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計 畫 主 持 人 ： 李紀舍

計畫參與人員： 碩士-兼任助理人員：蔡青松

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Victorian Urban Governance and Modern Cosmopolitan Imaginary:

H. G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia*

We build now not citadels, but ships of state.

A Modern Utopia by H. G. Wells

Concomitant with the ascendance of neoliberal globalization at the turn of the twenty-first century is a surge of cosmopolitanism as a point of exigent attention. While cosmopolitanism is often taken up as an ideal rather than an artificial product of long social changes, in this article I would like to sketch a historical manifestation of what I venture to call "cosmopolitan imaginary" at the turn of the twentieth century in England. I adopt this term to trace a realm not completely covered either by the history of intellectual ideas or by the history of literature to emphasize, on the one hand, a common vision of seeing the world in the city can be manifest in different forms of cultural expressions and, on the other hand, cosmopolitan yearning sits between accepted traditions of genres and historical tendencies.[1]

The very beginning of the twentieth century is a key historical site where we could examine the making of early varieties of liberal cosmopolitan imaginary. Historically, it is a period of globalization too. Jeffry A. Friedenin in his history of global capitalism surveys how between 1896 and 1914 an "integrated international economy" at its core came close to the classical ideal of global free trade (6). The steamships and railroads gradually incorporated the geographical earth into transportation grids and world trade accelerated accordingly, from "under $8 billion in 1898 to over $18 billion in 1913" (19). What anchored the acceleration of international trading was the gold standard, inaugurated in 1844 by Bank of England

[1] Here I follow largely the definition of social imaginary provided by Charles Taylor. Please see his *Modern Social Imaginaries*

and gradually received an almost world-wide acceptance, with the exception of only China and Persia in 1908 (17). Open trade was considered the norm of the day by such major industrial countries as Great Britain, France, Germany and the United States. In this newly formed world order Great Britain was central, investing half of her capital abroad and accounting for “about one-third of all international trade” (47).

The dominance of Great Britain’s capital incites a corresponding imaginary of expanding Victorian success to a global scale. To highlight the significance of this inquiry, I commence with H. Rider Haggard’s observation of adventure romance, a form that often orientalizes the globe for the metropolitan gaze. In 1894, he wondered, where "will the romance writers of future generations find a safe and secret place, unknown to the pestilent accuracy of the geographer, in which to lay their plots?" (qtd. in McClure 11) This archetypal adventure writer of England lamented the disappearing conditions that make possible adventure romance because cartographers on the ride of imperial expansion had practically mapped the surface of the globe toward the end of the Victorian era. Parallel to the decline of adventure fantasy, however, this study pinpoints around the turn of the twentieth century the rise of another kind of dreaming of the world, not necessarily revealed merely in form of popular literature but cutting across different forms of representation,[2] which in effect opens up the city and converts the urban space into a site of endless reshaping and one of human future. I will soon explain how this kind of cosmopolitan imaginary translates Victorian politics of demos and urbanization discourse onto the global space at the turn of the twentieth century to bring into being a mutual reinforcement of urban governance and imagined globalism. I will employ H. G. Wells as an exemplary

[2] Patrick Geddes expressed cosmopolitan imaginary in his exhibition plans, among which the Outlook Tower museum is the most studied by contemporary scholars. Please see Helen Elizabeth Meller’s *Patrick Geddes: Social Evolutionist and City Planner*..

to explain how the novelist articulates cosmopolitan imaginary of his day in his *A Modern Utopia* to "map" vital connections of modern urban globalism and the city-making of the nineteenth century. I will float the suggestion the cosmopolitan imaginary unearthed therewith would be of great relevance to understanding contemporary globalism today.

I: Urban Prosperity in the Late Victorian England

To situate H. G. Wells' utopia of a world state in the Victorian history of urbanization, rather than read it as *sui generis*, I will first briefly cover some historical contexts of Victorian urbanization. One underlying cause of Victorian urban prosperity, in addition to such well documented factors as the changed means of production, colonial expansion, globalized exchanges of commerce, is a rapid improvement of urban management of the lived environment and population. While Victorian urbanization indeed is a complex issue, a Foucauldian reading in particular provides a great vista into this problematic. Several Foucauldian scholars launched a revision of Victorian historical studies in the 1990s. Dean Mitchell first employs the Foucauldian concept of governmentality to interpret the social effects of the New Poor Law administration and thus underscores both the technical and the social dimensions in techniques of government. Mary Poovey codifies what Mitchell singles out in the term of the social body, an imaginary object which proposals and implementation of apparatuses delimit and work on. Nikolas Rose and Thomas Osborne identify the city as the privileged space for the ongoing governmentality highlighted by Mitchell and Poovey. The major practices found in the history of Victorian urban development are, in Patrick Joyce's words, "the conditions of possibility of liberalism, or in a stronger sense, as themselves liberal infrastructure, with nineteenth-century infrastructure being in this sense political infrastructure" (70). Assumed in this historical narrative are two key concepts, the concept of technology

and the making of subjects in the conditions of governing technologies.[3] As a result, redefining the Victorian city as a space for self-regulated individuality rather than a site of surveillance, these Foucauldian scholars render visible the building of the Victorian city as on-going attempts at administration/material "infrastructures," such as work houses and sewages, to allow for self-discipline of urbanites. Freedom, in this sense, is not a willed act of doing as one likes, but a practice socially sanctioned by and prospering in a design of a municipal city.

Here I give a brief account of a prominent case for illustration, the enforcement of the New Poor Law.[4] [5] By 1830 the money paid for poor relief assumed one-fifth of the national expenditure in Britain (Englander 3). Robert Malthus's theory of reproductive competition allowed one to draw a miserable conclusion that Britain was at the risk of being consumed away by an increasing burden of a population who were idle. Reformers concentrated on the question of how to keep the able-bodied from wasting funds of poverty relief. Edwin Chadwick and others promoted the practice of workhouses to deter those who sought aids. Once admitted into the workhouse, the person would subject him/herself to a rigid regimen of labor in an extremely harsh living condition and the sexes were separated inside. The moral legitimacy of this establishment was to prevent the able-bodied from degenerating into socially dependent paupers. Yet an obvious economic reason was to reduce the increasing relief rate collected from urban well-to-dos. The implementation of the New Poor

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[3] Please see Patrick Joyce on statistics (20-61) and Pamila Gilbert's *Mapping the Victorian Social Body* on mapping.

[4] This is an often rehearsed portion of Victorian history. For an account of it, please read David Englander's *Poverty and Poor Law Reform* and Lynn Hollen Lees's *The Solidarities of Strangers*.

[5] One should be reminded that this is just one among many others to come, including the Sanitary Movement, the making of public libraries, the elimination of slaughtering the live stock, and the much discussed establishment of lighted streets.Christopher Hamlin offers a comprehensive account of the emergence of public health in the Sanitary Movement. Chris Otter discusses how light in the city shaped urban subjects. Patrick Joyce also discusses the removal of slaughter houses and cattle markets from the city and the designing of local libraries for public access.

Law[6] managed to keep some urban problems under a bearable check but still one sees in this case much is at stake. First of all, the urban authorities refrained themselves from intervening in the labor market by artificially posing a standard of living, and returned the able-bodied back to the labor market for low wages..Second, in its practice one finds the triumph of free market in the sense that social relief was kept to a minimum to allow the manufacturers to collectively minimize labor wages without being responsible for social consequences of appalling working conditions, overcrowded living space and deteriorating health. Thus, it forged a format of governmentality in which the rulers were made into resources managers and the ruled self-governing"liberal subjects."

The theoretical concept of technologies of governance allows one to explain how the Victorian city weaved different kinds of social relationships in one ensemble of governing systems, machineries, organizations and so on and additionally opens up inquiries not yet well explored, and among which the human resources that make possible the operation of governing apparatuses have direct bearing on the making of modern cosmopolitan imaginary.[7] Interestingly, the intervention by urban management created a paradox: social reality is at once determined by place and amenable to social programs. The shape of the city is determined by the social milieu but technologies of governance can instead reengineer the conditions of the social milieu, which in turn disrupt the determinism of place. Such a paradox then forms a condition that enlarged the role of intellectuals in this circuit of urban changes for

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[6] One must not think the historical project of liberal governance was complete. Mary Poovey rightly cautions the reader that it was in "the process of forming," and "never fully formed" (1).

[7] Another one, not directly relevant to the argument here, is that material resources are unavoidably required to keep technologies operative even if the technologies involved are not directly constructed on materials such as in the instance of the New Poor Law. Chris Otter makes a great case on the necessity of materials and maintenance that make lighting of the city streets "durable." His investigation points to the fact that behind the booming of urban governing technologies lies an often ignored factor of wealth in the Victorian city. Any progress the Victorian city made assumes the incredible wealth but such a presupposition is not directly transparent.

they were in the position of designing and executing the social programs of urban governance. The creative potentials of human resources can always make technologies all the more elastic so as to be adaptable to contrived objectives. If we consider how Victorian urban governance in due course encouraged social planning by intellectuals, it is not hard to understand the social trend in which intellectuals tried to take the place of owners of property to be managers or trustees of social development. Foucauldian inquiries, focusing on how subjects are structured, are disposed to suspend this question of agency. Here it is instructive to go to the social history of British modernity narrativized by Harold Perkin to realize that the dominant success of technologies exclusively for the sake of free market is temporary at best. Professionals who lent a hand to the construction of social reforms were largely indiscernible in the midst of the triumph of the social projects at first (*Origins of Modern English Society* 252-270), but they returned with a vengeance between 1880 and 1914 (*The Rise of Professional Society* 116-170). Perkin observes in this period intellectuals of different backgrounds were mindful of their active engagement in the management of the society in general. In this sense, to explain such mounting awareness of agency among intellectuals, one cannot limit himself to the Foucauldian paradigm and bypass another inquiry on Victorian liberalism which lays emphasis on cultivation of an individual as an agent of social action.[8]

II Articulating Classical Globalization beyond Realism: H. G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia*

After two sociological works on the global future, *Anticipations* (1902) and *Mankind in the Making* (1903), Wells wrote *A Modern Utopia* (1905), which Lewis

[8] Amada Anderson expounds how Victorians including Charlotte Bronte, Charles Dickens, Matthew Arnold, George Eliot and Oscar Wilde seek to cultivate the ideal of detachment. David Wayne Thomas argues that "the aspiration to many-sidedness," or a valued practice to reach an autonomous decision in response to multiple restraints of a given situation, is the ideal of cultivation for Victorians (26).

Mumford famously regards as “the quintessential utopia” (184). Reading against the grain, assuming *A Modern Utopia* not just as an idealized future but also a manifestation of the present in a fundamental sense, I follow mainly Fredric Jameson and Walter Benjamin in understanding utopia as constitutive of modernity, a fantasy coexisting with the urban concentration of commodities,[9] and argue that he takes advantage of the utopian writing to form an imaginary of a globalized society at the beginning of the twentieth century. Simply put, the utopian future is a historical sense lodged into the present experience of modernity. In examining how the imaginative or the literary dimension of *A Modern Utopia* vocalizes a version of modern globalism, we will see how he solidifies a global imaginary of abstract expansion that paradoxically sits with the urban reality of jam-packed materials and commodities.

Upon writing *A Modern Utopia*, H. G. Wells set out to accommodate contesting perspectives of what the world should be, and resolved on a form manifestly novelistic, plotting an unexpected journey of the Owner of the Voice and the Botanist, two characters of distinctly different minds. This book unfolds as a stage exhibition, monitored by a chairperson. A presenter, vigorously denied to be the author, said to be the Owner of the Voice, reads from a manuscript. Along with the major presenter is another character “the Botanist,” who tags alone in the journey to an advanced world in spite of his own preoccupation with an unrequited love affair. In the background the utopia is projected in “the image of a cinematograph entertainment” (3). Glitches of the projection may cut in and the presentation alternates between blurred images and focused pictures. When the story begins, the two characters are “transported” into a world identical in its geographical and urban layouts with the Earth: “And behold!

[9] Benjamin’s theory of urban fantasmogoria is well known. Here is the complex way Jameson constructs utopia, which is “neither a representation of the past nor a representation of the future (although its various forms use such representations): it can first and foremost be defined as a perception of the present as history; that is, as a relationship to the present which somehow defamiliarizes it and allows that distance from immediacy which is at length characterized as a historical perspective. (Jameson 284)

In the twinkling of an eye we are in that other world!" (14).

When it was published in 1905, literary luminaries such as Henry James and Joseph Conrad were effusive in their praise for the immense capacity of the Wellsian imagination (Hillegas viii). Bound up with Wells's later propagandization of the world government, however, this book soon fell out of favor in the aftermath of the WWII. A typical voice against this work, represented by George Orwell, was a deep suspicion that it might proselytize a centralized world state with severely limited freedom in store for individuals. Continued interests in this book were sporadic and first and foremost derived from an appreciation of Wells's place in the modern intellectual history. The major one is, in the midst of nationalist fervor, Warren Wager defense of Wells's cosmopolitanism. Recently, we see a minor rise of attention to this book, especially in its "hybrid" form of presentation. *A Modern Utopia* is indeed unconventional in its form of presentation, which, Wells states, is a product of "trial and deliberation" (xxxii). Its form poses a challenge to literary criticism, not only because it mixes fictional writing and argumentation, but because within the fictional story one finds points of incoherence. June Deery explores the multiple meanings of the word "progress" to call attention to the fact that this work deals more than social progress: it is a work that reveals itself "in the process of being written" (217). Some others see this hybrid form a sign of Wells's creativity. Patrick Parrinder reaffirms the earliest critical response and maintains that "it is for its textual and imaginative qualities, rather than for its ideas, that the book repays rereading" (116).[10] Harvey N. Quamen observes literary critics are hampered by a crude classification system borrowed from biology and evolution of the late Victorian era and fail to appreciate Wells's experiment on literary genres but he values Wells's experimentation for its

[10] Parrinder, Patrick. "Utopia and Meta-Utopia in H. G. Wells." *Science-Fiction Studies* 12 (1985): 115-28.

potential contribution to the study of literary history in the way of how one should stress elastic boundaries of a genre.

This brief overview of critical responses allows us to find the reading of *A Modern Utopia* divided between the disciplines of intellectual history and literary studies.I would instead seek to explain how it is necessary to place Wells's ideas and his form of writing side by side in our reading and how the form of the work itself is connected to the construction of a Wellsian utopia. To convince the audience that social reality is indeed fluid, subject to change and may reach its optimal condition if the humankind all work toward this direction, one needs not just a global history, but a new form of persuasion. Lauren Goodlad is right to observe a close affinity between Wells and aestheticism of the late Victorian era and considers him a "quasi-Idealist" (219). I would like to extend Goodlad's insight by placing *A Modern Utopia* in the historical context of its urban governance to examines how Wells deals with crisis of representation in its narrow sense or how to articulate globalism without adequate forms of writing available.[11]

In other words, to write about large-scale changes of the social milieu for a writer at the end of the Victorian age is to face squarely the question of how not to write in the manner of realism, a form that vehemently presupposes an unchanged milieu. To make my point, I revisit first the finale of *A Modern Utopia*. The Owner of the Voice is unexpectedly wrenched awake from his utopian dream, and acutely overwhelmed by sullied streets, bums and a prostitute: "the dirt-littered basin of the fountain," "tramps," and "a draggled prostitute" (360; 362). While the details of urban reality are unbearably clear and real in a sense, he regretfully bellows at the ongoing of crowds and city traffic: "I wish . . . I could *smash* the world of everyday"

[11] Please read Chapter 16 of *The Condition of Postmodernity* byDavid Harvey for a close analysis of crisis of representation in the nineteenth century literature

(emphasis original 363). And he yells again: “This is a dream too—this world” (363). In fact, we may privilege this scene as symbolic of the conception moment of Wells’s utopian project although this howl for change is located at the end of the plot. The reversal of reality into dream and vice versa is here presented as the urgent task, to which the whole book is indeed constructed so as to respond in the form of “an illumination that passes as it comes” (373). Wells recognizes the obstacle to a perception of social evolution is the immediate context of urban life, beyond which the reader must be led to proceed. Significantly, to write a picture of social change at the turn of the twentieth century is also, to write against realism, a form that legitimizes urban reality by its relentless presentation of unchanged “thingness” in the environment.[12] What is noteworthy then is how Wells would break open the confinement of realism to render the city open for reshaping and transforming into the very site of articulation of fantasy. Wittingly or not, he seeks a form that defies realism, more on the change of the milieu than on that of an individual.[13]

In *A Modern Utopia*, Wells envisions a world state sharply distinguished from past utopias by its characteristic of being “kinetic”: “But the Modern Utopia must be not static but kinetic, must shape not a permanent state but as a hopeful stage, leading to a long ascent of stages” (5). Critics have paid attention to the keyword “kinetic.” For example, Parrington glosses this word by identifying it as an instance of ethical evolution in the sense as Thomas Huxley sees it (98). However, to my knowledge, its meanings, of great consequence to understanding both the form and the content of this work, have not been thoroughly traced. Importantly, being kinetic has both temporal

[12] In this case, we may go to Peter Brooks for his pithy acumen regarding the sociological significance of realism: “Realism is nothing if not urban: it is most characteristically about the city in some important way, as the new total context of modern life” (131).

[13] Even though Quamen defends him for doing an experiment. I would say that Wells does not completely understand that his major target would be realism since he still tries his hands on realist novels after this book, including *Tono-Bungay*.

and spatial connotations. First of all, its temporal association is derived from positivism. Auguste Comte counter-distinguishes "social statics," a stable moral order, from "social dynamics" to underscore "the uneven forces and disparate events that characterized human progress" (Cowen and Shenton 29). Typifying this new world as "kinetic," Wells simply reaffirms Comte's emphasis on "change and development" (*A Modern Utopia* 5). Second, being kinetic suggests the spatial meaning of a world of global flows of people and things. Interestingly, the two meanings of being kinetic, conceived together, are very close to "time-space compression," a dominant meaning of globalization nowadays.[14] Such a characteristic presents a challenge to Wells in terms of the form of his writing. The author's vision begs the question of what it takes to write a "kinetic" utopia. How could one explain the complex process of settling down the final form after giving up several other possibilities, and what does this struggle for articulation mean beyond his personal career of writing and politics, given the height of classical globalization at the early twentieth century?

The following discussion is broken into two parts: one on how Wells creates a form and the other on what content is supported by the given form.

1. Aesthetic Imagination and the Formation of Wellsian Cosmopolitan Imaginary

Wells constructs cosmopolitan imaginary by appealing to aestheticism. By and large, he privileges aesthetic imagination in his social planning. In a lecture six years after the publication of A *Modern Utopia*, he valorizes literary education in the training of future officials.

> We must have not only the fullest treatment of the temptations, vanities, abuses, and absurdities of office, but all its dreams, its sense of constructive

[14] David Harvey defines time-space compression: "processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves" (240).

> order, its consolations, its sense of service, and its nobler satisfactions . . . the complicated social organization today cannot get along without the amount of mutual understanding and mutual explanation such a range of characterization in our novels implies. (151)[15]

One might perceive that the emphasis on novel is not for its verisimilitude but for its faculty to inspire ethical understanding with imaginative stories. A similar constellation of concerns of novel, politics and imagination dominates the making of *A Modern Utopia*. Like many Victorian predecessors including the eminent social sage Matthew Arnold, Wells is driven by aestheticization of Friedrich Schiller in the way of conceiving of social evolution. Here I only briefly summarizes some aspects of Schiller's theory that have direct relevance to our understanding of the form of *A Modern Utopia*.

Partly as a response to the terror of social fragmentation and the violence of regicide, Friedrich Schiller wrote *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* to dispel the fear of the demos.[16] It begins with the problematic of conflict between the needs of an individual and those of a society in general. Any individual seems at first to be governed by the conflict between what he calls "sensuous drive," including sensory experiences, basic needs of survival and emotional impulses, and "formal drive," the process of experiences into rational standards. Schiller thinks it is only seemingly so and these two can be synthesized into a "play drive," a disinterested activity for its own sake. Schiller provides a psychology of aesthetic elevation. This activity possesses both content of life, as from sense-drive, and form, as from form-drive, and constitutes a living form. This aesthetic activity is then full of social significance to

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[15] Wells, H. G. "The Contemporary Novel." *Henry James and H. G. Wells*. Ed. Leon Edel and Gordon N. Ray. London: Hart-Davis, 1958,. 131-55.

[16] In the eighth chapter, he comments on the approaching chaos in the hands of the revolutionary crowd in France.

Schiller, and means detachment from immediate reality but toward the mutually beneficial relationship between an individual and the collective. In this way, the play-drive becomes “aesthetic semblance,” or crudely put, detached aesthetic imagination that hovers a bit away from the immediate reality but “imitate” in imagination of beauty an ideal social relationship between an individual and the political authorities. By extension, an ideal political state would emerge if every individual is fully engaged in aesthetic semblance. The strength of this work lies in the visioning capacity Schiller allows aesthetic detachment to develop. We are deeply restricted in our immediate experience, composed of sensory correspondences of external objects, but from which one can be detached once fully engaged in aesthetic imagination, and reach social harmony ultimately even when the sense experiences foretell the impossibility of it.

We are now in a better position to understand the form of *A Modern Utopia*: the fiction derives largely from allegorizing the mind drama, as Schiller delineates, between attachment to and detachment from the immediate experience by narrating a conflict of the two characters, the Owner of the Voice and the botanist, since the latter allegorizes, especially in his nostalgic disposition toward his unrequited love, the pull toward immediate sense experiences and base desire. The Botanist represents a type of science-informed experts, whom the Owner of the Voce bluntly ridicules for their inflexibility in thinking and lack of imagination: “You scientific people, with your fancy of a terrible exactitude in language, of indestructible foundations built, as that Wordsworthian doggerel on the title page of Nature says, “for aye,” are marvelously without imagination” (21).Supposedly because the Botanist is tied to the sense experiences and sets his eyes merely on the appearance of objects instead of social relationships, he has almost insurmountable difficulty perceiving differences between the Earth and its utopian double: “a terrestrial botanist might find his every species

there, even to the meanest pondweed or the remotest Alpine blossom" (13).

The erection of a new world does not merely depend on what could be called "infrastructures." Even if the world is already there physically, the question of how to get ready for it staunchly remains. By this plot design Wells has also the advantage of bringing into focus the question of cultivation of aesthetic detachment (or "disinterestedness" in Matthew Arnold's word) in the interaction between the two characters. Most of time the Botanist seems to act as the opposite to the Owner of Voice in his preoccupation: the former on his past love, and the latter on the new world. Yet, the Owner of Voice would envy the Botanist for his ability of "blending in," to share his nostalgia with a passer-by in small talks. Moreover, the Owner of the Voice would occasionally sympathize with the Botanist' plight and become cognizant of the difficulty of elevating oneself in a lofty imagination. Right before the climax of the novel, the meeting with the Samurai double, the Owner of the Voice, seeing the despondent Botanist, comes to understand how it is to be gnawed at by unrequited love. The Owner of the Voice laments, "We agreed to purge this State and all the people in it of traditions, associations, bias, laws, and artificial entanglements, and begin anew; but we have no power to liberate ourselves. Our past, even its accidents, its accidents above all, and ourselves, are one" (257).Thus, a tension between this world and the new world reaches a new height. In the story between the Owner of the Voice and the Botanist, Wells foregrounds the slow coming to terms with a new reality and the necessity of cultivation against a "realistic" perspective.[17]

Although occasionally tugged back to a factual Victorian reality, the momentum of the plot starts when the Owner of the Voice senses the piquancy of wanting to his double, the same but a higher self: "I doubt if we shall meet our doubles, or if it would

[17] This resurges at the last discussion on the utopia when the Owner of the Voice cautions the reader to be on guard against racial prejudices. "We may watch against it and prevent it doing any great injustices, or leading us ito folloies, but to eradicate it is an altogether different matter" (325).

be pleasant for us to do so" (25). The climax is reached and so is his aesthetic assemblance at the moment when he meets his utopian double and finds out how the class of Samurai rules the world. The Samurai double is the one who develops the faculty of imagination. Central to this utopian state are those "possessing imagination that range beyond the known and accepted, and that involve the desire to bring the discoveries made in such excursions, into knowledge and recognition" (266). The utopia recognizes "the ultimate significance in life in individuality, novelty and the undefined, would not only regard the poietic element as the most important element in human society, but would perceive quite clearly the impossibility of its organization" (274).

A Schillerian aesthetic imagination is necessarily subject to a frail balance between detachment and attachment. This utopian planet of Wells is by no means a locale completely detached, independent of the Earth, but remains one similar to the the latter with major threats: "a world of uncertain seasons, sudden catastrophes, antagonistic diseases, and inimical beasts and vermin, out of men and women with like passions, like uncertainties of mood and desire to our own," (7-8). It is important to note that one cannot stray too far away from the immediate factual life of changes and dangers. In a typical Schillerian view, any aesthetic activity, if deeply ungrounded, runs the risk of becoming delusionary ("not logical semblance" in Schiller's words). This is what after all happens to the Owner of the Voice, who "forget[s] that a Utopia is a thing of the imagination that becomes more fragile with every added circumstance, that, like a soap-bubble, it is most brilliantly and variously coloured at the very instant of its dissolution" (352). In addition, the reality check sets in too. After a long journey in this utopian world state, the Botanist still remains fixated on his perspective on the identical appearance. At the remark of the botanist's deep disbelief in the utopian world, these two are instantaneously shifted back, unwittingly, to Edwardian London:

"There is no jerk, no sound, no hint of material shock. We are in London and clothed in the fashion of the town. The sullen roar of London fills our ears . . ." (Omission mark original, 358). The imagination of a world state collapses because the Owner of the Voice and the Botanist destroy the delicate tension by pulling each other far into an opposite direction, one saoring to imagination and the other staying on the empricial observations of the surface details of senses.

One could consider *A Modern Utopia* to be a sustained work of Schillerian "aesthetic semblance." This doubling of the Earth, a typical instance of aesthetic semblance, detaches the reader from the immediate everyday life of the Earth and invites him to imagine a better one. As the Owner of the Voice constantly reminds the reader, the utopian reality is authored and thus authorized by no other but himself: "Thank Heaven this is my book, and that the ultimate decision rests with me" (67). The narrator is never shy about revealing "artistic limitations" of this creation (9). That is, the Owner of the Voice begins to, in Deery's word, "hypothesize" a utopian world, rendering outputs of his imagination into concrete shapes. Notwithstanding, I would agree with Deery only up to a point. He considers this work subjective, so much so that Wells allows the story to take control, and implies a loss of rational authorial craftsmanship in some confusing parts (221). This judgment in effect misses the mark, circumnavigating Wells's major premise that individual subjectivism is the starting point of the journey toward a better world. The legitimacy of this individual's creative imagination is underwritten by a free play of individual consciousness in the Schillerian sense. And it follows aesthetic semblance is an activity full of tensions and sustained efforts. In *A Modern Utopia*, Wells shares with Schiller two imperatives: first, the unyielding optimism to strike a balance between the supposedly contradictory demands of an individual and the society in general; second, the feasibility of such a harmony starts with aesthetic cultivation within an individual.

2. The Globe as the Victorian City enlarged

With an imagined better double of the Earth, Wells capitalizes on Schillerian aestheticism to concretize a modern urge of welcoming social changes of large scales. Wells's globalism has often been characterized as a technological utopia but one should not be misled into believing that Wells is so immersed in some science fiction fantasy to lose a grip of history. Without doubt, Wells partook profoundly in controversies of his own time as the profusion of topical references in this hybrid novel can prove. Most of all, he puts to use a range of then newly developed techniques of population controls, or what Patrick Joyce properly calls "technologies of governance," and broadens the applied province of them into a globalized setting to explore their social consequences. I will enumerate instances of them below, including public transportation, the management of poverty relief, regime of public health, and trusteeship to demonstrate how the Owner of the Voice radiates an unflagging optimism in "modernity at large," to borrow Arjun Appadurai's appellation of globalization: "a general consolidation of a great number of common public services over areas of considerable size is not only practicable, but very desirable" (76).[18]

First of all, the Wellsian utopia glamorizes public transportation technologies for the benefits they might bring to the freedom of movement globally. If the first electric tramway in London opened on 15 May 1903, and many other technological innovations of transportation, such as trains, steel ships, steel bridges, horse-drawn tramways and undergrounds, were in place for some time, Wells carries to a logical conclusion to imagine that the entire planet would be permeated with traffic routes for

[18] Here I want to stress the formation factor of Wells's liberalism comes much from his realization of social implications of Victorian urban technologies of governance. Steven McLean is one that reminds us of Wells' connection with Victorian liberalism. McLean might be right about an influence of Mill's thought of liberalism over Wells, but it does not necessarily follow that Mill is the only source.

the public. The varieties of this technological development are wide, including "interurban communications" (42), "webs of inconspicuous special routs" over the world (45), "great tramways" (46) and the high speed train that runs two hundred miles per hour (240). Even more importantly, what enthrall Wells are not merely innovative wonders in these diverse machines, but their rich socio-political consequences of enabling freedom of movement. World-wide transportation makes possible the basic condition of this utopia as a social body completely fluid in itself, "beyond any earthly precedent, not simply a travelling population, but migratory" (47). In turn, the unremitting flows of people warrant even more salient results. Above all, "[i]n the Modern Utopia travel must be in the common texture of life," declares the Owner of the Voice (43). Freedom of finding jobs wherever they are available, unthinkable in the Victorian restrictions of settlement, is now given automatically to any citizen: "[a] free change of locality once or twice a year from a region of restricted employment to a region of labor shortage will be among the general privileges of the Utopian citizen" (150). In contrast, the severest punishment for criminals in this liquid world then is to deprive them of physical freedom by confining them in insular territories.

At this point it is appropriate to explicate the second important meaning of being kinetic: flows of people on a planetary scale. It also has a derivative meaning; in this condition each locale is a reflection point of the world of flows, in sharp contrast with the idea of it as a fixed center: 'indeed all local establishments, all definitions of place, are even now melting under our eyes" (162). This meaning can be seen as a positive anticipation of what Anthony Giddens calls "disembeddedness" or what Roland Robertson christens "relativization"[19] of globalization around the turn of the

[19] Robertson defines "relativization as the consequence of radical changed

twenty-first century. Less frequently observed but vitally important is the point Wells utters almost in one breath freedom of movement and freedom in general as if the latter is not a right itself but a condition guaranteed by technologies of movement.

Second, Wells's conception of a proto world welfare state transposes Victorian practices of local poverty reliefs onto a global space. Contextually, one controversy in particular that dates Wells's proposal of global welfare was the social inquiries separately conducted by two groups, respectively led by members of Charity Organization and socialist Fabians. Rising dissatisfaction with the New Poor Law was followed by the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress in 1905. The concern of striking a delicate balance between how to prevent a depletion of local resources in social aids and how to maintain social security in areas of migratory populations continued to haunt reform-minded intellectuals in the very early twentieth century. In the novel, however, the Owner of the Voice alludes to the Victorian practices of the workhouse, again, a vital measure predominantly foregrounded in the New Poor Law, to remind the reader that Wells's pseudo-welfare policies seeks to address what the project of the Victorian social reforms failed to do. Extremely discontented with Fabians' attempt of keeping their deliberations within the limit of an urban locale, in response Wells pitches in a new direction, pushing the old practices onto a global scale. Seen in the light of global migration, priorities would change completely and the legitimization of social aids cannot be derived locally and limited by local resources. When atomized in a world of migration, each individual is given a minimum protection everywhere he or she goes**:** "It will insist upon every citizen being properly housed, well nourished, and in good health, reasonably clean

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perspectives in which "globalization proceeds, challenges are "increasingly presented to the stability of particular perspectives on, and collective and individual participation in, the overall globalization process" (29).

and clothed healthily, and upon that insistence its labour laws will be founded" (138). Thus, Wells practically makes social aids "portable," so to speak, to an individual, who is always free to roam the earth. The right to social reliefs is similar to that to property: "he would receive as a shareholder in the common enterprise and not with any insult of charity" (141).

The significance of Wells's reengineering of Victorian social aids is hardly exhausted by readers of *A Modern Utopia* to the best of my knowledge. One might suppose that Wells shows a strong collectivist outlook in the proposal of the world state welfare, but it could be argued otherwise. Insisting on providing anyone anywhere some basic cares, Wells comes very close to a discourse of human rights, an individual's inalienable claims to the humanity at large. And in this sense one can contend that Wells's social cares work for the cause of individualism instead and later in his life Wells became one of the first initiators of the human rights discourse during the twentieth century, and his proposal merged into the version eventually endorsed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued by the United Nations in 1948.[20] [21]

Third, Wells's discussions on public health, including the environmental hygiene and mild population control, are variations of the Victorian models of the said measures. To begin with, the improvement of Victorian public hygiene is represented mostly via the Samurai double's reflection on social changes and his own social role. In the dialogue with the Owner of the Voice, the better double jubilantly declares, "Our hygiene and regimen are rapidly pushing back old age and death, and keeping

[20] Wells used all of his personal influences, gave lectures and wrote editorials to promote a draft of human rights declaration. In early 1940 he published the draft in a book entitled *The Rights of Man or What Are We Fighting For?*.

[21] Wells's change of Victorian practices is of significance as an antecedent that corresponds to a sharp turn of attention to human rights issues in the early twenty-first century when migration moves unprecedented amount of people out of their habitats in which they grow up.

men hale and hearty to eighty and more" (285). In fact, the doppelganger of the protagonist simply reiterates both the history and the prospect of hygiene reforms in the nineteenth century. For instance, when the utopian self explains utopians are vegetarians because they want to do away with hygienic problems associated with "slaughter-houses" (286), he effectively alludes to the history of moving cattle markets and slaughter-houses from the center of the city in the nineteenth century.[22] As if very much content with the progress of public hygiene improvement, the Samurai double turns away from public hygiene issues and takes on instead the task of devising a better scheme of imprisonment to address current complaints against the measure of extreme insulation (278).

Compared with the matter of public hygiene, Wells spends much more space on pseudo-eugenic policies. As a work that emerged at the turn of the century, proposals regarding population control were inevitably entwined with the contemporary discourse of eugenics. Although overlapping with some eugenic claims of birth control, Wells's preventionism is in essence different from the kind of eugenics Francis Galton advertised around the turn of the century (211). The idea of burden invites Wells to evoke key concerns that launched Victorian social reforms chiefly led by Chadwick. Wells seeks control of birth for fear that children might claim social aids. That is, Wells considers it appropriate to conduct birth control to alleviate burdens of the society in general. This elaboration of social burden then is sharply distinguished from Galton's emphasis on elimination measures in population control.Wells in this instance seeks to steer a middle path between individual freedom and interventionism. The utopians entertain substantial hope for self-motivated improvement: "people will exercise foresight and self-restraint to escape even the possibilities of hardship and discomfort" (185). However, forceful measures are

[22] Please read Patrick Joyce's discussion "The Blood of the City" (76-93).

proposed to prevent reproductive burdens. For instance, couples of ill health or inadequate wages are not qualified for marriage. One should add that Wells's judgment of the women question is deeply entangled in or even subsidiary to his deliberation of "reproductive competition" (135). A case in point is that childbearing and rearing are regarded as "a service done" "to the whole community" (190).[23]

Finally, Wells's forging of a Samurai class is, in spite of its foreign branding, no more than a continued thought on a British question of social trusteeship, starting from social reforms of Chadwick and further theorized by Stuart Mill,[24] in which "the intention to develop has been framed by trusteeship" (Cowen and Shenton 57). Wells persists in dwelling on qualifications and cultivation of trustees of the society. Among all of the utopian proposals, the formation of a global elite force for ruling over others is the most misunderstood, perhaps because of the militant overtone of the allusion to Japanese swordsmen and the historical associations of such an order with fascist regimes in the history of WWII.[25] However, the chapter on the class of "voluntary nobility" discusses much less on the institutional roles over others than on the cultivation of youths to be trustees of the global society. Wells places great weight on values of inventiveness and exercises of detachment. The Samurai recruits affiliates mainly from the top category of the four classes of the society, the poetic, the kinetic, the Dull and the Base (which we could roughly translate into the creative, the executive, and the common). The class divisions are flexible since it is said that such a perceived social order is merely a classification to an end (270). As with Stuart Mill, Wells values individuality and creativity but more than Mill Wells would advance what the cliché of today would dub as "institutional incentives of creativity": "a great

[23] Again, Wells may sound very much like a socialist, valuing the community over an individual. In fact, I would say he is much more a biologist than a socialist in this instance.

[24] Wells's concern of education and global progress is long standing as one of his final works *The Open Conspiracy* shows.

[25] For a historical account of Wells's reputation of his being "the authoritarian and racist" in the early 1930s, please read Philip Coupland's "H. G. Wells's 'Liberal Fascism.'"

variety of devices by which poietic men and women were given honour and enlarged freedoms" (275). In addition, the world state stipulates a routine practice of a solitary journey in the wild to promote a ruling member's detachment from the immediate everyday life. The utopian self describes how in one star gazing moment in the desert he was transported into an elevated conception of his self: "[o]ne becomes an ambassador of mankind to the outer world" (308).

We might recall here my early point on the social agency of intellectuals in urban governance. Sociologically speaking, Wells participated in the shared critique of capital by the class of professionals around the turn of the century, as described by Harold Perkin (*The Rise of the Professional Society* 159). Wells removes wealth from being a necessary qualification of the voluntary nobility by regarding social classifications based upon land or capital as "accidental categories" (265). Furthermore, an individual is required to take "a vow of moderate poverty" upon entering the order of Samurai and denies this membership to be a channel of reaping profit (288). In these ways, Wells virtually takes over the governorship of the society from the wealthy to be given to the educated as trustees. One might speculate, nevertheless, that Wells dodges an ensuing problem of whether to pronounce the professional class to be the only qualified. It is said that utopians do not enforce an original rule that a member should be one with the training of "a Technique" (282). Professional training becomes an undecided quality presumably because it might imply a denial of membership to workers. Wells chooses to anchor the appeal of the Samurai class on the Victorian value of character building; a guardian of the society is one who possesses "a certain steadiness of purpose, a certain self-control and submission" (281). In this case, one can trace an emerging struggle by the professionals to grasp the legitimacy of being trustees of the society in general.

In *A Modern Utopia* Wells rescales the Victorian urban governance to be applied

to the entirety of the globe. He believes the cosmopolis could naturally stem from globalized technologies of liberal governance. The Owner of the Voice once challenges the audience with a rhetorical question: “Utopia has sound sanitary laws, sound social laws, sound economic laws; what harm are these people [of different racial or ethnic backgrounds] going to do?”(339) I would like to bring to the fore the central double in the novel. Critics observe the doubling of individual identities in this work, but I contend this doubling of the major character is just a secondary feature, merely a derivative effect of the major kind of doubling, that of the social environments: the dominating double of this utopia writing is the globe as the city and the geographical city mirroring the globe in its flows of people.

3. An Imaginary of Classical Globalization: London as a Wellsian Cosmopolis

The creative attempts of H. G. Wells’s utopian writing express a cosmopolitan imaginary of classical globalization. In what follows I bring up two major kinds of social relationship privileged in *A Modern Utopia*, a conception of global exchange, and a forging of the city as the networking center of global people flows, to portray this social imaginary.

First of all, the Wellsian utopia is intrinsically in sync with the ideal of classical globalization controlled by the gold standard. At first sight, Wells seems to propose to eradicate the gold standard, the underpinning of classical globalization. The idea of flows is so strong that even trading itself is considered a sign of barriers. Wells would like to remove gold from the circuit of global exchanges because he considers a representation of flows cannot be rendered onto a material, believing that globalization should be subject to the material fluctuations as one finds in gold (75). In fact, except the speculations resulted from trading, he completely accepts what the gold standard embodies: “it is the water of the body social, it distributes and receives, and renders growth and assimilation and movement and recovery possible” (73).

Therefore, the Owner of the Voice proposes an alternative: this world is to be regulated by a standard measured by units of energy, supposedly better than the gold standard for its immaterial and readily transferrable quality.

In this utopia of global flows emerges a mega-city-centered geography. The binary opposition between the city and nature has been buttressed by the preferred Schillerean prioritization of art over nature. On the one hand, nature means raw materials and object of sensory experiences, from which one should cultivate some distance in activities of aesthetic imagination. It is no wonder that in the chapter on the nature of the utopia the Owner of the Voice does not want to listen to a defense of undeveloped nature by a utopian character he comes across. The apology of nature is taken to be "overbearing" to the point of being idiosyncratic. Unlike the Owner of the Voice, the Botanist, again, the allegorized image of a "naturalist," can engage in a conversation with the garrulous utopian, and their talk quickly turns to the Botanist's favorite subject, his lost love. The Owner of the Voice cannot hold his contempt of the pettiness of this topic in comparison with imagination and declares, "I can't attempt to explain these vivid spots and blind spots in the imaginations of sane men; there they are!" (124)

While the nature is associated with an undesirable lingering in the raw state, the city epitomizes the accomplishments of inventive utopians. The new world is dominated by cities, which reflect in urban networking capacity the flows of the people. In fact, an important device of the setting in *A Modern Utopia* is the working of Paris in the background. Paris is said to house an index center that archives identity information of every individual of the globe. The processing of identity information in Paris allows the Owner of the Voice to locate his double so he can be transported to be with him and discuss the Samurai class. Beyond Paris, in the second half of the journey world city London is the topographical focus. We read a rewriting of London,

reversed from a location of seamy corners to a place full of light, where flows of people daily visit and the institutes within have been busily gathering knowledge. Utopian London "designed by the artist-engineer[s]," sits at the apex of artistic efforts of the humankind (Hillegas, *A Modern Utopia* xxii). The Owner of the Voice amazes at the wonders of buildings, which "will have flung great arches and domes of glass above the wider spaces of the town, the slender beauty of the perfect metal-work far overhead will be softened to a fair-like unsubstantiality by the mild London air" (emphasis mine 244). This new metropolis exults in the Victorian vogue enabled by the massive use of steel and glass. Moreover, the utopian buildings resemble the style of the glass dome of the Great Exhibition (1851), in which the frames of brick and mortar almost disappeared to allow sunlight to beam on the objects gathered from all over the world.

London also serves as a functional center of "social and intellectual exchange" (243). One obvious trait of the urban landscape is the plethora of hotels: "the cliffs of crowded hotels, the hotels that are still glowing with internal lights" (244). Another is the proliferation of such institutional centers as universities, libraries, and museums. These all are sites for the encyclopedic knowledge of the world (163) This belief in encyclopedic knowledge is derived from the Enlightenment hope that extensive cataloguing of objects can harness the global knowledge into one physical locale. At an early point of the book, the Owner of the Voice already proclaims with confidence, "Bacon's visionary House of Salomon will be a thing realized, and it will be humming with this business" (60). In short, London remains a world city of the future because it is reshaped to mirror the globe in key aspect of its functions: the magnificence of the city then comes from its capacity of extensive reach to every corner of the globe as a center of travel and knowledge.

Conclusion

My reading of *A Modern Utopia* would provoke, I hope, the important question of how historically we have been conceiving of a world tightly connected, in which people flows are the dominant concern. H. G. Wells experimented to give an expression of what he considered the trends of the future. In the creative visions discussed in this paper, the expanding city of the late nineteenth century England was one of the ruling contexts. This artistic shaping of cosmopolitan imaginary points to the future as an urbanized one, so much so that any fantasy adventure of world starts right where the urbanites stand. London as an imagined city in the Wellsian utopia substantiates what the Great Exhibition of 1851 stands for, the vision of light that takes for granted imperialism and celebrates in the urban locale concentration of commodities brought forth by global trading. Then, I would say to insist on this historical situating of cosmopolitan imaginary is to think of the city as a persistently dominant form of contemporary global visions.

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移地研究簡要

本次移地研究參加位於匈牙利布達佩斯的Central European University所舉辦的夏季學程（2007 年七月十六號至二十二號）。參加者爲副教授、助理教授及博士候選人。台灣方面只有我一人。

此次移地研究收獲豐富。茲簡述如下:

首先,該夏季學程安排的學習內容豐富。更重要的是目前唯一針對我的研究專長而有的學程。是千載難逢的機會。我在其間研究的是跨國公司與文化改變的問題。

其次, 從這次交流活動中發現西歐及北美以外的研究關照。學員除有若干來自北美,大部份其實來自東歐及俄國。在學習過程中,包括課堂討論、課堂報告,課外實習中與他們進行實質的交流。提展我的研究視野。台灣長期以來進行文學交流活動，概以歐、美、日地區爲主，且偏向美國居多，甚少和東歐地區的研究著聯繫，應鼓勵台灣其他的研究者也參加類似的活動。

第三、在此次參訪的基礎下，希望未來能繼續與學者保持密切聯繫。在其中向幾位授課教師表達希望他們能到台灣訪問、交流。在 2008 年五月,主辦人 Imre Szeman (Director of Globalization Studies, McMaster University)及另一位教師 Eric Cazdyn (Comparative Literature, University of Tonoro)同意來訪。也替台灣介紹全球化文化的研究頂尖的學者。

以下附上學程課表

CEU SUMMER UNIVERSITY
Nádor u. 9., Budapest, Hungary 1051
Tel.: (36 1) 327 3069, 327 3811
Fax: (36-1) 328-3698 or (36-1) 327-3124
E-mail: summeru@ceu.hu
Website: http://www.ceu.hu/sun

Cultural Studies/Cultural Theory

CULTURE AS RESOURCE: CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY IN THE GLOBAL SYSTEM

July 16- 27, 2007

Course Director: ***Imre Szeman****,* McMaster University, Institute on Globalization, Canada

Faculty:
Nicholas Brown, University of Illinois-Chicago
Eric Cazdyn, University of Toronto
Maria Elisa Cevasco, University of São Paulo
Günter Lenz, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Helen Petrovsky, Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of Sciences
Will Straw, McGill University, Canada

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Viewed through the lens of cultural studies, globalization (both as rhetoric and reality) has had two broad effects on how researchers, policy makers, and those engaged in the

production of culture view culture today. ***First***, as with all of the other phenomena associated with globalization, the collapse of space and time as a result of (among other things) new technologies of cultural diffusion, has meant that cultural critics have to contend with a world in which culture and cultures bump up against one another with more frequency and intensity than ever before. From this perspective, the interesting questions to pose about culture today seem to have to do primarily with the results—whether positive or negative, emancipating or threatening—of the modes and forms of hybridization, standardization, and bricolage that are the results of the globalization of culture.

Such a perspective tends to conserve *older* ideas of culture even as they attempt to embrace the new realities of globalization—ideas concerning the function and meaning of culture that extend back to the modern origins of the concept, where it was imagined to be (relatively) autonomous vis-à-vis the market or other spheres of society, linked to the national soil or 'context' in which it is produced, and defined mainly by its function as "the independent and abstract noun which describes the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity" (Raymond Williams). However, if there is any content at all to the idea of globalization, it is that the levels into which we have long separated the study of the social (always artificial to begin with) have been shown now to be definitively unworkable. In describing globalization as "complex connectivity," the sociologist John Tomlinson suggests that "the complexity of linkages established by globalization extends to phenomena which social scientists have laboured to separate out into the categories into which we now, familiarly, break down human life: the economic, the political, the social, the interpersonal, the technological, the environmental, the cultural, and so forth. Globalization arguably confounds such taxonomy" (13). The ***second*** analytic perspective on culture in the era of globalization thus asks what it means for cultural production and cultural analysis if culture is now (for complex reasons extending well beyond the epistemic ones identified by Tomlinson here) no longer relatively autonomous, but truly collapsed into other phenomena. The cultural critic Fredric Jameson has suggested that today the "sphere of culture itself has expanded, becoming coterminous with market society in such a way that the cultural is no longer limited to its earlier, traditional or experimental forms, but is consumed throughout daily life itself, in shopping, in professional activities, in the various often televisual forms of leisure, in production for the market and in the consumption of those market products, indeed in the most secret folds and corners of the quotidian." What does it mean for contemporary cultural analysis if we are to take such an insight seriously?

The first half of this course will pursue this question—taking up the second analytic

perspective on culture in globalization—by considering the problems and possibilities of culture and cultural politics today. During the second week, the class will consider what the transformations of the concept of culture mean for how we understand the links between culture and *democracy*. Though democracy is most commonly discussed in relationship to narrowly political structures and phenomena, the importance of culture to democratic life (as well as the cultural determinants of democracy itself) has long been recognized. Indeed, the relative autonomy of the cultural sphere has been seen as a crucial element of democratic polities, whether democracy is understood to refer to a specific kind of state formation or to more radical political possibilities (democracy as the 'rule of all over all'). One of the contemporary transformations of culture has been from a sense of "art as the process through which the individual gains freedom by externalizing himself" (Adorno) to the evocation of culture as a primary mode by which cities and countries might "spur economic growth through urban cultural development projects and the concomitant proliferation of museums for cultural tourism" (Yúdice). Art, architecture and film (for instance) have become primary ways for cities to develop their economies and to achieve the status of 'creative cities,' which the writer Richard Florida has argued is essential for the economic growth today. The imagined autonomy of culture has been essential to envisioning it as a potential space for critique or as a defining component of the public sphere or civil society required for democracy. If culture has become merely a resource for the development of urban (and national) economies, does culture have a role to place in actualizing democratic futures? Can a strictly market culture breed democratic life?

COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

Week One: Culture After Globalization

Unless otherwise noted, all readings are included in the course materials available through the CEU Summer University website. It is recommended that students familiarize themselves with the readings before they begin the class. There may be readings on the website in addition to those listed below. The readings listed below are required; the others are recommended readings that develop and expand the topic under discussion.

Although one resource person will be primarily responsible for leading each class, other faculty members will be present in each and every session to participate in the discussions with the students. Please consult the schedule for this course to see exact times when sessions are planned each day.

Monday, July 16th

1. Introduction: Culture Now *Dr. Imre Szeman, McMaster University*

Overview of expectations and course requirements; Review of major theories of culture and their change over history; from colonialism to post-colonialism; the persistence of cultural imperialism; the politics of culture and the idea of culture as the exercise of political/ideological control by other means. (Lecture/Discussion)

Reading: Imre Szeman, "Culture and/in Globalization." In *Concepts of Culture: Art, Politics, and Society*. Ed. Adam Muller. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005: 157-179.

2. Library and Computer Lab Orientation Session *CEU Staff*

Introduction to the library and computer facilities available to SUN students at the Central European University.

3. Presentation of Student Research Interests *Dr. Szeman*

During this session, students will briefly introduce themselves, and discuss their current research interests and expectations for the course. (Group Discussion)

Tuesday, July 17th

4. Globalization: Discourses and Debates *Dr. Eric Cazdyn, University of Toronto*

Does the discourse of globalization offer the best way to conceptualize culture today? In addition to considering the specific contribution of globalization discourses to our understanding of contemporary culture, this lecture will probe the central assumptions and claims of the leading theories of globalization.

Readings:

- Masao Miyoshi, "Turn to the Planet: Literature, Diversity, and Totality," *Comparative Literature* 53.4 (2001): 283-297.
- Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. by D. F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell, 1977).

5. Cultural Transnationalism *Dr. Nicholas Brown, University of Illinois*

Does the discourse of globalization offer the best way to conceptualize culture today? In addition to considering the specific contribution of globalization discourses to our understanding of contemporary culture, this lecture will probe the central assumptions and claims of the leading theories of globalization. (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings:

- Roberto Schwarz, "Misplaced Ideas." *Misplaced Ideas* (New York: Verso, 1992)
- Fredric Jameson, "Third World Literature in the Age of Multinational Capitalism." *Social Text* 15 (1986): 65-88.

6. Group Work: Student Research Teams *Dr. Szeman*

One of the requirements for the course is for small groups of students (2-3 max.) to make a short presentation (<30

minutes) on the final day of the class. This session will give students the opportunity to form their groups (based around the research interests discussed at the end of the first day) and, in conjunction with the faculty, to settle on some research themes they will develop together during the course. The class is only two weeks long; there is limited time to engage in original research during the course. Through serious engagement with their peers, the aim of these groups is to give students the opportunity to (a) further develop, modify, expand, etc. their research aims and orientations, and (b) to do so through exchange with students from different research traditions. (Group Discussion)

Wednesday, July 18th

7. The Politics of Culture and/in the Periphery I *Dr. Maria Elisa Cevasco, University of Sao Paulo*

Does culture function the same way in the periphery and in the center? How has globalization altered the classical scheme of imported ideas? What is the cognitive potential of cultural critique as viewed from the periphery? (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings:

- Roberto Schwarz, "Nationalism by Elimination." *Misplaced Ideas* (New York: Verso, 1992)
- Fredric Jameson, "Culture and Finance Capital." *The Cultural Turn* (London: Verson, 1998). Also in *Critical Inquiry* 24.1 (1997): 246-265.

8. The Politics of Culture in the Center: Americanization, Globalization, and the European Dream *Dr. Günter Lenz, Humboldt University*

The globalization of culture is often conflated with the 'Americanization' of culture. In what ways and to what degree is this conflation analytically productive? This class will analyze and assess the degree of U.S. influence on global culture and explore its significance for the cultural and social analysis of globalization. (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings:
- Rob Kroes, "Introduction" and "Chapter 9: Americanization" from *If You've Seen One You've Seen the Mall* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2002)
- Jeremy Rifkin, "Introduction" and "Chapter 13: Unity in Diversity" from *The European Dream* (Tarcher, 2005)

9. Politics of the Popular I: Music and Globalization *Dr. William Straw, McGill University*

The rise of popular music in the twentieth century; importance of technological innovations; world music; file sharing and copyright issues; fan communities; from the Walkman to the I-Pod. (Lecture/Discussion).

Readings:
- Steven Feld. "Pygmy POP: A Genealogy of Schizophonic Mimesis." *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 28 (1996): 1-35.

Faculty Office Hours

Students can arrange to meet individually with faculty members.

Thursday, July 19th

10. Politics of the Popular II: Visual Culture and Globalization *Dr. Helen Petrovsky, Institute of Philosophy, Moscow*

This session will examine the predominance and significance of all forms of visual culture—from contemporary arts to video games, from television to new media arts—in the context of globalization. How is visuality linked to social control? What new social imaginings are opened up in a global society dominated by the visual? (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings: • Jean Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulations," in: Idem. *Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Poster (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), pp. 166–184.

• Fredric Jameson, "The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," in: Idem. *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London, New York: Verso, Duke University Press, 1991), pp. 1–54. (*Recommended*)

11. Politics of the Popular III: Commodity Cultures — *Dr. Brown*

Is popular culture complicit with commodity culture and the spread of what has been characterized as 'consumer culture'? Do forms of popular culture—once imagined as potentially democratizing social experience—now offer any critical relation to the market? Or is popular culture and market culture one and the same? (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings: • Theodor Adorno, "On the Social Situation of Music." *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2002): 391-436.

• Theodor Adorno, "On Jazz." *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2002): 470-495.

12. Group Work: Student Research Teams — *Dr. Szeman*

In conjunction with faculty members, students engage in work on their group presentation projects.

Faculty Office Hours

Students can arrange to meet individually with faculty members.

Friday, July 20th

This day is devoted to individual and group work, library research and reading. Faculty members will be available for consultation during extended office hours.

Week Two: Culture and the Promise of Democracy

Monday, July 23rd

1. 'Relative Autonomy' and Cultural Criticism — *Dr. Szeman*

The idea that culture or the aesthetic offers a space outside of the social that allows for a critique of it has been a key component of aesthetic philosophies and avant-garde movements since the late eighteenth-century. One of the key insights that have emerged from globalization discourses is that the idea of the autonomy of culture is unsustainable. Can we imagine a politics of culture without assuming that (some forms of culture) are relatively autonomous from the social order more generally? What are the critical powers of culture in the era of globalization? (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings:
- Peter Bürger, "On the Problem of the Autonomy of Art in Bourgeois Society." Ch. 3 of *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1985)
- Malcolm Bull, " Between the Cultures of Capital." *New Left Review* 11 (2001): 95-113.

2. From Modernism to Postmodernism to Globalization — *Dr. Brown*

What was cultural modernism? Is there a unifying thread that can tie together apparently diverse modernisms? What does it mean for modernism to have ended? And what is the relation of various modernisms to the movements and periods that are thought to have superseded it? (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings:
- Jean-François Lyotard, "What is Postmodernism?" in *The Postmodern Condition* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984): 71-82. Also in Peter Brooker, ed. *Modernism / Postmodernism* (London: Longman, 1992): 139-150
- Franco Moretti, "The Long Goodbye." *Signs Taken For Wonders: Essays in The Sociology of Literary Forms.* (New York: Verso, 1997).

3. Cultural and the Practice of Cultural Studies — *Dr. Cevasco*

The function of culture at the moment of cultural studies, the politics of "culture is ordinary", culture and democracy at the age of culture as commodity. (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings:
- Raymond Williams, "Culture is Ordinary." Widely anthologized. Available in: Ann Gray and Jim McGuigan, eds., *Studies in Culture: An Introductory Reader* (London: Arnold, 1997): 5-14.; In R. Williams, *Resources of Hope* (New York: Verso, 1989). In R. Williams, *The Raymond Williams Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001)
- Michael Denning "The Socioanalysis of Culture." *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (New York: Verso, 2004).

Faculty Office Hours

Students can arrange to meet individually with faculty members.

Tuesday, July 24th

4. Contesting the Commodification of Culture — *Dr. Straw*

What are the ways in which the commodification of culture is contested today? This lecture looks at a range of cultural contestations of the growing economic logics and language being used with both cultural practice and cultural policy in the world today. (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings:
- Sanjay Asthana, "Patriotism and Its Avatars: Tracking the National-Global Dialectic in Indian Music Videos." *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 27.4 (2003): 337-353.

5. Cultural Politics — *Dr. Cazdyn*

In what ways are cultural artefacts or practices the bearers of political messages, forces, ideas and discourses? What does it mean to imagine and to practice forms of 'cultural politics' as a way of animating democratic public life? (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings:
- Jean-Luc Nancy, "L'Intrus." *CR: The New Centennial Review* 2.3 (2002): 1-14
- DVD: *L'Intrus* (dir. Claire Denis, France, 2004)

  [A screening of the film will be arranged during the course. Students will also have access to a copy of the DVD to view on their own time]

Faculty Office Hours

Extended faculty office hours: students can arrange to meet individually with faculty members

Wednesday, July 25th

6. Group Work: Student Research Teams *Dr. Szeman*

In preparation for Friday, students will be given the opportunity to spend the day working on the completion of their group research projects. Students may make use of the library and arrange meetings with faculty members.

Thursday, July 26th

7. Anti-Americanism *Dr. Szeman*

One of the most common forms of 'cultural politics' is one that begins with a criticism of all things American. Anxieties over the globalization of culture are often synonymous with worries about American global cultural dominance. This session will ask two questions: What is anti-Americanism today such an easy position to adopt—a ready-made answer to the question of what ails us today? Might an angry yet progressive anti-Americanism actually be more effective at producing global democratic change than so many utopian calls for a new democratic future? (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings: • David Harvey, "How America's Power Grew," Ch. 2 of *The New Imperialism* (Oxford, 2003): 26-87 (especially 62-87)

8. Cultural Democracy *Dr. Straw*

"Cultural democracy" takes different forms in different national and local contexts. The politics of the popular may turn to the state as an agent of intervention in some contexts, and uniformly resist any such intervention in others. This class will look treat the politics of popular culture as phenomena whose terms and stakes are posed differently across the globe.

Readings*:* • Thomas Elsaesser: "Film Festival Networks: The New Topographies of Cinema in Europe." From Thomas Elsaesser, *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005)

9. Course Review *Dr. Szeman*

The closing session of the course will allow faculty and students to engage in thorough discussion over the issues and themes discussed in the course—and those not (yet) discussed as well!

Friday, July 27th

10. Student Presentations *All Faculty*

The final day of the course is devoted to presentation of the small group research projects that students will have developed during the course. Precise instructions, expectations and requirements for the small group project and presentation will be handed out on the first day of class.

INSTRUCTORS

Imre Szeman, McMaster University (*Course Director*); **Nicholas Brown**, University of Illinois-Chicago; **Eric Cazdyn**, University of Toronto; **Maria Elisa Cevasco**, University of São Paulo; **Günter Lenz**, Humboldt University; **Helen Petrovsky**, Russian Academy of Sciences; **William Straw**, McGill University

The instructors for this course are drawn from around the world and represent a range of theoretical perspectives and research expertise, including specific expertise in Japan and South-East Asia (Cazdyn), Africa (Brown), South America (Cevasco), Canada and the Caribbean (Szeman), Western Europe (Lenz), and Eastern Europe (Petrovsky). Collectively, the team also represents a range of disciplinary backgrounds. Team members hold degrees and/or academic positions in art history, communication studies, comparative studies, cultural studies, East Asian Studies, film, literary studies, philosophy, politics and sociology.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

We will assess the in-class work of each participant and will ask for a **theoretically-informed position paper on at least two of the assigned readings**. We will also assess the participants on the **group-presentations** that they will be responsible for developing over the course and presenting on the afternoon of the final day. In addition, we want to encourage participants to use this intensive two-week period of reading, analysis and discussion to set out the beginning of a publishable research essay. The resource personnel will make themselves available after hours throughout the

two-week period in order to give participants feedback and to help mold their research papers.