11] Indeed, Pfaller notes that "Precisely this idea of self-observation by the artwork is seen [...] in modernism and the classical avant-garde."[12] From the perspective of art history and art criticism, Pfaller's identification of the interpassive dimension of modern art clearly resonates with Clement Greenberg's well-known advocacy of formal autonomy. Here, perhaps, one of the most familiar examples is Greenberg's landmark essay "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" (1939), in which he suggests that avant-garde artists or poets seek the "absolute... by creating something valid solely on its own terms... something *given*, increate, independent of meanings" such that "Content is to be dissolved so completely into form that the work of art or literature cannot be reduced in whole or part to anything not itself."[13]

At this point, it seems necessary to point out the problems that may arise from reading too literally Pfaller's references to "interpassive people" and "interpassive art" – at least, if we are to be rigorous in approaching interpassivity from an anti-humanist, anti-metaphysical standpoint. In the first place (if this is not stating the obvious), it is important to bear in mind that the terms "interactivity" and "interpassivity" apply to *relations obtaining between entities* as opposed to *intrinsic features of entities*. In both cases, Pfaller observes a transference between subjects or between subjects and objects – activity or passivity, respectively. Pfaller elaborates the nature of the transferences in question by appealing to a distinction between work and consumption. On this basis, interactivity is said to involve transference of activity through a delegation of work from producer or product to consumers. Thus, for example, interactive artworks involve a transfer of activity/delegation of work from the artist or artwork to spectator-participants. Conversely, interpassivity is said to involve transference of passivity through a delegation of consumption from the consumer to the product. Hence, interpassive artworks involve a transfer of passivity/delegation of consumption from spectators who are non-participants to artworks.[14]

Strictly speaking, then, there is no such thing as an "interactive person" or an "interpassive person" – these terms must be understood as a convenient shorthand for a person *acting on* or *with* another person or thing. Similarly, the expressions "interactive art" or "interpassive art" are potentially misleading. More precisely, these terms refer to the art with which a person interacts in some way – even if, in the case of interpassive art, this "interaction" is apparently negative in nature insofar as, from the perspective of the artist or spectator, it resides in delegating to the *artwork* or (as in the case of the "relational art" to be addressed in the closing section of this paper) orchestrated *art situation* the tasks of aesthetic observation and even actual becoming as art. By way of anticipating discussion to follow, the negative interactions proper to interpassive art are synonymous with what Pfaller refers to as "selective contact with a thing in order, in exchange, to entirely escape that very thing."[15] However, the critical point to take away from these considerations is that, depending on the tenor of the relationships that are in question at any given time, the expressions interactivity *or* interpassivity may be applied to the very same person or thing.

Indeed, if interpassivity is (as Dolar suggests) the "reverse side" or (in Žižek's view) the "shadowy... uncanny double" of interactivity, then it would seem that, in considering entities and their relations, interactivity and interpassivity are opposite sides of the same coin.[16] How should we interpret this concurrency? On one level, it simply reflects the fact that it is possible to think any expression in the field of subjectivity as being mediated by either an active voice or a passive voice. Superficially speaking, "I observe" (active voice) is equivalent to "it is observed" (passive voice). In both cases, there is an assertion of agency: the active statement makes this assertion immediately, openly, directly, whilst the passive statement does so, mediately, allusively, indirectly. Still further, it may be suggested that, in asserting agency circuitously, surreptitiously – at one remove as it were – in effect, the passive voice displaces and veils the active "I", thereby eroding its integrity, implicitly placing it in question. Compared with the active voice, whose determinations would seem to brook no dissent, the passive voice, by contrast, makes assertions that are sustained only in their ambiguity. Thus, if interactivity and

interpassivity *are* opposite sides of the same coin, then this "coin" (i.e., subjectivisation or the identifications proper to subjectivisation) is one whose being is (actively) asserted only insofar as, always already, it is (passively) undermined, placed in question. Here, we gain some insight as to why Pfaller links interpassivity with escaping identification and subjectivisation. The "escape", towards which interpassive behaviours and structures gesture, can be understood as akin to what, in *Seminar XI*, Lacan has in mind when he suggests that "the experience of the fundamental phantasy becomes the drive" for the "subject who has traversed the radical phantasy".[17] In a fashion that echoes Dolar's explorations of the implications of interpassivity in "The Enjoying Machine", I would suggest that the basic efficacy of interpassivity resides in its potential to enliven this "traversing" of "fantasy". In the limit, this process engenders a confrontation with the enabling conditions of identification/subjectivisation – in the face of which identification/subjectivisation as such is subverted or unravelled. Hence, in becoming drive, subjective experience per se is superseded by or disappeared into its constitutive ground – something Lacan refers to as a "headless subjectification, a subjectification without a subject".[18]

Having drawn parallels between interpassivity-as-delegation and what we might term the modernist aesthetic position proper to Greenbergian formalism, Pfaller's subsequent appeals to psychoanalysis complicate this resonance and, indeed, seem more in harmony with *post*modern and *anti*-aesthetic (i.e., anti-formalist, anti-essentialist, anti-absolutist, anti-totalising) standpoints on art. In particular, the idea that interpassivity-as-delegation is neither simply nor immediately an expression of individual agency and autonomy becomes apparent when Pfaller likens the delegations and performances of interpassive individuals to "the substitute behaviours of compulsive neuroses decoded by Freud" – a key feature of which is, of course, that the individuals in question are oblivious of that which drives the repetition compulsion (which is of the order of the unconscious and repressed) or even, indeed, *that* they are repeating themselves.[19] On the level of self-consciousness, then, intellectuals playing at reading through photocopier machines (and deriving satisfaction in consequence) are unaware of

their interpassive delegation or performance. Indeed, they would be incredulous at the suggestion that they were, in any sense, letting a machine read for them– something that would be tantamount to anthropomorphising an object or attributing to the machine-automaton the privilege of self-conscious agency. As Pfaller suggests, the idea that a machine-automaton literally might perform the act of reading in the place of a self-conscious agent cannot be regarded as anything other than an investment in illusion. That said, Pfaller proposes that not only do interpassive behaviours demand the embracing of illusions, the illusions in question possess a distinctive character insofar as they are "not merely illusions that *certain people* have never believed in, but apparently illusions that *no one* has ever believed in […] illusions […] entirely unsuitable for anyone ever to believe in." Nevertheless, Pfaller insists that it is, apparently, only by virtue of *someone*'s investment in a completely untenable illusion of this kind that we can explain the satisfaction attained by the intellectual from the act of photocopying materials that will never be read – if not the satisfaction attained through the interpassive delegation of enjoyment to others in general.[20] And at this point, the question immediately arises: *who* is this hypothetical someone who believes the illusion that the interpassive individual cannot? Pfaller's response is instructive for the general approach this paper will take towards the topic of interpassivity –namely, that no *one*, that is, no *individual subject* believes the illusion. On the contrary, interpassive phenomena confront us with the spectre of what Pfaller refers to as " 'illusions without owners' " or "a new psychic observing agency, only touched upon to date by psychoanalytical theory, but not yet conceptually registered: that of the 'naïve observer' ".[21]

Interpassivity-as-resistance

Pfaller's understanding of interpassivity-as-delegation in terms of the investment in an illusory, naïve observer exemplifies the manner by which interpassivity per se presents challenges to humanist-metaphysical conceptions of subjectivity. However, before proceeding to address the implications of the naïve observer in more detail, it is important to bear in mind that interpassivity-as-delegation is only the first

moment in our twofold consideration of interpassivity. Indeed, *qua* investment in illusion, interpassivity-as-delegation may be regarded as that which must be negotiated or worked through in order to realise the even more provocative and critically efficacious aspect of interpassivity – namely, interpassivity-as-resistance. The manner by which Pfaller does, indeed, conceive of interpassivity in terms of a movement from interpassivity-as-delegation to interpassivity-as-resistance seems evident from his suggestion that

> [i]n interpassive behaviour, people take up selective contact with a thing in order, in exchange, to entirely escape that very thing—and indeed, not only, as we have established to begin with, with regard to enjoyment, but also with regard to belief; that is, with regard to an identification with an illusion. Interpassivity is thus a strategy of escaping identification and consequently subjectivisation.[22]

Here, Pfaller's reference to the "selective contact with a thing" corresponds to interpassivity-as-delegation. The selective contact *is* the interpassive delegation – an equivalence that underscores for us the manner by which inter*passivity* is a kind of obverse, complementary inter*activity* at a distance, in the negative. Moreover, notwithstanding the apparent assignment of this mode of interpassivity to the behaviour of self-conscious individuals, we have just seen how Pfaller's invocation of the "naïve observer" evidently situates interpassivity-as-delegation beyond such limited conceptions of subjectivity. This demonstrates to what extent caution is indicated in reading Pfaller too literally or superficially: we must be alert to the manner by which certain turns of phrase –particularly those which appear to reify the being and agency of self-conscious individuals—potentially mask a more nuanced complexity. Bearing this mind, the ostensible point being made in the passage cited above is that, by virtue of the delegation of enjoyment/belief, there is enabled an "escape" from "that very thing". In this "escape", there becomes visible a "strategy of escaping identification and consequently subjectivisation". It is this "strategy" that is proper to what we are calling interpassivity-as-resistance—although, in keeping with the caution given above, questions arise as to the precise nature

and identity of the "who" or "what" that so delegates and resists. Indeed, in light of the more nuanced model of subjectivity that the exploration of interpassivity demands, even these questions are, arguably, only of preliminary importance. Their value resides in enlivening more fundamental considerations of the nature of "activity" and "agency" per se—which is to say, an interrogation of the binary "active-passive" or "agency-automatism", and a challenging of the tendency to identify these as distinct, separable functions, capacities, or modalities of (i.e., possessed by, grounded in) particular beings or things (e.g., art subjects and art objects).

Relevant here is the way in which the term "resistance" can signify self-conscious, individual agency *and* a structural automatism that is of the order of the unconscious – i.e., the phenomenon of repetition compulsion that bears witness to subjectivisation in what we shall refer to as its (mal)functioning and/or the manner by which, in Lacan's view, drive "forces" (i.e., sculpts or shapes) desire.[23] To the extent that resistance *may* be considered to be an expression of self-conscious agency, it harmonises with the privileging of individual self-empowerment and self-realisation proper to the tradition of Western humanism – of which, in the fine arts, the more recent discourses of Romanticism and Modernism are exemplary. Thus, one encounters the familiar figures of the artist-hero, genius, and avant-gardist revolutionary=whose individual perspicacity, it may be noted, typically is directed against a system defined by collective conservatism and conformity (e.g., the academy, the art canon, canonical art institutions). Of course, the actual situation is more complex than this myth in which the avant-gardist individual battles the totalitarian cultural collective. The academy or canonical structures of art do not define an undifferentiated mass but, on the contrary, an extremely heterogeneous constellation of individual people and things; conversely, to the extent individual artist-revolutionaries share common values or work in concert, they may be said precisely to constitute a collective called the "avant-garde".

The questions raised by the definition and assignment of the categories "individual" and "collective" already signal that modernist

aesthetics, in privileging the former over the latter, does not tell the whole story. However, this is not to suggest that a more complete or objective perspective on art and aesthetics may be obtained simply by reversing the direction of the privileging—so that the collective or context takes precedence over the individual. Such a tactic could not be said to enliven more than the most preliminary and superficial possibilities of a postmodernist anti-aesthetics, the more complete realisation of which demands interrogating the constitutive ground of the binaries "individual-collective" or "self-otherness" as such, as opposed to merely accomplishing their reversal. The figure of the cultural collective is of utility insofar as it engenders a way of thinking interpassivity-as-resistance that does not, necessarily, invest in the humanist privileging of individual agency. Thus, contrary to the *resistance-for-change* that exemplifies the stance of the avant-garde artist-individual, it is possible to speak of the *resistance-to-change* that seems proper to the tendency to maintain (or return to) the equilibrium of a conservative, homeostatic, or entropic structure or system—even though, as we shall see, vis à vis the relationship between drive and desire, it is also necessary to consider that which disturbs or exceeds this homeostasis in the very constituting of it. Moreover, in saying this, we should bear in mind that, ultimately, the elucidation of interpassivity demands embracing a model of subjectivity wherein the individual and the collective, the self and the others, are related dialectically. From this perspective, the functions of "agent-like" resistance-for-change and "automatist" resistance-to-change are to be liberated from any one-to-one correspondence with, respectively, the individual or the collective. On the contrary, the subjectivity defined in terms of a reciprocal tension between self and otherness, consciousness and the unconscious, also will be defined in terms of a counterpoise of agency and automatism, activity and passivity.

The degree to which Pfaller thinks interpassivity-as-resistance in this way is evident from his reference to the " 'theoretical anti-humanism' of the concept of interpassivity" and the two theoretical coordinates he invokes in support of this position: Louis Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" (1970) and Gianni Vattimo's *The End of Modernity* (1991).[24] In the former case, Pfaller identifies the "philosophical

common ground" of interpassivity with an Althusserian "mistrust of the assumption that 'activity' is fundamentally good and that, consequently, activating the beholder will always be aesthetically productive and satisfying"—a position that, as Pfaller puts it, reflects Althusser's contention that "becoming a subject is one of the key mechanisms of ideological subjugation".[25] Here, Pfaller's allusion is to Althusser's notion of subjective "interpellation"—namely, the way in which ideological structures and individual subjects define a counterpoise or reciprocity such that "*the category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology*" only "*insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of 'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects*."[26] Of immediate relevance to the discussion to follow is the distinctly Lacanian flavour of Althusser's argument—specifically, the manner by which interpellation involves an imaginary function of recognition/identification (where it is important to note that, in Lacanian terms, always already, the function of recognition/identification is a function of *mis*recognition, *mis*identification). Thus, Althusser maintains that "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" and suggests that our sense of self—our conviction that we are self-willing individuals—is an "elementary ideological effect": a consequence of an "ideological *recognition* function" that is, at the same time, a "function of *misrecognition—méconnaissance*".[27] With reference to the functioning of Christian ideology, Althusser elaborates the ideological (mis)recognition function proper to subjective interpellation in terms of a "*doubly* speculary... mirror structure" between an "Absolute Subject" (i.e., God) and individual subjects. This structural reciprocity gives rise to a twofold paradox such that (i) the Absolute subject confirms its supreme autonomy and sufficiency precisely through interpellating the "infinity of individuals into subjects" (i.e., "God needs men, the great Subject needs subjects", as Althusser puts it); and (ii) individual subjects obtain a transcendental guarantee of *their* autonomy and sufficiency precisely through being interpellated by the Absolute Subject (i.e., "men need God, the subjects need the Subject").[28]

Latterly, Pfaller links the Althusserian scepticism of the efficacy—if not the very *possibility*—of purely individual activity and agency with the

critique of modernist, humanist values presented in Vattimo's *End of Modernity*. On this basis, Pfaller maintains that interpassivity involves "questioning the theoretical humanist paradigm of 'reappropriation' " and, indeed, demands interrogating what has tended to be taken for granted by "most emancipatory movements since 1968"—of which the tendency to privilege activity over passivity, subjectivity over objectivity, and mutability over permanence are, for us, among the most instrumental prejudices Pfaller places in question.[29] In so doing, Pfaller appeals to the manner by which Vattimo exposes the modernist-humanist investment in (i) the necessity or desirability of human individuals to be engaged in a "progressive 'enlightenment' which develops through an ever more complete appropriation and reappropriation of its own 'foundations' " so that, always already, the presentation of the "new" involves a "recovery", "rebirth", or "return" of a "foundation-origin", and (ii) the metaphysical presumption that the powers and capacities of human individuals can be realised "through an appeal to a transcendental foundation" (i.e., God or, more generally, the notion of ultimate truth).[30] By way of more precisely defining the context within which considerations of interpassivity emerge, it is worth taking note of the two primary philosophical points of reference *Vattimo* invokes in advancing his critique of western-modern humanist-metaphysical values. Firstly, Vattimo makes recourse to Nietzschean nihilism, the "entire process" of which may be "summarized by the death of God, or by the 'devaluation of the highest values' "—i.e., in the context of Western humanist-metaphysical thought, the subversion of claims to objective truth and the transcendental ground on which such claims depend.[31] Secondly, and perhaps even more importantly, Vattimo's use of the term "appropriation" to critique humanist-metaphysical prejudices is indebted to Heidegger's conception of *Ereignis*, the so-called "event of appropriation". In harmony with the dialectical model of subjectivity this paper advocates for the analysis of interpassivity, Vattimo refers to *Ereignis* as "the play of appropriation and expropriation"[32] and as

> ...the event in which the thing is given... only insofar as it is taken up in 'the mirror-play of the world' or in the 'round dance' (*Ring*). While appropriating itself in this fashion, however, it is also expropriated (*Ent-eignet*), since in the last analysis appropriation is always an

Über-eignen or transpropriation... the thing comes to Being only as an aspect of a total project that, while it allows the thing to appear, also consumes it in a network of references.[33]

Here, Vattimo acknowledges his debt to Heidegger's essay "The Thing" (1951), wherein reference is made to the reciprocal "mirror-play" of the "fourfold" (i.e., "Earth and sky, divinities and mortals") such that "each is expropriated, within their mutual appropriation, into its own being. This expropriative appropriating is the mirror-play of the fourfold", in relation to which "The fouring presences as the worlding of the world. The mirror-play of world is the round dance of appropriating... The round dance is the ring that joins while it plays as mirroring".[34] In Heidegger's philosophy, *Ereignis* is a complex and multivalent term, a more detailed treatment of which is beyond the scope of the present study.[35] For our purposes, it is, perhaps, sufficient to observe that, in Heidggerian parlance, *Ereignis* is implicated in the becoming or "clearing" of *Dasein* as "ek-sistent" "being-in-the-world". That is to say, *Ereignis* is synonymous with a non-humanist and non-metaphysical conception of subjectivisation (or, better perhaps, the enabling ground of subjectivisation) insofar as it pertains to the becoming of a subjectivity exceeding and eluding metaphysical oppositions such as inside-outside or self-other.[36]

Naïve observer to subject supposed

Having identified two primary modes of interpassivity, and having clarified how interpassivity, so conceived, presents challenges to humanist-metaphysical understandings of subjectivity, we are now in a position to explore further what is implied by Pfaller's suggestion that, in the *transition* from interpassivity-as-delegation to interpassivity-as-resistance, there is enabled an *escaping* of subjectivisation. In what follows, this transition and escape will be illuminated with reference to the clinical situation of psychoanalysis. Our suggestion is that, insofar as certain critical potentials are actualised, considerations of interpassivity parallel the progress of the psychoanalytic treatment. Thus, the transition from interpassivity-as-delegation to interpassivity-as-resistance bears witness to a subjective transformation wherein an initial investment in

illusion is succeeded or supplemented by an investment in the process of analysing or interrogating illusions per se. Indeed, as previously suggested, in Lacanian terms, the investment in the process of analysis as such is, in the (strictly speaking, unrealisable and ideal) limit, equivalent to the completion of the traversing of fantasy such that the experience of the fundamental fantasy becomes the drive. Herein resides the "escape" from subjectivisation to which Pfaller refers: in the limit, this escape is nothing less than the very elision of subjectivisation per se in the face of drive as a "headless subjectification".

At this point, it seems necessary to define more precisely what we mean by "subjectivisation". Superficially speaking, we understand subjectivisation to name the manner by which people become subjects—i.e., the becoming or crystallisation of subject-hood. However, if we are to be rigorous in advancing an anti-humanist, anti-metaphysical perspective on subjectivisation, then we must allow that it demands a conception of "the subject" as "ex-centric", "decentred", "extimate", or (in Heideggerian parlance) "ek-sistent".[37] For this reason, and in a fashion that is entirely in keeping with the impetus of Lacanian theory, we shall identify "subjectivisation" with the function or operation synonymous with the continuous crystallisation or becoming of the *field* of desiring subjectivity—where, moreover, we may take it as read that, in this context, "subjectivity" = "inter-subjectivity". Still further, it is also crucial to appreciate that, from a Lacanian standpoint, subjectivisation is characterised by its interminability—its perennial failure ever to be fully resolved. To this extent, subjectivisation designates a functioning that is, always already, *mal*functioning; an operation paradoxically predicated on the impossibility of its full realisation. It is from this perspective that we may understand Lacan's suggestions that desiring subjectivity defines a "relation of being to lack… the lack of being whereby the being exists", and that the subjectivity emerging as "the goal, the end, the term of analysis before it is named, before it is formed, before it is articulated, if indeed it ever is… is the subject of a becoming".[38] The exemplary symptom of the perennial (mal)functioning of subjectivisation is the manner by which *self-consciousness* emerges in the form of a fundamentally irresolvable relation of tension with *otherness* or,

alternatively, what Lacan refers to as the "big Other"—i.e., for our intents and purposes, language-mediated, social and cultural reality, the greater part of which is, practically speaking, repressed from the perspective of self-consciousness and, therefore, on the level of the unconscious.[39]

In the context of a discussion devoted to interpassivity, we shall seek further clarification of what is involved in the Lacanian conception of subjectivisation—from which process, supposedly, interpassivity offers an escape—through a closer inspection of what Pfaller refers to as the "naïve observer". Here, it is evident that Žižek's *Sublime Object* provides us with a Lacanian equivalent: in Lacanian terms, Pfaller's naïve observer resonates with what Žižek refers to as " 'the *subject supposed to believe*' "—one of three "subjects presumed to..." (the others being "the *subject presumed to enjoy*" and "the *subject presumed to desire*") that are structurally correlated with and, indeed, whose "function... is precisely to disguise [the] troubling paradox" of the Lacanian "subject supposed to know" (*le sujet supposé savoir*), which Žižek terms their "basis" or "matrix".[40] In this regard, two points demand our attention. Firstly, we may consider investments in "subjects supposed" precisely to be symptoms of subjectivisation. Relevant, here, is Pfaller's understanding of investments in naïve observers in terms of the "substitute behaviours of compulsive neuroses"—i.e., repetition compulsion. From a psychoanalytic perspective, the investments proper to interpassive phenomena testify to fixations on the objects or aims of the drives—where, as Dylan Evans points out, the drives, in turn, can be understood as "partial manifestations of desire".[41] From a Lacanian standpoint, subjects supposed—considered as a species of drive objects or aims—are illusory or imaginary surrogates for "that" which is, strictly speaking, impossible and non-existent: namely, "that" which would fully and finally assuage subjective desire (i.e., the Lacanian *objet petit a*).[42] Secondly, insofar as they are symptoms of subjectivisation, investigation of investments in contradictory subjects supposed offers to illuminate the equally contradictory nature of subjectivisation as such—thereby casting light on what might be implied by the escaping subjectivisation proper to the transition from interpassivity-as-delegation to interpassivity-as-resistance. By way of elaborating this idea, it is evident that a

consideration of the subject supposed to know brings to light at least three areas of contradiction associated with the function of subjectivisation, each of which may be related to the course of the psychoanalytic treatment. Our suggestion is that the paradoxes associated with the subject supposed to know reflect (i) the *identifications* proper to subjectivisation, on which basis the analytic treatment becomes possible in principle, (ii) the apparently contingent *leap of faith* in the efficacy of analysis that, retrospectively, assumes a mantle of necessity in relation to the initiation and successful prosecution of analysis, and (iii) the *Real-as-impossible* dimension of subjectivisation that defines the horizon of our understanding vis à vis subjectivisation and also, thereby, the limits of analysis and, indeed, the efficacy of interpassivity.

Identification

In *Seminar IX*, Lacan's commentary indicates that, in the first instance, the subject supposed to know may be conceived as nothing other than the fantasy of self-consciousness entirely present and transparent to itself in acts of thinking and knowing. Thus, the term "subject supposed to know" is introduced precisely in order to "radically subvert, to render impossible this most radical prejudice… which is the true support of this whole development of philosophy."[43] That Lacan's target is the unquestioned investment in the powers and privileges of self-consciousness is evident from his assertion that "A thought… in no way requires that one thinks about the thought… thinking begins with the unconscious" and that, furthermore, the knowledge arising from this thinking is not to be associated with or grounded in any particular subject but is, rather, "intersubjective".[44] In *Seminar X*, Lacan is even more explicit, insisting that "The *Selbstbewusstsein*, which I've taught you to name subject supposed to know, is a deceptive supposition. The *Selbstbewusstsein*, considered to be constitutive of the cognizing subject is an illusion, a source of error".[45] This dimension of error or illusion underscores the first paradox associated with the subject supposed to know. It obtains insofar as the investment in a subject supposed to

know—*qua* symptom of subjectivisation as such—involves a continually *failing* attempt to sustain identifications between self and otherness—i.e., identifications of the form A = B. These identifications are destined to fail insofar as the entities involved are not, in fact, identical and, in consequence, the identifications in question are sustained *only in their ambiguity*—only insofar as, always already, they evince what Lacan refers to as "the effects of fading".[46] Here, we may recall that, in Lacanian theory, identification is theorised in relation to the reciprocally entangled registers of imaginary representation and symbolic formalisation. The former mode of identification is the topic of Lacan's early essay on "The Mirror Stage" (1949), whilst the latter mode of identification is the principle theme of *Seminar IX*. As is well-known, "The Mirror Stage" articulates subjectivisation in terms of the formation of the ego—i.e., the way in which identifications with visual gestalts ("imagos" or mirror images) are implicated in the crystallisation of an imaginary sense of self-unity and self-sufficiency.[47] On the level of imaginary identification, the subject supposed to know—*qua* self-consciousness entirely present and transparent to itself in the acts of thinking and knowing—embodies the antinomy that, in *Seminar II*, Lacan expresses thus: "*I is an other*".[48] By contrast, in *Seminar IX*, Lacan presents an understanding of subjectivisation in terms of what is fundamental to the operation of the signifier or signification as such. Hence, on the level of symbolic identification, Lacan refers to the "origin from which one can see the signifier constituting itself" in terms of "pure difference" or a "fundamental structure of the one as difference" such that subjectivisation reflects the paradoxical identity "the one as such is the Other".[49]

Perhaps some further elaboration is indicated in order to clarify how it is that subjectivisation involves identifications of the form "I = other" or "one = other" that are sustained only in their ambiguity; only insofar as, always already, they are fading. The instrumental point is that, in Lacanian terms, subjectivisation—the operation proper to the becoming of the field of language-mediated, desiring subjectivity—is synonymous with the functioning of the signifier (or of signification) as the becoming of difference. In Lacanian theory, this idea is expressed in various ways—e.g., the linking of repetition compulsion to "significant insistence" or "the

insistence of the signifying chain".[50] Lacan also theorises signification in terms of the "metaphoric function" or the "agency" of the "letter"—where the letter corresponds to the "essence of the signifier through which it is distinguished from the sign."[51] Here, the distinction in question is that obtaining between the essential function of the signifier as the becoming of a structure of difference as opposed to the status of the sign as an accomplished, determined, concrete entity. Yet another Lacanian synonym for subjectivisation inheres in the psychical function of repression—as conceived in terms of the reciprocity of repression and the return of the repressed.[52] In this regard, we have already suggested that, by virtue of subjectivisation, the field of subjectivity continually crystallises in the form of an irresolvable relation of tension between self and otherness, consciousness and the unconscious. Equivalently, we may say that subjectivisation involves asserting correspondences between certain entities (i.e., identities of the form "I = other" or "one = other") that are sustained by virtue of repressing differences between these entities (i.e., as might be represented by the inequalities "I $\neq$ other" and "one $\neq$ other").[53] On the level of the unconscious and repressed, there obtains what Lacan refers to as the "differential battery" or "treasury" of the signifier—which we may conceptualise as an infinite field of infinitely interconnected pure differences.[54] In saying this, we should resist the tendency to hypostatise the Lacanian unconscious—a gesture that precisely would accord with the metaphysical thinking Lacanian theory tends to undermine. Moreover, insofar as the differential battery of the signifier is nothing but a structure of differential traces, we should note that, strictly speaking, it is fundamentally resistant to imaginary representation and/or symbolic formalisation. Nevertheless, for the sake of argument, we may (very inadequately) represent/symbolise it like so: ".../I/one/other/..." (although, it should be reiterated that, on the level of the unconscious, there are no signifieds or determined signs like "I", "one", "other", "...", "/", and so on). Insofar as, always already, the repressed and unconscious field of differences is returning or insisting—as what might be conceived as "identities-in-difference" of the form ".../I/other/..." or ".../one/other/..."—the aforementioned identities "I = other" or "one = other" evince ambiguity and fade.[55] On the level of self-consciousness, the

fading of these identities is experienced as a loss of certainty in oneself and in the world at large.

Leap of faith

The second area of paradox associated with the subject supposed to know reflects the manner by which investments in subjects supposed to know *initially* present as radically contingent leaps of faith that, *retrospectively*, assume the mantle of necessity. In *Sublime Object*, Žižek refers to this antinomy as "the greatest mystery of the symbolic order"— namely, the manner by which "its necessity arises from the shock of a totally contingent encounter of the Real".[56] I take it that Žižek has in mind Lacan's reference, in *Seminar XI*, to "the *tuché*... as *the encounter with the real*" or "The function of the *tuché*, of the real as encounter—the encounter in so far as it may be missed, in so far as it is essentially the missed encounter... in... [the] form... of the trauma."[57] In order to make sense of these enigmatic formulations, it is necessary to recall that, in Lacanian terms, subjectivisation is temporally complex. The apparently contradictory counterpoise of contingency and necessity characterising the identifications proper to subjectivisation reflects the way in which expressions of subjectivity evince a twofold temporal movement of anticipation and retroaction. One of the clearest explanations of this principle may be found in *Seminar V*. Here, Lacan defines the "structure of discourse" in terms of a chain of signifiers and signifieds (i.e., $S_1/s_1...S_2/s_2...S_n/s_n$) such that significations (i.e., identifications, determinations of meaning) proper to subjectivisation involve

> ...an anticipation of the signifying succession, every signifying chain opening out before it the horizon of its own completion, and at the same time... a retroaction, once there has come naturally the signifying term which, as one might say, overtakes the sentence, which means that what it produced at the level of the signified always has what one might call this retroactive function. Here S_2 already takes shape once S_1 has started, and is only completed when S_2 retroacts on S_1.[58]

What Lacan refers to as the "elementary cell" of the "graph of desire" conveniently illustrates this idea.[59] Recall that the elementary cell comprises a left-to-right horizontal line defining the signifying chain (from S to S') that is doubly intersected by a right-to-left horseshoe-shaped line of subjective intentionality (reading the entire diagram from left to right, the two points of intersection may be labelled S_1 and S_2). We may designate the anticipatory dimension of subjectivisation—the "radically contingent encounter" with that which is, initially, unknown, mysterious, the Real-as-trauma—where the right-to-left horseshoe-shaped line of subjective intentionality first intersects the left-to-right horizontal line defining the signifying chain (i.e., at S_2). The second point of intersection (i.e., at S_1) designates the moment of the crystallisation of meaning or "symbolic necessity" consequent to the "shock" of this contingent encounter. That is to say, the moment where, precisely by virtue of the identifications proper to subjectivisation, the radical contingency is integrated into the symbolic reality of the subject (or, better perhaps, encoded into the field of subjectivity) and, thereby, stripped of its contingency so that, as retrospectively rationalised, it now bears an aura of inevitability; as if, always already, the encounter was predestined. That said, we must remember that subjectivisation is defined by failure: this is implicit in Lacan's characterisation of the encounter as, always already, "essentially the missed encounter". Thus, like any identification or determination of meaning registered on the level of self-consciousness, the sense of symbolic necessity is sustained only in its ambiguity and, therefore, destined to fade. This fading engenders the possibility of further contingencies fated to be retroactively determined as necessary—these subsequent necessities, themselves, unravelling and fading even as they are made.[60]

As Žižek explains, further, the "mystery" of symbolic necessity arising from radical contingency is, "in the final analysis, the mystery of the *transference* itself: to *produce* new meaning, it is necessary to presuppose its existence in the other."[61] Let us unpack Žižek's remarks— beginning, perhaps, with how subjectivisation relates to the phenomenon of the transference, before moving on to consider the Real (which is of relevance to the third area of contradiction associated with

the subject supposed to know). In relation to the transference, the critical point to bear in mind is that the structural logic of the identifications proper to subjectivisation (i.e., the manner by which, always already, self-consciousness exists in a relation of tension with otherness) necessarily implies that the conscious *one* thinks and knows only insofar as *others* think and know—regardless of whether this is acknowledged on the level of self-consciousness.[62] To put the matter in equivalent terms, we may say that, always already, the conscious one invests in the subject supposed to know only insofar as it is encoded in the Other of language-mediated culture and society. Always already, then, the signifier or sign "subject supposed to know" and its signifying conjugates (i.e., relations of similarity and difference with the infinity of other signifiers in the signifying constellation that is the Other) is *given to one*: the conscious one invests in the idea of the subject supposed to know only insofar as it is *given to so invest* by the Other. The idea that *one knows or believes* only insofar as *one is given to know or believe* by virtue of the knowledge/belief in question always already being encoded in the Other is precisely what Žižek has in mind when he refers to the "objective status of belief". However, this is not to suggest that human beings are, simply and immediately, culturally programmed automatons. Rather, the "objective" nature of knowledge or belief forces us to confront certain humanist-metaphysical preconceptions about the nature of subjective being and agency per se—specifically, (i) the idea that agency is the essential characteristic of self-conscious individuals, entirely transparent and present to themselves in acts of thinking and knowing, and (ii) the idea that agency/activity is fundamentally incompatible with, or operates in complete isolation from, automatism/passivity.

In the context of the psychoanalytic clinic, the paradoxical counterpoise of contingency and necessity is intrinsic to the transference. As Lacan observes in *Seminar XI*, "As soon as the subject who is supposed to know exists somewhere... there is transference"—i.e., as Evans puts it, "the attribution of knowledge to the Other."[63] Lacan goes on to assert that, in the context of the psychoanalytic clinic, transference is "established" when, from the perspective of the analysand, the "function" of the subject supposed to know is "embodied" by the analyst.[64]

That is to say, analysis is initiated on the basis of the analysand's belief that the analyst has the answer to the analysand's question—i.e., by virtue of the analysand's identification with the analyst who, from the perspective of the analysand, is considered to be a subject supposed to know. In *Seminar XV*, discussing "what is effectively involved in the necessary pre-supposition of the psychoanalytic act", Lacan likens the nature of the identification in question to "an act of faith… in the subject supposed to know".[65] In this regard, *Seminar XV* applies to the psychoanalytic clinic a principle Lacan had previously invoked, in *Seminar XI*, in relation to epistemological enquiry in general. Namely, the account of Descartes' appeal to God as transcendental guarantor of the validity of the *cogito* such that, in (mis)conceiving of the *cogito* as a kind of knowledge, Descartes "puts the field of this knowledge at the level of this vaster subject, the subject supposed to know, God."[66] That said, Lacan's remarks vis à vis the Cartesian method's prioritisation of the ordinal over the cardinal (i.e., the order of operations as opposed to the number or accumulative results of the operations) and its employment of small letters to designate algebraic unknowns reveals to what degree Descartes' investment in God as a subject supposed to know is a necessary step in the creation of "the initial bases of a science in which God has nothing to do."[67]

A brief inspection of Kant's so-called "principle of reflective judgement", as introduced in the *Critique of Judgement* (1790), provides further illustration of the point Lacan is making. Namely, that a leap of faith in a subject supposed to know is a necessary prerequisite for the creation of a systematic science in which the heterogeneity of empirical experience may be unified under universal laws. Here, we may recall that, for Kant, the faculty of reflective judgement—i.e., the capacity to judge in the absence of determinate concepts—is not only characteristic of aesthetic experience but also that which defines the ground of "*cognition in general*".[68] What is relevant to our considerations of the subject supposed to know is Kant's contention that reflective judgement involves the positing of a "transcendental principle"—i.e., the *a priori* concept of the "*finality of nature*"—that has no objective ground; it is, rather, that which "the reflective judgement can only give as a law from

and to itself."[69] Ultimately, this boils down to the presumption that what seems "contingent in the particular (empirical) laws of nature contains nevertheless unity of law... unfathomable... unthinkable... as such unity may, no doubt, be for us." In Kant's view, without this presupposition that a "systematic unity" underlies the heterogeneity of empirical particulars, "we should have no order of nature in accordance with empirical laws... no guiding thread" by which to "discover in nature an intelligible order".[70] In short, for Kant, the very possibility of empirical science depends on a leap of faith in the *efficacy* of empirical investigation per se—in effect, a leap of faith in an abstract transcendental principle or depersonalised subject supposed to know.

Real-as-impossible

To some degree, Kant's investment in a subject supposed to know as abstracted or depersonalised prefigures Lacan's suggestion, in *Seminar XV*, that the end or "term of analysis consists in the fall of the subject supposed to know and his reduction to the arrival of this **o**-object, as cause of the division of the subject which comes in its place" in "the act if there is one, which carries [the analysand] to become a psychoanalyst".[71] In other words, during the course of analysis, in the process of working through the transference, the analysand undergoes a transformation whereby they relinquish their initial identification with the analyst considered to be a subject supposed to know—i.e., a subject defined in terms of the positive condition of knowing fully and absolutely. Instead, the analysand becoming as an analyst identifies with the analyst "reduced" to the "**o**-object" (i.e., *objet petit a* as it is rendered in Cormac Gallagher's translation). Hence, this latter identification is with a "subject" defined negatively in terms of *objet a*—an ineffable nothingness, hypothetically posited as "cause" of subjectivisation and thus source of the irresolvable tension between self and otherness, consciousness and the unconscious defining the subjective field. Equivalently, we may say that the course of the psychoanalytic treatment bears witness to the abandonment of identifications directed towards the impossible ideal of subjectivisation fully realised in favour of identification with the inescapable actuality of subjectivisation as failure. In consequence, the

analysand becoming as an analyst ceases to look for "the answer" to the question of their desire in the analyst (i.e., via an identification with a concrete, replete, personified subject supposed to know), in favour of investing in the inherently open-ended *activity* of questioning, interpretation, analysis per se (i.e., via an identification with an abstracted, evacuated, de-personified subject supposed to know).

As previously suggested, in the context of our considerations of interpassivity, the "term" of analysis may be equated with the theoretical completion of the movement from interpassivity-as-delegation to interpassivity-as-resistance—which is to say, the completion of the traversing of fantasy so that the experience of the fundamental fantasy (i.e., the investment in self-consciousness and its corollary—the subject supposed) becomes drive. In the process, investments in illusory subjects supposed are superseded by investment in the process of analysis per se. Here, however, it must be emphasised that this latter investment is neither simply nor immediately that which "belongs" to the conscious one. On the contrary, it is an investment by virtue of which the conscious one and its relation of tension with otherness is vanished; rendered null and void in the face of drive as a "headless subjectification". Hence, the "escaping" subjectivisation, to which Pfaller refers, defines an ideal limit or horizon of subjectivisation where the "escape" in question would seem to be synonymous with the superseding of subjectivisation as such. This underscores for us the correlation between subjectivisation defined in terms of an irresolvable, interminable relation of tension between self and otherness, consciousness and the unconscious, and what might be termed the *interminability* of analysis per se—such that the "end" of analysis is, perhaps, better understood as an aim or ideal as opposed to a final destination. That the completion of traversing fantasy (hence, the complete subversion of identification/subjectivisation in becoming drive) *is* an unrealisable objective would seem evident from Lacan's insistence that this "beyond of analysis… has never been approached" or "Up to now, it has been approachable only at the level of the analyst" in the so-called "training analysis… a psychoanalysis that has… specifically

traversed the cycle of the analytic experience in its totality… looped this loop to its end", where "The loop must be run through several times."[72]

What is implied by this correlation obtaining between the irresolution of subjectivisation (i.e., its intrinsic (mal)functioning) and the interminability of analysis? Our suggestion is that, variously, the experience of the fundamental fantasy becoming drive, the identification with the analyst reduced to *objet a*, and the escaping subjectivisation proper to interpassivity-as-resistance must be regarded as hypotheticals defining the horizon of subjectivisation as such. This brings us to a consideration of the third area of contradiction associated with the subject supposed to know—namely, its relationship to the Lacanian Real. Relevant, here, is the identity Žižek establishes, in *Sublime Object*, between *objet a* and the subject supposed to know. The equivalence in question obtains insofar as Žižek posits the Real as an "entity" that must be retrospectively "constructed" in order to "account for the distortions of the symbolic structure"—i.e., the ambiguities or, indeed, outright contradictions in the field of language-mediated, desiring subjectivity that are symptomatic of failures in subjectivisation.[73] As Žižek points out, this means that the Lacanian Real itself is contradictory or impossible insofar as "it does not exist" yet possesses "a series of properties" and "exercises a certain structural causality" such that "it can produce a series of effects in the symbolic reality of subjects." In Lacanian terms, this entity is, of course, *objet a*—less an object per se than a "cause which in itself does not exist—which is present only in a series of effects, but always in a distorted, displaced way." The aforementioned identity between *objet a* and the subject supposed to know obtains when Žižek subsequently characterises the subject supposed to know as such a "real entity" insofar as it also "does not exist, but it produces a decisive shift in the development of the psychoanalytic cure."[74]

At this point, the reader may be experiencing some difficulty in reconciling the the subject supposed to know as illusory with Žižek's characterisation of it as a causative "real entity"—not to mention his concurrent claim that the structural correlates of the subject supposed to know serve to "disguise" its "troubling paradox". In the first place, it is

important to bear in mind that, insofar as investments in subjects supposed to know *are* investments in illusions, they are symptoms of failures in subjectivisation as expressed in Imaginary and Symbolic registers. Investments in illusory subjects supposed to know exemplify the kinds of (mis)identifications proper to the (mal)functioning of subjectivisation. The *inevitability* and, indeed, *interminability* of (mis)identification underpins the status of subjects supposed to know as drive objects on which the conscious one fixates—usually without being aware of this. Indeed, the inevitability and interminability of failures in subjectivisation precisely is that which is elided in self-consciousness. The inevitability and interminability in question is, so to speak, "registered" on the level of the unconscious—which is to say, by virtue of the endlessly repeated insistence of what Žižek refers to as "real entities". In order to make sense of this, I would suggest that, in common with Pfaller and interpassivity, we must read certain Žižekian (and, indeed, Lacanian) expressions figuratively as opposed to literally. For example, we understand that *objet a* is not an actual object. Similarly, we appreciate that there are no such things as causative "real entities" in any literal or objective sense. Notwithstanding the many ambiguities that surround this term in Lacanian theory, "Real" does not designate the ineffable "cause" of subjectivsation per se, but rather defines the limit of our capacity to fathom this cause. Here, the critical point is that the impossibility of (self-consciously) knowing the cause or ground of subjectivisation is synonymous with what we have termed the (mal)functioning of subjectivisation such that a fundamentally irresolvable relation of tension obtains between *self-consciousness* and *otherness*. Equivalently, we may say that, paradoxically, subjectivisation is a function founded on the very impossibility of its realisation, thereby bearing witness to the way in which the field of language-mediated, desiring subjectivity necessarily becomes as interwoven with structural impasses and impossibilities. In Lacanian terms, these impasses and impossibilities are of the order of the Real.[75] Thus, the Real-as-impossibility, synonymous *with*, yet inassimilable *to*, subjectivisation defines the horizon and limit *of* subjectivisation. Insofar as subjectivisation admits consideration as a function paradoxically founded on the impossibility of its realisation, it also might be

characterised as a productive nothingness. This understanding of subjectivisation harmonises with Žižek's definition of the Lacanian subject as "this original void, the lack of symbolic structure… the subject of the signifier".[76] It also emphasises for us why the term of analysis and escaping subjectivisation must be regarded as unattainable ideals. *Qua* productive nothingness, subjectivisation defines that which becomes endlessly *ex nihilio*—hence, in a sense that is quintessentially "Real", there is no escaping subjectivisation because there is, in the "final analysis", "no-thing" from which to escape.[77]

Interpassivity vis à vis Relational Aesthetics

In the spirit of Pfaller's original intentions for interpassivity, let us now try to relate these theoretical considerations on interpassivity to the field of contemporary art. By way of extending the conversation Pfaller has instigated vis à vis the rhetoric of interactivity and participation in the arts, we shall apply our ruminations on interpassivity to one particularly noteworthy example that is not mentioned specifically in *Interpassivity*. Namely, the so-called "relational art" Nicholas Bourriaud promoted in his capacity as curator of group exhibitions like *Traffic* (held at the CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux in 1996), and about which he theorised in the collection of essays entitled *Relational Aesthetics* (originally published in French in 1998 and in English in 2002). We shall also address the objections raised to this advocacy by Claire Bishop in her *October* article "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics" (2004). In the course of these deliberations, it will be useful to keep in mind two key implications of our (anti-humanist, anti-metaphysical) considerations of interpassivity. Firstly, notwithstanding the emphasis of relational art on *interactivity*, we should remember that always already it is the case that "interactivity" and "interpassivity" are opposite sides of the same "coin" of subjectivisation (or the identifications proper to subjectivisation). Relational art clearly is "interactive" to the extent that its being or becoming as art relies on audience participation within the compass of certain orchestrated situations. However, by the same token, relational art is "interpassive" insofar as there is also a delegation of responsibility for this being and becoming as art to other people and/or the

orchestrated situation as such. Thus, from the perspective of the artist (or other non-participating spectators), by virtue of this delegation, the orchestrated situation inculcates the relational artwork: indeed, insofar as the artwork is identical with the orchestrated situation, we may say that the artwork inculcates itself. Secondly, we should remain mindful of in what the critical efficacy of interpassivity consists. Namely, that, *in potentia*, considerations of interpassivity foment the transition from interpassivity-as-delegation to interpassivity-as-resistance that we have equated with the traversing of fantasy—at the limit of which, subjectivisation is superseded by or disappeared into drive as its constitutive ground. In the context of relational art, the fantasies to be traversed follow from Pfaller's aforementioned observation that the pervasive rhetoric extolling the virtues of interactivity and audience participation in art constituted a "revival of very old wishes and utopias, which had become unquestioned facts"—namely, the myth that art has the power to promote social emancipation, thereby enabling people to attain greater levels of self-realisation and individual freedom. Insofar as it perpetuates this myth, the discourse of participation in the arts promotes what Pfaller refers to as "the affirmative commissioning of individuals under the conditions of postmodern ideology"—a profoundly ironic state of affairs wherein the rhetoric of interactivity and participation in art engenders the very social conditions to which, ostensibly, it is opposed—i.e., a lack of social emancipation.

A cursory inspection of the opening commentary in *Relational Aesthetics* reveals the degree to which Bourriaud does, indeed, appear to be advancing a rhetoric of social emancipation and individual self-realisation through art that, for Pfaller, epitomises the "affirmative commissioning of individuals" proper to postmodern ideology. That Bourriaud is presenting arguments for the efficacy of relational art in restoring or recovering free and authentic human relations is evident from his assertion that contemporary art's "most burning issue" resides in exploring the possibility of enlivening "relationships with the world" through "social experiments" and the creation of "hands-on utopias." In offering to realise these possibilities, relational art is proposed as a panacea to the contemporary cultural malaise—which is to say, the

manner by which the proliferation of global networks of commerce and communication, and the expansion of electronic media, has reduced free and authentic human interactions to a series of rote responses in a culture of unbridled consumerism. In this context, the field of consumer products (i.e., material items, electronic media), and their modes of exchange and consumption, become matrix and measure of "human relations"—thereby also defining conceptions of community or social identity. In a poststructuralist vernacular one might say that *signs* of human relations (i.e., consumer products, modes of consumption and exchange) supplement *actual* human relations. In Bourriaud's view, this transformation of the "social bond... into a standardised artefact" is synonymous with the "final stage" in the emergence of the Debordian "Society of the Spectacle", wherein "human relations are no longer 'directly experienced', but start to become blurred in their 'spectacular representation'."[78]

That said, matters are complicated by Bourriaud's advocacy of relational art only as a *limited* site of resistance to the invidious effects of the Society of the Spectacle. This is evident, for example, in the way Bourriaud emphasises how relational art operates within a "minute space of daily gestures", bears witness to "tiny revolutions" in the mesh of the quotidian, and produces "micro-communit[ies]" from "momentary groupings" of people in exhibition spaces.[79] On Bourriaud's account, these features reflect how, in the contemporary cultural context, "Social utopias and revolutionary hopes have given way to everyday micro-utopias and imitative strategies" in which the potential of contemporary art to be a locus of cultural criticism and political resistance resides "in the invention of individual and collective vanishing lines, in those temporary and nomadic constructions whereby the artist models and disseminates disconcerting situations."[80] Thus conceived, relational art offers to restore or recover free and authentic human relations only *partially*, *contingently* — from which perspective the notion of such relations obtaining (or ever having obtained) in any full or enduring fashion is tacitly dismissed as myth. To this extent, the postmodern flavour of Bourriaud's relational aesthetics would seem to inhere in its repudiation of the absolutisms and essentialisms of the modern.

Nevertheless, *qua* ideology, relational art arguably still "commissions" individuals in the way Pfaller suggests — the limited rewards on offer justified insofar as the resistance to modernist ideals attests to a greater (if not absolute) level of pragmatism and authenticity. To this extent, relational art bears witness to a relinquishing of the modernist faith in the power of art to bring about truly radical and decisive change — whether on the level of society or the individual. If this is not altogether too much of an oversimplification, we might say that relation al aesthetics involves relinquishing the modernist ideal of Revolution (i.e., the singular, all-encompassing, and absolutely conclusive advent of personal and/or social transformation) in favour of a more pragmatic, postmodernist investment in revolutions (multiple, localised, transitory knots and folds within the intersubjective social and cultural fabric).

Here, we may observe that Bourriaud's vision of relational art harmonises with Pfaller's account of interpassivity in two main respects. Firstly, Bourriaud's characterisation of relational art in terms of "micro-utopias" and "imitative strategies" bears comparison with Pfaller's suggestion, vis à vis what we have termed interpassivity-as-delegation, that interpassive behaviours and structures are "always necessarily connected with a seeming miniature staging of the act of enjoyment." Relevant here is the manner by which Bourriaud posits relational art as being only partially and contingently efficacious in the restoration or recovery of full human relations — i.e., relational art tends to model or pantomime in microcosm the mythological condition of full human relations. Secondly, considered *as* strictly limited and transient performances in miniature of full human relations, relational artworks echo Pfaller's aforementioned contention that interpassive behaviours involve "selective contact with a thing in order, in exchange, to entirely escape that very thing", on which basis interpassivity invites interpretation as a "strategy for escaping identification and consequently subjectivisation." The resonance between Bourriaud and Pfaller obtains if we equate interpassive "selective contact with a thing" with relational art's modelling or pantomiming things in microcosm. In either case, what results are identifications and/or subjectivisations distinguished by limitation or failure—and that, by the same token, enliven the possibility

of a transition to a more critically efficacious condition we have characterised as interpassivity-as-resistance. In other words, the critical potentials of Bourriaud's relational aesthetics obtain insofar as transitioning from interpassivity-as-delegation to interpassivity-as-resistance is nascent in *any* expression of desiring subjectivity. As symptoms of the malfunctioning of subjectivisation, always already, investments in fantasy are doomed to fail repeatedly. In fading, these fantasies bear witness to the possibility of their traversing and, in the (unrealisable) limit, the disappearance of subjectivisation as such in the face of drive. Thus, with regard to Bourriaud's advocacy of relational art or particular examples of relational art as such, the question that confronts us is to what extent these possibilities are actualised.

It is certainly the case that relational art and Bourriaud's advocacy of it has excited debate—one noteworthy example being Bishop's aforementioned "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics". Here, among other things, Bishop addresses the work of two well-known artists associated with Bourriaud and relational aesthetics: Rirkrit Tiravanija and Liam Gillick. In the former case, Bishop examines Tiravanija's "hybrid installation performances" such as *Untitled (Still)* (1992), presented at 303 Gallery, New York, wherein exhibition venues are transformed into "convivial" communal spaces in which visitors are invited to relax, converse, consume food prepared by the artist, and so on. In the latter event, Bishop discusses Gillick's interdisciplinary sculptures, installations, and conceptual works such as the *Pinboard Project* (1992) (a bulletin board to which participants were invited to rearrange and supplement material addressing a predetermined theme) or *Big Conference Centre Limitation Screen* (1998) (an aluminium and Plexiglas structure, reminiscent of a corporate office divider, intended to function as a frame or backdrop for social exchanges) where, in common with Tiravanija, the artwork is less an object than an orchestrated social situation or "scenario".[81] In Bishop's opinion, these works are troubling insofar as they emphasise description or representation of social and cultural forms over the analysis of such: their reproduction of the social and cultural spectacle takes precedence over the generation of genuinely interrogative substance and content. Thus, with reference to earlier

criticism advanced by Janet Kraynak, Bishop observes that, insofar as Tiravanija enjoys widespread international exposure, his work does not interrogate the logic of globalisation in any thoroughgoing fashion "but merely reproduces it."[82] Similarly, Bishop suggests that Gillick's "design structures" address themselves primarily to the form and functioning of office environments, as opposed to the manner by which corporate and state entities employ workplace design as a mode of social control.[83] Whilst Tiravanija's performance installations may be occasions for community, Bishop considers their political potentials to be barely realised beyond the most elementary fact of "advocating dialogue over monologue". Likewise, insofar as Gillick's constructions focus on modelling forms of sociability in workplace environments, as opposed to exposing the status of these social forms and spaces as expressions of underlying power structures, Bishop finds them to be expressions of a "pragmatism... tantamount to an abandonment or failure of ideals... the demonstration of a compromise, rather than the articulation of a problem."[84]

The problems Bishop identifies with the work of Tiravanija and Gillick follow from one of her primary objections to Bourriaud — namely, the degree to which he presents relational art's micro-utopias as inherently "positive", "emancipatory", and "democratic" expressions of harmonious human relations.[85] In contesting this view, Bishop invokes arguments advanced by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (1985). Here, the idea of democracy is elaborated in light of Lacan's conception of human relations as being inevitably antagonistic insofar as they take place among subjects who are "irremediably decentered and incomplete."[86] In light of our preceding discussion, we would say that human relations define an irresolvable relation of tension between self and otherness and are, thus, symptomatic of the intrinsic (mal)functioning of subjectivisation. The key point is that, as Bishop relates, not only do Laclau and Mouffe understand antagonism to be a necessary feature of a "fully functioning democratic society... in which relations of conflict are *sustained*, not erased" — this understanding reflects the Lacanian insight that, paradoxically, subjectivisation is

predicated on the *impossibility* of its full realisation.[87] Among the examples Bishop invokes to illustrate the antagonistic dimension of relational art are works by Santiago Sierra such as *250cm Line Tattooed on Six Paid People* (1999), in which actions orchestrated by the artist are documented photographically in a manner reminiscent of the Conceptual and Performance Art of the 1970s. In stark contrast to the appearance of social harmony and reciprocity in works orchestrated by, respectively, Tiravanija and Gillick, Sierra's piece confronts the spectator with a far less optimistic vision of human relations insofar as the artist pays his collaborators to engage in activities that seem humiliating, futile, and which are, quite literally, disfiguring. Whilst Bishop acknowledges that Sierra has attracted criticism for his rather nihilistic reflections on capitalism, she contends that such opprobrium misses the significance of the artist's work vis à vis relational aesthetics. That is to say, the manner by which Sierra's orchestrated situations sustain and exacerbate discordances in the field of subjectivity, thereby exposing Bourriaud's micro-utopias as impossible ideals insofar as they are predicated on the phantasms of full and harmonious intersubjective identification.[88]

Bishop makes some compelling observations in her assessments of the relational art produced by the likes of Tiravanija and Gillick. That Bourriaud has promoted some of this work in his capacity as a curator also makes him a legitimate target for criticism and, in this regard, Bishop's article is timely and necessary. Nevertheless, we suggest that Bishop's account is, itself, open to criticism vis à vis its interpretation of Bourriaud's ideas. In saying this, we must concede that the question of interpretation attends any discourse analysis (which means that "our"—or, rather, if "I" am to momentarily re-emerge from this hiding place behind the royal "we" — "*my*" interpretations of Pfaller, Lacan, Bourriaud, and Bishop are also, inevitably, open to question). Indeed, on the basis of the discussion thus far, we are obliged to acknowledge that, always already, the *interactive* dimension of interpretation (the conscious one's phantasmic engagement/identification with other subjects or works in making determinations of meaning) is accompanied by an *interpassive* obverse or underside (thereby attesting to the inevitable fading of such determinations, the (mal)functioning of subjectivisation, the phenomenon

of repetition compulsion and, ultimately, the insistence of drive). We might characterise this interpassive dimension of interpretation in terms of the delegation of the task or enjoyment of interpretation to an illusory "naïve interpreter"—a subject supposed to have performed the task of interpretation for us. In keeping with the understanding of interpassivity advanced thus far, our suggestion is that, in its allusive and circuitous aspect, the function of the naïve interpreter is twofold. Firstly, it is the phantasm tacitly invoked or appealed to in order to support determinations made on the plane of interactivity. Secondly, however, *qua* phantasm, the naïve interpreter simultaneously subverts these determinations, ensuring that, always already, they are sustained only in their ambiguity, as fading in the face of the insistence of drive.

In relation to Bishop's interpretation of Bourriaud, the double function of the naïve interpreter insists to the extent that her reading strikes us as excessively reductive, absolutist, and totalising. On this basis, our most immediate challenge is to traverse *Bishop*'s fantasy vis à vis Bourriaud and relational aesthetics — an operation that is, inescapably, a reification of *ourselves*, *our* fantasies (the traversing of which is, of course, to be performed by our interpreters in turn).[89] Having made this genuflection, acknowledging the intersubjective nature of the conversations within which we are enmeshed, we are now in a position to present our objection to Bishop's argument in more detail. In essence, our reservation stems from Bishop's insistence that Bourriaud understands the relations proper to relational aesthetics or relational artworks to be "intrinsically democratic" or "fundamentally harmonious… because they are addressed to a community of viewing subjects with something in common" — i.e., relations taking place in a subjective field in which identifications tend towards a certain degree of fulfilment and sufficiency.[90] This tendency to read Bourriaud as if he considers the restoration or recovery of full human relations to be a genuine possibility is reiterated in Bishop's closing comments, where she suggests that relational aesthetics is fundamentally problematic insofar as it "requires a unified subject as a prerequisite for community-as-togetherness".[91] However, as we have seen, Bourriaud explicitly repudiates as a modernist myth the possibility that art might engender social and/or

personal transformations in any total or absolute sense. As is implicit in their very denomination, the *micro*-utopias proper to relational aesthetics offer only partial and contingent degrees of social emancipation and individual self-realisation. Bishop seems to overemphasise the *utopian* dimension of relational aesthetics (i.e., its impetus to perfection) at the expense of its *microcosmic* aspect (i.e., its pragmatic acceptance of imperfection). In so doing, she does not appear to appreciate the manner by which the microcosmic dimension of relational art harmonises with her own position. That is to say, the manner by which relational art as microcosm precisely confirms its status as symptomatic of failures in subjectivisation — which is to say, the instantiation of inherently antagonistic intersubjective human relations—thereby underscoring the degree to which Bourriaud's relational aesthetics is predicated on the very impossibility of its full realisation.

Of course, as suggested earlier, the fact that, in the context of the postmodern, Bourriaud conceives of relational aesthetics as a necessarily limited project does not excuse him from criticism. The value of considering relational art in light of Pfaller's conception of interpassivity is that we glimpse the ideological underpinnings of Bourriaud's ideas. This is the crux of our reservations vis à vis Bishop. When she refers to the "feel-good positions adopted by Tiravanija and Gillick", and the "cozy" complicity of certain artists and curators such that "art does not feel the need to defend itself... it collapses into compensatory (and self-congratulatory) entertainment", Bishop certainly identifies the surface symptoms of the limitations and failures of relational art, thereby unveiling the "relational antagonism... which is repressed in sustaining the semblance of... social harmony".[92] However, in so doing, Bishop acknowledges neither the manner by which Bourriaud defines and justifies relational aesthetics *as* limitation and failure, nor the way in which this definition/justification is a reflection of postmodern ideology. That is to say, the manner by which, paradoxically, relational art's rhetoric of interactivity and participation sustains itself precisely insofar as it *fails* to restore and recover full human relations. In the context of the postmodern, relational art's "affirmative commissioning" of individuals bears witness to a repudiation of modernist myths — those oppressive

and impossible absolutes and ideals by which, formerly, modernism dominated the cultural field. In so doing, relational art offers to promote human relations characterised by greater pragmatism and authenticity. The irony in this is evident in that the discourses of interactivity and participation, *qua* postmodern ideology, continue to subjugate individuals in the name of their (now only limited) liberation. Moreover, in so doing, these discourses precisely recapitulate the quintessentially modernist investment in avant-garde art as a vehicle for representing self and society in a real and authentic way, thereby enlivening the (albeit, limited) possibility of self-realisation and social emancipation. In this way, modernist investments in absolutism and totality apropos reality, authenticity, self-realisation and social emancipation are supplemented by a postmodernist ethos of relativity and incompleteness—but the insistent drive to (degrees of) reality, authenticity, self-realisation and social emancipation remains art's fundamental *raison d'être*.

---

[1] Pfaller 2017, 2.

[2] Ibid, 2, 3.

[3] Ibid, 91-92ff.

[4] Ibid, 4, 8.

[5] Ibid, 1. See also 26, 29-30.

[6] Žižek 1997, 34-35.

[7] Lacan SVII, 252.

[8] Dolar 2001, 124-25.

[9] Pfaller 2017, 2.

[10] Ibid, 6.

[11] Ibid, 19-20.

[12] Ibid, 21.

[13] Greenberg 1939, 36.

[14] Pfaller 2017, 19.

[15] Ibid, 7-8.

[16] See Dolar 2001, 123 and Žižek 1998, 7.

[17] Lacan SXI, 273. The term "fundamental phantasy" may require brief explanation. In *Seminar VIII*, Lacan characterises the fundamental fantasy in terms of the subject's

fixation on a "privileged object" (which, for our purposes, equally may be considered an *objective*, *aim*, or *meaning*) by which the subject halts the "infinite slipping... that the signifying fragmentation brings of its own accord into the subject" and, on this basis, fabricates or sustains an identity or sense of self (see Lacan SVIII, Lesson 12, 1 March 1961, 145). Whilst this is something of an oversimplification, one might say that, in the first instance, the "privileged object" of the fundamental fantasy is, in effect, nothing other *than* the idea of self-consciousness, entirely transparent and present to itself in acts of thinking and knowing. Hence, generally speaking, the fundamental fantasy inheres in the privileging of self-consciousness and, as we shall see, as an important corollary of this privileging, a tacit investment in what Lacan refers to as "the subject supposed to know". For further remarks on the fundamental fantasy and the necessity to "traverse" it in analysis, see Evans 1996, 60-61.

[18] Dolar suggests that "the very process of psychoanalysis" constitutes a "bridge" between two "senses" of interpassivity (Dolar 2001, 135). As Dolar explains, the "first form of interpassivity" resides in "entrusting enjoyment to the other" (i.e., what we are calling interpassivity-as-delegation). This can be understood as a "defence against enjoyment", thereby sustaining desire, which is "maintained by being perpetually dissatisfied" (ibid, 131). The "second sense of interpassivity" (which corresponds to what we are calling interpassivity-as-resistance) is, as Dolar relates, "synonymous with the basic mechanism of the drive"—i.e., it designates an " 'it enjoys' where both the subject and the Other vanish" (ibid, 134). As Dolar acknowledges (ibid, 132, 138, n15), this implies that the drive may be characterised by what Lacan refers to as a "headless subjectification, a subjectification without a subject" (see Lacan SXI, 184). In other words, the drive is not that which is grounded in the subject so much as it is implicated in the conditions of possibility for subject-hood as such.

[19] For a reference to Freud's discussion of the "compulsion to repeat" see Freud SE v12, 150ff.

[20] Pfaller 2017, 6.

[21] Ibid, 6-7. Here, Pfaller directs the reader to his earlier book, *The Pleasure Principle in Culture. Illusions without Owners* (London: Verso, 2014).

[22] Ibid, 7-8.

[23] We shall detail the (mal)functioning of subjectivisation in the following section. With regard to the idea that drive "forces" desire, I have in mind Lacan's commentary, in *Seminar XI*, where he refers to "The forcing of the pleasure principle by the effect of the partial drive" and his assertion that "it is by this that we may conceive that the partial ambiguous drives are installed at the limit of an *Erhaltungstrieb*, of the maintenance of a homeostasis" (see Lacan SXI, 184). In making sense of these statements, we need to recall that, in Freudian terms, the human psyche is conceived in terms of a homeostasis between the so-called primary and secondary processes (see Freud SE v1, 296-97) or what Freud later terms the pleasure principle and the reality principle (see Freud SE v5, 565-604 and Freud SE v12, 218-26). The primary process reflects the functioning of the libido as it is expressed in the form of unconscious wishes. By virtue of the psychical function of repression, the secondary process mediates (filters, censors) libidinal

desires. That said, Freud's later considerations of repetition compulsion and the experience of trauma lead him to posit something that exceeds and eludes the psychical homeostasis—a "beyond" of the pleasure principle that Freud terms the "death instinct" and which various commentators have since referred to as the "death drive" or, simply, the "drive" (see Freud SE v18, 20-22, 36, 44). The instrumental point to take away from these ruminations is that, in both Freudian and Lacanian terms, drive is, at once, *beyond* and yet *constitutive principle* of subjective desire. Paradoxically, drive is "that" which is impossible to integrate into the field of language-mediated, desiring subjectivity, but which also is condition of possibility of that field. Again, I should acknowledge that my thinking of interpassivity in terms of the relationship between drive and desire is indebted to the general argument presented in Dolar 2001.

[24] Pfaller 2017, 4-5.

[25] Ibid, 4.

[26] Althusser 1971, 160.

[27] Ibid, 153, 161.

[28] Ibid, 167-68.

[29] Pfaller 2017, 4.

[30] Vattimo 1991, 2, 31.

[31] Ibid, 20.

[32] Ibid, 84.

[33] Ibid, 117.

[34] See Heidegger 1971, 177, 178. For a lucid discussion of what Heidegger means by the "fourfold", see Young 2006. In particular, Young proposes that Heidegger's enigmatic reference to "gods" can be understood in terms of the " 'unspoken'… fundamental *ethos* of a community" (374). "Gods" are the, never-quite-explicit constellation of cultural values and imperatives that guide or determine the life of a community. Young also suggests that "the fourfold of earth, sky, gods, and mortals is really the twofold of nature and culture" (375).

[35] For a useful introductory account of *Ereignis*, see Polt 2005, 375-91.

[36] For references to the Heideggerian conception of subjectivity as "ek-sistent" "being in the world" see, for example, Heidegger 1998, 247, where "the ek-sistence of human beings" is defined as "standing in the clearing of being", and Heidegger 2010, 129, where it is suggested that *Dasein* "is cleared in itself *as* being-in-the-world, not by another being, but in such a way that it *is* itself the clearing".

[37] For a reference to Lacan's conception of the subject as "ex-centric" or "decentred", see Lacan, SII, 9. For a reference to Lacan's use of "extimacy" see Lacan SVII, 139, where Lacan characterises the "central place… that is the Thing" (i.e., the impossible and non-existent object or aim hypothesised as cause or ground of desiring subjectivity—of which we will say more presently) as an "intimate exteriority or 'extimacy' " (139). For references to Lacan's employment of "ex-sistence" or "ek-sistence" see, for example, Lacan 1957a, 6, where "ex-sistence" is characterised as "the eccentric place… in which we must necessarily locate the subject of the unconscious". See also Lacan SXXII, Lesson 3 14 January 1975, 49, where, in the context of a discussion devoted to the

manner of the "knotting" or interface between the orders of the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic, Lacan asserts: "ek-sistence is... only this outside which is not a not-inside".

[38] See Lacan SII, 223 and Lacan SVI, Lesson 21, 20 May 1959, 264.

[39] The term "big Other" is introduced in Lacan SII, 235-36. See also Lacan SIII, 56, where there is reference made to "the otherness of the Other that corresponds to... the big Other, the subject who is unknown to us, the Other who is symbolic by nature, the Other one addresses oneself to beyond what one sees", Lacan 1956, 358, where the Other is characterised as "*The Locus of Speech*... in which is constituted the I who speaks along with he who hears, what is said by the one being already the reply", and Lacan 1960, 693, where Lacan refers to "the Other's very function as the treasure trove of signifiers". For further useful discussion of the big Other see Evans 1996, 132-33.

[40] Žižek 1997, 185-87.

[41] For a general account of Lacan's conception of the drives—in particular, the manner by which "the drives are partial manifestations of desire"—see Evans 1996, 46-49. See also Lacan SXI, 161-200.

[42] Here, it is, perhaps, advisable to address a certain ambiguity in the meaning of *objet petit a* and its relation to the Lacanian conception of *jouissance*. In *Seminar XI*, Lacan defines *objet a* as "cause of desire" (Lacan SXI, 168) and also "the object of the drive... the object around which the drive turns" (ibid, 243). As "cause of desire", *objet a* resonates with what Žižek refers to as the "impossible" or "Real *par excellence*" dimension of *jouissance*: that which "does not exist... is impossible, but... produces a number of traumatic effects" (Žižek 1997, 164). *Objet a*, considered as "cause of desire" and "impossible *jouissance*", thus signifies an always already lost and mythical condition of subjective fullness and completion hypothesised as obtaining prior to subjectivisation (which, in Lacanian parlance, we may also term "castration") and its accompanying, irresolvable tension between self and otherness, consciousness and the unconscious. Generally speaking, the aim or impetus of desiring subjectivity is to recover this fullness and completeness—to resolve or eliminate the tension arising from the malfunctioning of subjectivisation. However, as "object of the drive", *objet a* also resonates with what, in *Seminar XVI*, Lacan refers to as "the function of *surplus enjoying* (*plus de jouir*)" in relation to which "there is played out the production of... the **o**-object" (see Lacan SXVI, Lesson 1, 13 November 1968, 7-8). Insofar as this second sense of *objet a* is proper to the operation of the partial drives and partial drive objects, it defines a series of objects that function as imaginary surrogates for *objet a* (in the first sense of the term) as "cause of desire". By contrast with the forever lost and impossible "full" *jouissance*, surplus *jouissance* defines the practical actuality of subjectivity. In effect, surplus *jouissance* is equivalent to the irresolvable tension characterising the (mal)functioning of subjectivisation. In keeping with the paradoxical meaning of *jouissance* as a painful pleasure or pleasure-in-pain, surplus *jouissance* simultaneously encompasses (i) a quotient of *dissatisfaction* insofar as the pursuit of partial drive objects repeatedly fails to assuage subjective desire (this is what is intrinsic to the malfunctioning of subjectivisation and its concomitant symptom—repetition compulsion; repeated fixations on an endless series of partial drive objects), and (ii) a

quotient of perverse *satisfaction* in the very reiteration of this failure—i.e., in the very *repetition* of partial drive orbits around partial drive objects, without attaining them directly. For further useful discussion of the relationship between "impossible *jouissance*" and "surplus *jouissance*", see Žižek 1997, 169-70 and Evans 1996, 91-92.

[43] Lacan SIX, Lesson 1, 15 November 1961, 10.

[44] Lacan SIX, Lesson 1, 15 November 1961, 7, 10.

[45] Lacan SX, 59.

[46] For references to what Lacan terms "the effects of fading" proper to the (mal)functioning of subjectivisation see, for example, Lacan SII, 178 and Lacan 1960, 677-78.

[47] See, especially, Lacan 1949, 76-78.

[48] Lacan SII, 7.

[49] Lacan SIX, Lesson 3, 29 November 1961, 27.

[50] See, for example, Lacan SII, 206 and Lacan 1957a, 6.

[51] For references to the "metaphoric function" and the "agency" of the "letter", see Lacan 1957b, 418, 421-29. The understanding of the letter as "essence of the signifier" is stated explicitly in Lacan SIX, Lesson 4, 6 December 1961, 32.

[52] See Lacan SIII, 12.

[53] Here, I would suggest that, in keeping with our anti-humanist, anti-metaphysical perspective on subjectivisation, we must resist the temptation to assign the "agency" involved to *either* self-consciousness *or* the unconscious. Rather, "that" which "asserts" identities by virtue of "repressing" differences is implicated in the becoming of the field of language-mediated, desiring subjectivity *qua* irresolvable tension between self and otherness, consciousness and the unconscious. In Lacanian parlance, "what" we are referring to is the function of drive as a "headless subjectification".

[54] For references to the "differential battery" or "treasury" of the signifier, see Lacan SIX, Lesson 20, 16 May 1962, 225 and Lacan SX, 160.

[55] Here, I should acknowledge that the term "identities-in-difference" (i.e., those paradoxical identities that are, at the same time, different in and from themselves) appropriates and slightly modifies a term employed in Lacan SI, 243.

[56] Žižek 1997, 185.

[57] Lacan SXI, 53, 55.

[58] Lacan SV, Lesson 27, 25 June 1958, 356.

[59] See, for example, Lacan 1960, 681ff. The graph of desire makes its first appearance in Lacan SV, Lesson 1, 6 November 1957, 2. See also Žižek 1997, 100ff, and Evans 1996, 75-76.

[60] As symptomatic of the (mal)functioning of subjectivisation, the repetition of meanings asserted only in their ambiguity, as fading, thereby necessitating further assertions of meaning, is, of course, precisely analogous to repetition compulsion—which is to say, repeated fixations on an endless series of partial drive objects and/or the manner by which the partial drives endlessly orbit partial drive objects, without directly attaining them.

[61] Žižek 1997, 185.

[62] Typically, there is no such acknowledgement—which is why, in Lacanian terms, the self-certainty of the self-conscious one involves a "*function of misrecognition*" (see Lacan 1949, 80). Indeed, as discussed in Chiesa 2007, 16ff, this misrecognition is *twofold*. The first level of misrecognition reflects the manner by which self-certainty depends on an (mis)identification with otherness. To this extent, the self-conscious one is, in Lacanian jargon, "alienated" (see Lacan 1949, 76) or "decentred" (see Lacan SII, 9): its origin, so to speak, lies outside or beyond itself. The second (and as Chiesa points out, "most fundamental") level of misrecognition follows from the failure of the self-conscious ego to fully appreciate its functioning—which is to say, the ego fails to appreciate that it *is* alienated.

[63] See Lacan, SXI, 232 and Evans 1996, 212.

[64] Lacan SXI, 233.

[65] Lacan, SXV, Lesson 10, 21 February, 1968, 4.

[66] Lacan, SXI, 224. The subtlety of Lacan's commentary resides in his observation that Descartes ultimately eliminates "his subject supposed to know... by the primacy given to the will of God" such that "the eternal verities are eternal because God wishes them to be" (ibid, 225). Insofar as Descartes presents God as a wishing (i.e., desiring, lacking) Other, God is, at once, an infallible subject supposed to know *and* a fallen or failed subject supposed to know. In the context of *Seminar XI*, this harmonises with Lacan's account of the role of "separation" implicated in "the emergence of the field of the transference"—namely, the manner by which identification/subjectivisation involves the "superimposition of two lacks" defining "the desire of the subject and the desire of the Other" (ibid, 213-15).

[67] Ibid, 225-26.

[68] Kant 1911, §9, 58ff.

[69] Ibid, "Introduction IV", 19.

[70] Ibid, "Introduction V", 24-25.

[71] Lacan, SXV, Lesson 5, 10 January 1968, 11.

[72] Lacan, SXI, 273-74.

[73] Žižek 1997, 162.

[74] Ibid, 163.

[75] For references to the idea that, by virtue of subjectivisation/identification, the field of language-mediated, desiring subjectivity becomes as interwoven with impasses and impossibilities synonymous with the Real see, for example, Lacan SVI, Lesson 21, 20 May 1959, 266-7, where the "real-as-real" is characterised as "something in the subject... [that] is articulated... beyond his possible knowledge... the real in so far as it is inscribed in the symbolic" and Lacan SXX, 93, where it is asserted that "The real can only be inscribed on the basis of an impasse of formalisation." Here, I should acknowledge that my reference to Lacan SVI is indebted to Chiesa's nuanced discussion of the Lacanian "Real-of-the-Symbolic". See especially Chiesa 2007, 127, 131. The understanding of the Real in relation to the notion of impasses and impossibilities also is frequently reiterated in Žižek 1997. For example, vis à vis the Real dimension of the social antagonism theorised by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe in *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy:*

Towards A Radical Democratic Politics (1985), Žižek refers to the "logic of the Real" as "an impossible kernel, a certain limit which is in itself nothing; it is only to be constructed retroactively, from a series of its effects, as the traumatic point which escapes them; it prevents a closure of the social field" (163-64).

[76] Žižek 1997, 175. Here, I would suggest that Žižek's "subject of the signifier" is, in essence, equivalent to "subject of subjectivisation". That is to say, "subject" defined in terms of the essential functioning of signification or subjectivisation per se—i.e., in terms of the becoming of the field of language-mediated, desiring subjectivity in the form of an irresolvable tension between self and otherness, consciousness and the unconscious.

[77] Vis à vis subjectivisation and its limits, here, I have in mind Lacan's assertion that "the fashioning of the signifier and the introduction of a gap or a hole in the real is identical" such that "The introduction of this fabricated signifier… already contains the notion of creation *ex nihilio*" (Lacan SVII, 121, 122).

[78] Bourriaud 2002, 8-9.

[79] Ibid, 17.

[80] Ibid, 31. Bourriaud expresses similar degrees of scepticism with regard to modernist ideals when he suggests, for example, that "It is not modernity that is dead, but its idealistic and teleological version", from which perspective, "the role of artworks is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities, but to actually be ways of living and models of action within the existing real, whatever the scale chosen by the artist" (13).

[81] Bishop 2004, 55-61.

[82] Ibid, 57-58. Bishop refers to Janet Kraynak, "Tiravanija's Liability", *Documents* 13 (Fall 1998), 26-40.

[83] Ibid, 60-61. See also 60, n4.

[84] Ibid, 68-69.

[85] Ibid, 62, 65.

[86] Ibid, 66.

[87] Ibid, 65-67. For further discussion of the idea that, after Laclau and Mouffe, the inherently antagonistic dimension of intersubjective, social relations reflects the manner by which subjectivisation is a process or function structurally synonymous with the impossibility of its full realisation, see Žižek 1997, 45. Here, Žižek refers to ideology as a "fantasy-construction" that "structures… social relations" and "thereby masks some unsupportable, real, impossible kernel (conceptualized by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe as 'antagonism': a traumatic social division which cannot be symbolised)." Žižek's point is that ideology does not compensate for insufficiencies or difficulties in an actual social reality. Rather, ideology offers the fantasy of social reality itself "as an escape from some traumatic, real kernel". This "traumatic, real kernel" is nothing other than the very impossibility of subjectivisation being fully accomplished—i.e., the impossibility of fully realising intersubjective human relations or social reality as such.

[88] Ibid, 70-72.

[89] Here, of course, the point is that we must remain attentive to the reflexivity of the field of desiring (inter)subjectivity. In effect, this implies that there can be no traversing Bishop's fantasy (vis à vis Bourriaud) without there being, at the same time, a traversing

of our fantasy (vis à vis Bishop). In relation to the problem of interpretation, we might say that, always already, "we", in becoming (as subjects, analysts, scholars), catalyse Other traversing of fantasy (i.e., enliven the possibility of assuming new perspectives in and of the discourse) only insofar as "we" are being catalysed by the Other in traversing the fantasy *we are given to speak/desire* (i.e., the "we" becoming by virtue of performing the task of interpretation is, at the same time, *being interpreted* by the discourse of the Other in which the interpretation sits).

[90] Bishop, 67, 68.

[91] Ibid, 79.

[92] Ibid.

Bibliography

Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)" in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans Ben Brewster, London: New Left Books, 1971 (originally published in *La Pensée*, 151, June 1970, 3-38), 121-73. (Althusser 1971)

Bishop, Claire. "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics", *October*, v110, Autumn 2004, 51-79. (Bishop 2004)

Bourriaud, Nicholas. *Relational Aesthetics*, trans Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland, Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2002 (originally published as *Esthétique relationnelle*, 1998). (Bourriaud 2002)

Chiesa, Lorenzo, *Subjectivity and Otherness, A Philosophical Reading of Lacan*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2007. (Chiesa 2007)

Dolar, Mladen. "The Enjoying Machine", *Umbra* (2001), http://www.umbrajournal.org/pdfs/Umbra-Polemos-2001.pdf, (01.12.17), 123-39. (Dolar 2001)

Evans, Dylan. *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, London and New York: Routledge, 1996. (Evans 1996)

Freud, Sigmund. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, 24 vols, London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1953.

———.. "Project for a Scientific Psychology" (1895) in SE, v1, 295-343, 347-387. (Freud SE v1)

———. "The Interpretation of Dreams (second part)" (1900) in SE, v5, 339-621. (Freud SE v5)

———. "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through" (1914) in SE, v12, 147-56. (Freud SE v12)

———. "Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning" (1911) in SE, v12, 218-26. (Freud SE v12)

———. "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" (1920) in SE, v18, 7-64. (Freud SE v18)

Greenberg, Clement. "Avant-Garde and Kitsch", *Partisan Review*, v6, n5, Fall 1939, 34-49. (Greenberg 1939)

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time,* trans Joan Stambaugh, revised and with a Foreward by Dennis J. Schmidt, New York: State University of New York Press, 2010 (originally published as "Sein und Zeit" in *Jahrbuch für Phänomenologie und phänomenologische Forschung*, v8, 1927). (Heidegger 2010)

———. "Letter on 'Humanism' " in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998 (originally written as a letter to Jean Beaufret, 1946 and originally published with "Plato's Doctrine of Truth", Bern: A. Francke A.G., 1947), 239-76. (Heidegger 1998)

———. "The Thing" in Albert Hofstadter (trans), *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York, Harper & Row, 1971 (originally presented as "Das Ding" at the Bayerischen Akademie der Schönen Künste, 6 June 1950 and originally published in *Jahrbuch der Bayerischen Akademie der Schönen Künste*, Band 1, *Gestalt und Gedanke*, 1951, 128ff)), 163-80. (Heidegger 1971)

Kant, Immanuel. "Critique of Judgement" (1790) in *Kant's Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*, trans, with seven introductory essays, notes, and analytical index by James Creed Meredith, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911. (Kant 1911)

Lacan, Jacques. *Écrits, the First Complete Edition in English*, trans Bruce Fink in collaboration with Héloïse Fink and Russell Grigg, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006 (originally published as *Écrits*, Paris: Seuil, 1966). (Lacan 2006)

———. "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" in Lacan 2006 (originally presented as "Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction de Je" at the Sixteenth International Congress of Psychoanalysis, Zurich, 17 July 1949, and originally published in *Écrits* (1966), 75-81. (Lacan 1949)

———. "The Freudian Thing or the Meaning of the Return to Freud in Psychoanalysis" in Lacan 2006 (originally presented as "La chose freudienne" at the Vienna Neuropsychiatric Clinic, 7 November 1955 and originally published in *Évolution Psychiatrique*, v21, n1, 1956, 225-52), 347-48. (Lacan 1956)

———. "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter' " in Lacan 2006 (originally presented as "Le séminaire sur 'La lettre volée' ", 1955 and originally published in *La Psychanalyse*, n2, 1957, 1-44), 6-48. (Lacan 1957a)

———. "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason Since Freud" in Lacan 2006 (originally written as "L'instance de la lettre dans l'inconscient ou la raison depuis Freud", 1957 and originally published in *Écrits*, 1966), 412-441. (Lacan 1957b)

———. "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious" in *Écrits* (2006) (originally presented as "Subversion de sujet et dialectique du désir dans l'inconscient freudien" at the Royaumont Conference,

19-23 September 1960, and originally published in *Écrits* (1966),   671-702. (Lacan 1960)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book I. Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953-1954*, ed, Jacques-Alain Miller, trans John Forrester, with notes by John Forrester, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987 (originally published as *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre I. Les écrits techniques de Freud, 1953-1954*, Paris: Seuil, 1975). (Lacan SI)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book II. The Ego in Freud's Theory and   in the Technique of Psychoanalysis, 1954-1955*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans Sylvana Tomaselli, notes by John Forrester, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988 (originally published as as *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre II. Le moi dans la theorie de Freud et dans la technique de la psychanalyse, 1954-1955*, Paris: Seuil, 1978). (Lacan SII)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book III. The Psychoses, 1955-1956*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans Russell Grigg, with notes by Russell Grigg, London: Routledge, 1993 (originally published as *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre III. Les psychoses, 1955-1956*, Paris: Seuil, 1981). (Lacan SIII)

———. *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book V. The Formations of the Unconscious, 1957-1958*, unpublished transcript in Cormac Gallagher (trans*), Jacques Lacan in Ireland, Collected Translations and Papers*, http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Book-05-the-formations-of-the-unconscious.pdf, (officially published, in French, as *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre V. Les formations de l'inconscient, 1957-1958*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, Paris: Seuil, 1998). (Lacan SV)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book VI. Desire and its Interpretation, 1958-1959*, unpublished transcript in Cormac Gallagher (trans*), Jacques Lacan in Ireland, Collected Translations and Papers*, http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Book-06-Desire-and-its-interpretation.pdf. (Lacan SVI)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book VII. The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans with notes by Dennis Porter, New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992 (originally published as *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre VII. L'éthique de la psychanalyse, 1959-1960*, Paris: Seuil, 1986). (Lacan SVII)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book VIII. Transference, 1960-1961*, unpublished transcript in Cormac Gallagher (trans*), Jacques Lacan in Ireland, Collected Translations and Papers*, http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/THE-SEMINAR-OF-JACQUES-LACAN-VIII-Draft-21.pdf, (officially published, in French, as *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre VIII. Le transfert, 1960-1961*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, Paris: Seuil, 1991). (Lacan SVIII)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book IX. Identification*, *1961-1962*, unpublished transcript in Cormac Gallagher (trans*), Jacques Lacan in Ireland, Collected Translations and Papers*, http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-

content/uploads/2010/06/Seminar-IX-Amended-Iby-MCL-7.NOV_.20111.pdf.
(Lacan SIX)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book X. Anxiety*, ed. Jacques-Alain   Miller, trans
A.R. Price, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014 (originally published as *Le   Séminaire
de Jacques Lacan. Livre X. L'angoisse, 1962-1963*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil,
2004). (Lacan SX)

———. *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book XI. The Four Fundamental   Concepts
of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans Alan Sheridan,   London
and New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1998 (originally published   as
*Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre XI, Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de
la psychanalyse*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1973). (Lacan SXI)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book XV. The Psychoanalytic Act, 1967-
1968*, unpublished transcript in Cormac Gallagher (trans*), Jacques Lacan in
Ireland, Collected Translations and Papers*,
http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Book-15-
The-Psychoanalytical-Act.pdf. (Lacan SXV)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book XVI. From an Other to the other,
1968-1969*, unpublished transcript in Cormac Gallagher (trans*), Jacques Lacan
in Ireland, Collected Translations and Papers*,
http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Book-16-
from-an-Other-to-the-other.pdf. (Lacan SXVI)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book XX. Encore. The Limits of Love and
Knowledge, 1972-1973*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans with notes by Bruce Fink,
New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999 (originally published as
Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre XX. Encore, 1972-1973, Paris: Seuil, 1975).
(Lacan SXX)

———.*The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book XXII. RSI, 1974- 1975*, unpublished
transcript in Cormac Gallagher (trans), *Jacques Lacan in Ireland, Collected
Translations and Papers*, http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-
content/uploads/2010/06/RSI-Complete-With-Diagrams.pdf. (Lacan SXXII).

Pfaller, Robert. *Interpassivity, The Aesthetics of Delegated Enjoyment*, Edinburgh:
Edinburgh University Press, 2017. (Pfaller 2017)

Polt, Richard. "*Ereignis*" in Hubert L. Dreyfus & Mark A. Wrathall (eds), *A Companion to
Heidegger* (Malden & Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 375-91. (Polt 2005)

Vattimo, Gianni. *The End of Modernity*, trans with an Introduction by Jon R. Snyder,
Oxford and Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991 (originally published as *La fine della
modernità*, Garzanti Editore, 1985). (Vattimo 1991)

Young, Julian. "The Fourfold" in Charles B. Guignon (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to
Heidegger*, 2ᵈ Ed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006 (1993)), 373-92.
(Young 2006)

Žižek, Slavoj. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, London: Verso, 1997 (1989). (Žižek 1997)

———. "The Interpassive Subject" in Centre Georges Pompidou, *Traverses*   (1998),
http://www.egs.edu/faculty/slavoj-zizek/articles/the-interpassive-   subject/ (n.b., this

link, which is given in the bibliography of Pfaller 2017, was inactive at the time of writing and so this paper refers to an eighteen page   version of Žižek's essay available here: http://timothyquigley.net/vcs/interpassive.pdf), 1-18. (Žižek 1998)