Self(ie)-Surveillance:

Religion, Recording Instruments, and the Body

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Abstract

Self-surveillance connotes that surveillance is not only a top-down phenomenon being enforced solely by governments or security agencies; it rather suggests that people are subjected to control and observation even by and among themselves. Derived from this notion, the term selfie-surveillance refers to a specific type of self-surveillance, emphasizing the role of recording instruments that also reflects the growing contemporary obsession with recording/sharing one's body through social media. The notion of selfie-surveillance can benefit from Burroughs's conception of control as junk—a metaphor for the never-ending desire for something with no practical purpose, like narcotics—as a key to analyze the emerging culture of surveillance on two levels. First, the fact that NSA surveillance is taking place for the sake of surveillance itself, gathering as much data as possible even if for no practical purpose; second, that the rise of selfies reflects an egocentric desire to solidify the bodies. Following an introductory chapter on the significance of the selfie and its relation to surveillance, chapter 2 investigates the theoretical advances of control of the body with a focus on its religious dimensions. It will first draw on Foucault's notion of panopticism as a tool to identify the notion of self-surveillance; then, Deleuze's understanding of the body—something not limited to the biological boundaries of the flesh—will be further explored in order to show how shared images are segments of the body and thus subjected to control. Chapter 3 offers an analysis of selected works of Burroughs to enrich the theories of surveillance discussed in the previous chapter. Burroughs's investment in esoteric religious traditions enables him to offer a critique of control society that operates similar to junk. Burroughs believes the word to be a virus—an evil enemy that equals ego and encourages the body to consume image as junk. Yet, resistance towards control is possible through challenging the unification of the body and the recorded self.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

> Anyone who fights with monsters should take care that he does not in the process become a monster. And if you gaze long into an abyss, the abyss gazes back into you.
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> —Friedrich Nietzsche[1]

> But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother.
>
> —George Orwell[2]

> *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is an important book but we should not bind ourselves to the limits of the author's imagination. Time has shown that the world is much more unpredictable and dangerous than that.
>
> —Edward Snowden[3]

The remarkable notion of surveillance is undoubtedly informed by various socio-political elements; but what often gets overlooked within both the academic context and the public sector is that surveillance is deeply constructed by, and represented through a myriad of religious beliefs/rituals as well as works of literature. In the aftermath of his revelations, Edward Snowden described NSA surveillance "worse than Orwellian,"[4] an expression that signifies the crucial imaginary aspects of the existing surveillance as well as its forms of representation. For such a long time, George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* had grasped the imagination of both the academic and the popular by bringing to light the centralization of state power and the use of technologies to screen the face of Big Brother into every corner of people's lives. Nevertheless, surveillance had fundamentally altered by the late 20th century, and those thinking in Orwellian terms have to judge surveillance practices "well beyond the nation-state—in advertising and

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[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. Marion Faber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 68.

[2] George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, ed. Bernard Crick (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 416.

[3] Edward Snowden, "Edward Snowden Interview: The Edited Transcript," *The Guardian*, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/18/-sp-edward-snowden-nsa-whistleblower-interview-transcript

[4] Griff Witte, "Snowden Says Government Spaying Worse than Orwellian," *The Washington Post*, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/snowden-says-spying-worse-than-orwellian/2013/12/25/e9c806aa-6d90-11e3-a5d0-6f31cd74f760_story.html

marketing, for instance—and involving technologies that have greater speed and capacity and are much more subtly interactive than anything previous."[5] It could be argued that works of William S. Burroughs—the 20th century American novelist who believes "control can never be a means to any practical end… It can never be a means to anything but more control… Like junk…"[6]—are an example of representing a worse-than-Orwellian society. Indeed, Snowden's revelations have highly attested to the precision of Burroughs's prediction; surveillance is now largely taking place for the sake of surveillance itself, gathering as much data as possible even if for no practical purpose. Certainly, *security* is a purpose justifying the need for surveillance especially in the post-9/11 context of the War on Terror, but there are other undeniable aspects of surveillance such as *marketing* purposes that have nothing to do with security. "Big data surveillance is not selective," Mark Andrejevic and Kelly Gates argue, "it relies on scooping up as much information as possible and sorting out its usefulness later."[7] Yet, the fact that collecting big data has real, tangible consequences, in terms of privacy for instance, should not obscure the significance of the ways in which people apprehend the notion of surveillance, and practice various forms of self-surveillance through their everyday lives. A noteworthy case is the growing contemporary obsession with the recording instruments, particularly the cameras located on many sorts of electronic devices, that has resulted in the rise of selfies (self-portrait photographs) in the social media. Interestingly, *OED* (Oxford English Dictionary) chose "selfie" as the "word of the year" in 2013, indicating the significant of the term itself in the contemporary culture. The emerging "culture of surveillance," according to David Lyon, is not simply "a top-down phenomenon where *they* monitor *us*"; instead, surveillance has become "an everyday social

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[5] David Lyon, *Surveillance Studies: An Overview*, (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), 54.
[6] William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: the Resorted Text*, ed. James Grauerholz and Barry Miles (New York: Grove, 2001), 137.
[7] Mark Andrejevic and Kelly Gates, "Big Data Surveillance: Introduction," *Surveillance & Society* 12, no. 2 (2014): 190.

experience" that includes even the playful part of mediated relationships such as taking selfies.[8]

Snowden's revelations have provided notable evidence on some details of the culture of surveillance, but he has also questioned the Orwellian rhetoric which is based on the reductionist dichotomy of *us vs. them*, or *people vs. state*. One wonders, to what extent *surveillance* or to watch from *above* has turned into *sousveillance* or to watch from *below*.

By means of a critical engagement with Burroughs's body of work, particularly his most acclaimed novel *Naked Lunch* (1959), and through reinforcing his peculiar understanding of religion, recording instruments and the body, this paper offers an alternative approach to the common understanding of the notion of surveillance merely as an external force limited to collecting data by security agencies. Instead, self(ie)-surveillance refers to those internal, esoteric, and seemingly unnoticed aspects of the contemporary surveillance within which people are unconsciously, yet willingly, policing themselves. Burroughs's investment in many esoteric religious traditions—ranging from Mayan and Egyptian mythology to Christian Gnosticism and North African Sufism—not only helps him to challenge the "natural" organism and formulate a posthuman "body without organs," but rather to notice an exotic form of self-consciousness within the recording instruments such as the typewriter and the camera. Meanwhile, Burroughs's critique of the control society offers a form of resistance: as long as the body is an integrated system compatible with the self—and its gadgets such as identification cards and cellphones—it would be subjected to control; whereas a body without organs could escape means of control since it does not possess a single, unified identity to be traced easily. Theoretically, this paper benefits mainly from critical approaches of Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze in order to explore the notion of self(ie)-surveillance with respect to control of the body. Foucault's

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[8] David Lyon, "The Emerging Surveillance Culture," in *Media, Surveillance and Identity: Social Perspectives*, ed. André Jansson and Miyase Christensen (New York: Peter Lang, 2014), 72.

formulation of panopticism and his analysis of observatory techniques, along with the reassessments of his works, help understanding modern technologies of surveillance that are still evolving. In addition, Deleuze's perception of the body as something that is always in the process of becoming could shed a new light on the notions of virtual bodies and selfies in the 21st century. Via the mentioned theoretical frameworks, this research, at the final stage, offers a religious comprehension of self(ie)-surveillance through a close reading of Burroughs's works of fiction.

The study of surveillance has recently shifted to go beyond Foucault's panopticism and Orwell's Big Brother as the two major metaphors that had captured this critical discourse. One of the efforts to go beyond previous theoretical frameworks is based on Deleuze's conceptual tools in regard to control societies and concepts such as modulation and assemblage; yet, the scholarly literature on surveillance, considering the formulation of control, has dismissed works of Burroughs, by whom Deleuze is inspired. Even within the Deleuzian framework and studies on representations of surveillance,[9] Burroughs is not discussed at all. In many senses, *Naked Lunch*, alongside other Burroughs's writings on/in control, could be the alternative to *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a more precise and well-warned description of contemporary forms of surveillance. The reason for this dismissal could be the difficultly of reading Burroughs in comparison with the accessibility of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. *Naked Lunch* is a polyphonic work of fiction with no linier narrative and no single narrator; it is full of jargon from discourses of medicine and pharmacology; and there is an abundant amount of violent, abject, and pornographic (homo/hetro)sexual scenery within the pages of this novel. Also, Burroughs's reputation as a counterculture writer who might easily be labeled as a deviant, voyeur, hedonist, drug addict, and

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[9] Lorna Muir, "Control Space? Cinematic Representations of Surveillance Space Between Discipline and Control," *Surveillance & Society* 9, no. 3 (2012): 263-279.

paranoid figure, might hinder scholars from citing his works as something enlightening. Nevertheless, from a post-structuralist point of view, the biography of the writer has nothing to do with the text and its interpretations. The dangers of control society that Burroughs brings in front of readers' eyes is worthy of critical attention regarding both internal and external aspects of surveillance as well as its religious dimensions.

The concept of self-surveillance has recently gained consideration from social scientists, though its religious connotations are yet to be explored. According to Paulo Vaz and Fernando Bruno, "techniques of surveillance are necessarily related to practices of self-surveillance,"[10] since, within a Foucauldian framework that reinforces the proximity between power relations and the care of the self, power "is everywhere and therefore also inside us."[11] Vaz and Bruno distinguish between two historically distinct types of self-surveillance: one, proper to early modern disciplinary societies, promotes the normalization of power, while the second type is associated with contemporary problematizing of health-related behaviors and risk factors. Hence, self-surveillance not only refers to "the attention one pays to one's behavior when facing the actuality or virtuality of an immediate or mediated observation," but it rather includes "individuals' attention to their actions and thoughts when constituting themselves as subjects of their conduct."[12] In other words, self-surveillance does not rely solely on an "invisible but unverifiable power, but also on normalizing judgments."[13] Vaz and Bruno argue that understanding the Panopticon as an Orwellian Big Brother is a result of understanding self-surveillance merely as a self-monitoring phenomenon; on the other hand, it is the care of the self that constitutes the second type of self-surveillance. The modern medical discourse on health,

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[10] Paulo Vaz and Fernando Bruno, "Types of Self-Surveillance: From Abnormality to Individuals at Risk," *Surveillance & Society* 1, no. 3 (2003): 272.
[11] Ibid., 273.
[12] Ibid., 273.
[13] Ibid., 274.

where "individuals accepts restricting their behavior in order to care for their health even and principally when they experience well-being,"[14] is the main realm of self-surveillance for Vaz and Bruno.

Indeed health, as a notion linked to control of the body, and arguably a secular form of salvation that reflects the care of the self, is intertwined with practices of self-surveillance. By means of a qualitative study, Minna Ruckenstein discusses how using the emerging health-related apps that aim at optimizing healthiness through self-monitoring practices results in creating "data doubles"—a term originally coined by Haggerty and Ericson.[15] The stimulating concept of data double, one that focuses on the ways in which people confront and interact with their own data as a sort of alter-ego, depicts how "self-tracking tools abstract human bodies and minds into data flows that can be used and reflected upon."[16] According to Ruckenstein, these apps help minimizing "unhealthy and deviant behavior" and maximizing "healthy behavior"; yet, she does not mention how this healthy/unhealthy dichotomy is culturally and historically constructed, and how this so-called healthy lifestyle is inseparable from the culture of marketing and consumerism in late capitalism. Arguing that data doubles provide "possibilities for the enhancement and improvement of life,"[17] Ruckenstein regards self-optimization as something "desirable," and optimistically maintains this could lead to "generating surveillance that probes ever more deeply into what it is to know and be human, increasing the potential for greater control over one's life,"[18] as well as revealing the unknown aspects of bodies. Still, as it will be

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[14] Ibid., 274.

[15] Kevin Haggerty and Richard Ericson, "The Surveillant Assemblage," *The British Journal of Sociology* 51, no. 4 (2000): 606.

[16] Minna Ruckenstein, "Visualized and Interacted Life: Personal Analytics and Engagements with Data Doubles," *Societies* 4, no. 1: 71.

[17] Ibid., 80.

[18] Ibid., 81.

discussed in the following chapters, this never-ending, egocentric desire to achieve more control by any means needs critical reconsiderations itself.

OED defines selfie as "a photographic self-portrait; esp. one taken with a smartphone or webcam and shared via social media." As a recording format, selfie captures bodies typically in their most healthy and fit situations such as after working out or before going to a party. Although other types of selfies such as parodic ones are also popular, they generally aim at self-promotion, capturing the photographer at a moment that would get "like" from his/her friends and followers. A British teenager attempted suicide after, in his own words, failing to take "the perfect selfie."[19] Still, there are moments when the perception of selfie as representation of the perfect is challenged. In June 2014, for instance, an Iranian TV performer best known for his children's shows posted a selfie on his Instagram, displaying himself beside the dead body of his father who most probably had died a few hours before taking the photo. This is perhaps one step further than taking selfies at funerals, like the one Barack Obama took few months earlier at Nelson Mandela's memorial service. The difficulty of interpreting this abject selfie is not merely a matter of cultural difference. Rather than asking for sympathy, or respecting the dead, this selfie is consuming the death itself. The photographer, the son, gazes into the camera, presumably saying: Look, I have a dead father beside me, please like and share. In another provocative instance, members of a Mexican drug cartel (named, in translation, "The Knights Templar") started posting selfies on social media showing their guns and other stuff; supposedly they were not afraid of the state police to detect them.[20] It might be straightforward to accuse this self-promoting trend of simply being narcissistic, but that would not say so much about what is

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[19] Samantha Grossman, "Teenager Reportedly Tried to Kill Himself Because He Wasn't Satisfied with the Quality of His Selfies," *Time*, 2014, http://time.com/35701/selfie-addict-attempts-suicide/

[20] Joseph Cox, "Mexico's Drug Cartels Love Social Media," *Vice*, 2013, http://www.vice.com/read/mexicos-drug-cartels-are-using-the-internet-to-get-up-to-mischief

really at stake. Discussing the ways in which personal information is "willingly" given to social media, Henry Giroux notes that "In the age of the self-absorbed self and its mirror image—selfie—intimacy becomes its opposite, while the exit from privacy becomes symptomatic of a society that gives up on social and historical memory."[21] Although the selfie phenomenon is not exactly an example of state surveillance, it still indicates an extreme tendency to expose, to reveal and being revealed, and maybe to forget.

Considering the relation of surveillance and religion, a case that might immediately come to one's mind is the idea of God as an omniscient, omnipotent observer or surveillor. Vaz and Bruno, for instance, briefly mention the similarity between the panoptic tower and God, noting how "the inmates knew they could be observed any time and that power would be deployed in the occurrence of a transgression"; yet, they also address the limitations of this mentality, since "God must be also a God of love," a characteristic that the panopticon lacks.[22] But the inadequacy of depicting the watchtower as God (or vice versa) seems to be more fundamental. First and foremost, this idea is limited to monotheistic religions, mainly the Abrahamic ones. It is questionable whether or not the notion of God the surveillor is applicable to or comprehensive for other religious traditions such as Indian or East Asian religions, as well as indigenous traditions. Jeremy Bentham's proposal of the Panopticon was a plan to build a "secular omniscience" during the Enlightenment, and a response specifically to the medieval Christian Church—as he epigraphed his design with a quote from the biblical Psalm 139, "Thou art about my path, and about my bed; and spiest out all my ways."[23] Describing today's surveillance as

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[21] Henry A. Giroux, "Totalitarian Paranoia in the Post-Orwellian Surveillance State," *Cultural Studies* (2014): 3.
[22] Paulo Vaz and Fernando Bruno, "Types of Self-Surveillance: From Abnormality to Individuals at Risk," *Surveillance & Society* 1, no. 3 (2003): 277.
[23] David Lyon, "Surveillance and the Eye of God," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 27, no. 1 (2014): 26.

"God's eye" helps reflecting "the priorities of the Enlightenment to discover accurate, exhaustive and perhaps hidden information using rational method," as well as showing how "abstract" and "disembodied" its techniques are; nonetheless, the roots of contemporary surveillance are "deeper and more complexly intertwined."[24] Additionally, understanding the cyberspace social media as a realm of confession is misleading, since, according to Lyon, the Christian confession is about "humility" and it is whispered to one person, while a post on social networks is "self-advertising" and it targets "publicity" or "publicness."[25]

Religion and surveillance could be closely connected in view of the self and its components like the ego. The obsession with taking a perfect selfie is bonded to an ego that seeks to gain full control of the body, and mastery over the self. Although it might be a false, reductionist generalization to argue that what all religions share in common is a notion of an esoteric, internal ego, it is definitely a more widespread concept than God or confession, since at least many interpretations of Abrahamic, Indian, and East Asian religions address the abstract notion of ego, even though with different names (e.g. *Nafs* in Islam). It is not the goal of this paper to offer a psychoanalytic interpretation of surveillance practices, but "ego" in particular is a concept that well describes various conflicts within one's self in terms of control. In his work on Freud and Religion, Michael Palmer discusses how the ego primarily deals with awareness of bodily selves, and how personality develops in relation to the ego and its encounter with the external world. In Palmer's words, "The ego's primary task, therefore, is self-preservation, seeking to gain control not merely of the world outside itself but of the internal world of the id."[26] Thus, ego is not identity; it is a form of consciousness that connects the identity to the

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[24] Ibid., 31.
[25] Zygmunt Bauman and David Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance: A Conversation*, (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 27.
[26] Michael Palmer, *Freud and Jung on Religion*, (London: Routledge, 1997), 16.

body, creating an integrated sense of individual wholeness. In one of the few articles—from a religious studies point of view—on the role of ego in religion, Volney Gay questions the idea of "wholeness" or "integration of the self" as a "natural good," and argues that "the ego creates and takes part in religious dramas which present an illusory world of wholeness and completion of self."[27] Burroughs's critique of the structure of psychic apparatus in psychoanalysis, inspired by Buddhism's respect for "egolessness"—or a certain type of good ego, in other words—aims at Freud's identification of the conscious ego as superior to unconscious states of mind. "In fact the conscious ego is in many activities a liability," Burroughs writes, "The best writing and painting are only accomplished when the ego is superseded or refuted."[28] Praising the unconscious—also principal in Western Esotericism, such as works of Aleister Crowley who utters that "Consciousness is a symptom of disease"[29]—is deployed by French post-structuralism in order to attack the heritage of the humanist Western philosophy that initiates subjectivity on the basis of a conscious "I" or ego.[30] Yet, ego is a construction, and even within an essentialist religious or psychoanalytical perspective, it takes different forms.

John McGrath believes surveillance is not a mere representation of something; it rather possesses a performative effect, meaning it can produce new forms of knowledge and subjectivity.[31] This performative effect further explains the two-fold relationship between ego and selfie. Selfie is derived from the ego's desire to gain control, but it also shapes the ego and

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[27] Volney Gay, "Against Wholeness: The Ego's Complicity in Religion," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 47, no. 4 (1979): 539.

[28] William Burroughs, "On Freud and the Unconscious," in *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays* (New York: Arcade Pub, 1986), 90.

[29] Aleister Crowley, *The Book of Lies, Which Is Also Falsely Called Breaks*, (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1978), 74.

[30] Wendy Grace, "Foucault and the Freudians," in *A Companion to Foucault*, (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 232.

[31] John McGrath, *Loving Big Brother: Performance, Privacy, and Surveillance Space*, (London: Routledge, 2004), 14.

makes it more conscious by attributing a static image to it. A good example is the trend of "After Sex Selfies" in social media, as it not only reflects an extreme intention for revealing and sharing the private, willingly, but also capturing a conscious moment "after" an unconscious one. Some of the photos in this campaign bear the caption "Who the fuck is that," meaning the photographer does not remember having sex with the other person in the photo. But the viewers of a selfie are more than its photographer/photographed; spectators leave their shadow—the need for caption/subtitle—on the selfie, while they face how a normal or at least common after sex moment would look like. This paper tries to address some theoretical issues in order to situate these kinds of complexities of the selfie phenomena within the culture of surveillance, while going along with Foucault: "Do not ask me who I am and do not ask me to remain the same: leave it to our bureaucrats and our police to see that our papers are in order. At least spare us their morality when we write."[32]

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[32] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Alan Sheridan Smith, (London: Routledge, 1991), 17.

Chapter 2 Control of the Body: Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze

> In every game and con there is always an opponent and there is always a victim. The more control the victim thinks he has, the less control he actually has. […] If the opponent is very good, he will place his victim inside an environment he can control. The bigger the environment, the easier the control. Toss the dog a bone, find their weakness, and give them just a little of what they think they want. So the opponent simply distracts their victim by getting them consumed with their own consumption.[33]

This chapter investigates the theoretical and methodological possibilities of understanding religion as a strategy of power to observe, control and organize bodies by means of self-discipline and self-surveillance. Through looking into certain aspects of the works of two main figures of French post-structuralism, Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, the relation between disciplinary powers and religion, with a focus on their treatment of the body, will be further explored. Despite the fact that most of the classic thinkers on religion—such as Weber, Marx, and Freud—argued that modern societies are moving toward secularization and disenchantment, it seems as though new forms of religiosity and sacredness still exist in contemporary societies. According to Bronislaw Szerszynski, "the illusion that the sacred has disappeared is arguably a feature of all historical transitions from one form of the sacred to the next in a given society."[34] A significant turning point, in this context, could be the spread of still-evolving modern technologies of (visual, audio, and data) recording that have immensely influenced the perception of the body and its relation to modes of control and religiosity. Possibly, these new cultural phenomena of—the seemingly—secular societies operate as religious strategies of power to organize the bodies.

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[33] *Revolver*, film, dir. Guy Ritchie, 2005, Sony Pictures.
[34] Bronislaw Szerszynski, *Nature, Technology and the Sacred* (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 26.

2.1 Foucault, Religion and Panopticism

> The ideal point of penalty today would be an indefinite discipline: an interrogation without end, an investigation that would be extended without limit to a meticulous and ever more analytical observation, a judgement that would at the same time be the constitution of a file that was never closed, the calculated leniency of a penalty that would be interlaced with the ruthless curiosity of an examination... The practice of placing individuals under 'observation' is a natural extension of a justice imbued with disciplinary methods and examination procedures.
>
> —Michel Foucault[35]

According to Jeremy Carrette, religious studies' interdisciplinary approach finds Foucault's work particularly fascinating, because, "religion is examined as part of his analysis of cultural facts… Foucault takes account of religion in the shaping of Western knowledge, and it is this dimension which needs to be rescued. It is unfortunate that most readings of him have obliterated or marginalised the religious content in the narrow confines of their studies."[36] But what exactly is Foucault's religious question or content? Although the question of religion became a central theme in Foucault's late works on early Christianity, Carrette believes that it always formed part of Foucault's wider studies and "was consistently included as a significant part of the 'apparatus' (dispositif) of knowledge."[37] In other words, Foucault's religious concern aims at the relation between discourses of discipline, domination, and control, and discourses of religious practice. Foucault prioritises practice over belief and body over mind or soul; this enables him to grasp religion not as an ideology or as a true/false consciousness, says Carrette, but rather as a set of procedures and power relations that functions through space and time in order to put different forms of embodiment in order. While Carrette criticizes Foucault's approach that he believes is a failure to appreciate the way theological ideas conceal body surfaces, he still finds the foundation

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[35] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 227.

[36] Jeremy Carrette, *Foucault and Religion: Spiritual Corporality and Political Spirituality* (London: Routledge, 2000), 1.

[37] Ibid., 2.

of Foucault's methodology practical for analysing the forces of power operating within the religious discourses. According to Carrette, "Belief… is not a separate and distinct process of the social positioning of bodies; belief 'is' the social positioning. The body is the receptacle of theology; bodies become theological organs. In a non-transcendent understanding of religion, theological beliefs are ways of mapping the body, imaginative constructs socially organising the body."[38] For Carrette, Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* is particularly significant because of its debate over the relation between body and belief.

Among Foucault's vast body of historical works, his discussion of panopticism in *Discipline and Punish* has been one of the most widely debated especially in regard to modern technologies of (self-)surveillance and control. Panopticon is a form of institutional building—most likely a prison—originally designed by English utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th century. Bentham suggested locating a tower at the center of an annular building so that a central eye could watch all the cells of the periphery. Anyone located in the tower is able to watch the inmates around, though the inmates cannot see the "inspector." The major effect of this simple form of architecture, according to Foucault, is "to include in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power."[39] In other words, the power will be visible and at the same time unverifiable when using the panopticon. The inmates constantly have the tall outline of the central tower before their eyes. Since they never know if they are being watched at any given moment or not, they should assume they are always being looked at. Hence, the inmate will initially become his or her own observer and warder. Stated differently, panopticon is not only an efficient method of surveillance, but a form of self-surveillance as well.

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[38] Ibid., 113.

[39] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 201.

Panopticon is basically a technological invention, or in Foucault's terms "a figure of political technology" in the disciplinary society.[40] He defines discipline as a type of power, or "a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets… a physics or an anatomy, a technology."[41] Bentham's aim in designing panopticon was to make the disciplinary institutions more effective and efficient. Foucault notes that Bentham's invention was complementary to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's dream of "a transparent society, visible and legible in each of its parts, the dream of there no longer existing any zones of darkness."[42] In other words, the Enlightenment not only exposed the liberties, but also created the disciplines. Here panopticon is not a metaphor; it is a material object, a form of architecture or a diagram that produces certain forms of disciplinary power. Not only power restricts, but it also produces new sets of procedures in order to spread its domain. Foucault suggests that panopticon must be understood as "a generalizable model of functioning; a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men."[43] Panopticism is a strategy that emerged at a certain point of Western European history when there was a crucial need to put a multiplicity of individuals in order, and impose on them a set of particular behavioural codes. Although Bentham's original idea for designing the panopticon is important, the function of panopticon itself has more significance. Foucault does not write the history of beliefs and ideas, but rather the procedures of power to organize bodies. Every belief and system of truth is the production of materialized power relations. Carrette extensively discusses Foucault's formulation of the body and the belief—in soul—as reflected in *Discipline and Punish*:

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[40] Ibid., 205.
[41] Ibid., 215.
[42] Michel Foucault, "The Eye of Power," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 152.
[43] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 205.

Foucault… firmly locates the soul on the surface of bodies in a way similar to Deleuze, but without the psychoanalytical framework of phantasy. The body is shaped and controlled by the idea of the soul as a mechanism of power not phantasy. It is correlation of religious ideas and the control of the body that extends into the later consideration of sexuality and the confession [in works of Foucault]. The body is continually controlled and organised by religious discourse in the creation of religious technologies of the body. It is precisely the 'political investment of the body' made by religious discourse and institutions that animates the work of Foucault and forms the bedrock of his study of religion.[44]

Methodologically, Foucault's examination of panopticism contributes to the study of religion and its possible relation to (self-)surveillance. Religion, according to Foucault, is a technique to control the individuals and their bodies by means of "regimes of truth." In this context, the role and responsibility of the study of religion is not evaluating or comparing various religious belief systems, but rather investigating how bodies, whether human or non-human, are being categorized, observed, and controlled in everyday life due to material components. From a Foucauldian perspective, truth is a product of power, and religion is not a system of belief representing the truth of the universe or existence, but rather a historical and cultural constellation of power relations that define what the truth, the sacred, and the profane are.

Foucault is careful to evade the assignation of power in any limited sense to a certain group; instead, his goal is to draw an outline of the set of processes, practices, and institutions by which power was disseminated. Therefore, the power relations are not determined by certain people or subjects, but rather by procedures and institutions. Foucault describes power as something omnipresent, "not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another."[45] Stated differently, "power is everywhere; not

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[44] Jeremy Carrette, *Foucault and Religion: Spiritual Corporality and Political Spirituality* (London: Routledge, 2000), 116.

[45] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Phantheon Books, 1978), 93.

because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere."[46] To the same extent, Foucault does not limit forms of surveillance to panopticon and mentions that the procedures of power that are at work in modern societies are numerous and much more diverse and rich. It would be reductive to argue that the principle of visibility governs all technologies of power used since the 19th century. For instance, Eric Stoddart argues that "Surveillance is indeed not what it once was. The panoptic gaze has not been averted but displaced by multiple surveillance *assemblages*."[47] This notion of assemblages, derived from works of Deleuze in order to go beyond the panopticism and analyze the multiplicities of surveillance techniques, is still inspired by Foucault according to Gilbert Caluya.[48] Foucault's panopticon must not be interpreted merely as an extension of Orwell's omniscient Big Brother, since it also reflects the internal power relations of the care of the self. Using the notion of *the care of the self*—central in the formulation of self-surveillance by Vaz and Bruno—might be a bit problematic as Foucault has used it in the first place to describe ethics of the Greco-Roman world. Yet, the care of the self could have a more general connotation, implying that subjectivity is constituted through certain historical practices. If one assesses selfie as a practice or ritual, its effect on subjectivity is a matter of explanation; "What we take ourselves to be, then, affects who we are."[49]

2.2 Deleuze, Body and Image

> The *judgment of God*, the system of the judgment of God, the theological system, is precisely the operation of He who makes an organism, an organization of organs called the organism, because He cannot bear the BwO [Body without Organ], because He

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[46] Ibid., 93.

[47] Eric Stoddart, "(In)visibility Before Privacy: A Theological Ethics of Surveillance as Social Sorting," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 27, no. 1 (2014): 35.

[48] Gilbert Caluya, "The Post-panoptic Society? Reassessing Foucault in Surveillance Studies," *Social Identities* 16, no. 5 (2010): 626.

[49] Mark G. E. Kelly, "Foucault, Subjectivity, and Technologies of the Self," in *A Companion to Foucault*, (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 515.

pursues it and rips it apart so He can be first, and have the organism be first. The organism is already that, the judgment of God, from which medical doctors benefit and on which they base their power. The organism is not at all the body, the BwO; rather, it is a stratum on the BwO, in other words, a phenomenon of accumulation, coagulation, and sedimentation that, in order to extract useful labor from the BwO, imposes upon it forms, functions, bonds, dominant and hierarchized organizations, organized transcendences.

—Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari[50]

Some of the major works of the French philosopher and social critic Gilles Deleuze, including two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (*Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*), are co-written with his psychoanalyst colleague Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus* has been hailed by Neil Spiller as "the philosophical bible of the cyber-evangelists," that is "possibly one of the most quoted philosophical texts in connection with the technological 'spacescape' that computers have created and augmented."[51] This section focuses on Deleuze's discussion of the body as "any whole composed of parts, where these parts stand in some definite relation to one another, and has a capacity for being affected by other bodies."[52] Deleuze's understanding of the body as something in the middle of the process of becoming, and something that is not limited to the biological boundaries of the flesh and skin, helps analyzing new forms of embodiment, for instance that of the selfie, in respect to their modes of control and religiousness. In Deleuze's words, "Perhaps the body is the only factor in all spiritual development."[53]

Deleuze and Guattari's formulation of the body as a concept is inspired by the ideas of the 17th century Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza. According to Brent Adkins and Paul R. Hinlicky, "neither for Spinoza nor for Deleuze and Guattari can bodies, whether human or

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[50] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: U of Minneapolis P, 1987), 158-159.
[51] Ella Brians, "The 'Virtual' Body and the Strange Persistence of the Flesh: Deleuze, Cyberspace and the Posthuman," in *Deleuze and the Body*, ed. Laura Guillaume and Joe Hughes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2011), 117.
[52] Bruce Baugh, "Body" in *The Deleuze Dictionary: Revised Edition*, ed. Adrian Parr (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2010), 35.
[53] Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (London: Athlone, 1983), 39.

otherwise, be spoken of in the abstract."[54] All bodies have their own limits that are produced by that body. For Spinoza, "a body is an infinity of parts (or modes) with a fixed relation of motion and rest among its various parts, and this relation of motion and rest allows one body to be distinguished from another."[55] Similarly for Deleuze and Guattari, bodies are not distinguished from one another in respect of substance, but rather of motion and rest, or quickness and slowness. In other words, a body is identified by the relation of its parts to one another, as well as the environment surrounding it. Bodies are affected by different things and in different ways, "each type of body being characterised by minimum and maximum thresholds for being affected by other bodies: what can and what cannot affect it, and to what degree."[56] In addition, the specificity of a body would be lost if this relation among the parts fundamentally changes. Animals' various forms of metamorphoses, for instance caterpillar to butterfly, could be regarded as tangible examples of this alteration. In case of human bodies, likewise, the body is not distinguished for any unique or essential substance that it possesses. Human bodies are distinct with respect to their relations of motion and rest. Adkins and Hinlicky maintain that "to understand a body is to know what affects it is capable of. For a human body this understanding can only be achieved through experimentations."[57] Through this understanding of the body, essentialist questions of traditional philosophy such as "what is body?" would be replaced with a whole new set of inquiries; for instance, what affects are religious organizations of human bodies capable of? Do the economic arrangements of human bodies increase power or decrease it?

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[54] Brent Adkins and Paul R. Hinlicky, *Rethinking Philosophy and Theology with Deleuze* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 79.
[55] Ibid., 78.
[56] Bruce Baugh, "Body" in *The Deleuze Dictionary: Revised Edition*, ed. Adrian Parr (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2010), 35.
[57] Brent Adkins and Paul R. Hinlicky, *Rethinking Philosophy and Theology with Deleuze* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 79.

Ella Brians argues that "traditionally, the boundary of the subject is identified with the boundary of the flesh; I end where my skin ends… Deleuze and Guattari, however, illustrate how the body must be constituted through 'codings' which are the result of the regulation, control, and interactions of various 'flows' including the biological, technological, and cultural."[58] In short, Deleuze insists that the body is always more than its biological parts or fleshy boundaries. "The 'material' is not merely the biological. There is a whole range of forces that interact to form the body."[59] A significant outcome of this perception is to count gadgets as parts of the body. A spider's web containing the corpses of other insects, for example, is as much associated with the spider's body as its fang and brain. Regarding humans, all clothes, laptops, backpacks, cellphones, earphones, credit cards, identification cards, and even writing instruments (such as pen and typewriter) are to be considered as portions of the body—that is why losing them may cause a traumatic experience. But more significantly are people's profiles and images on social networks like Facebook and Instagram that are founded as parts of the body. Brians notes, "The work the images of bodies on social networking sites are doing is not merely representative, but also constitutive."[60] Shared images not only represent, but they rather produce new forms of embodiment that are simultaneously liberating and limitative. To the same extent, Rebecca Coleman discusses how, from a Deleuzian perspective, images produce possibilities of embodiment and become materialised in particular ways. Coleman focuses on the theme of self-transformation and its relevance to images and the body by means of a critical reading of fitness advertisements that propagate a demand for "a 'better' self, through learning from the past and

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[58] Ella Brians, "The 'Virtual' Body and the Strange Persistence of the Flesh: Deleuze, Cyberspace and the Posthuman," in *Deleuze and the Body*, ed. Laura Guillaume and Joe Hughes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2011), 134.
[59] Ibid., 134.
[60] Ibid., 137.

entering a more productive future."[61] Since a body cannot exist independently and is produced through its connection with other bodies, "becoming" is not an alteration from one form into another with a starting point and an end point; becoming is rather a process or a transformation in itself.

The method Deleuze uses to approach the body could effectively relate to the study of religion. Deleuze's emphasis on becoming instead of being resembles similarities with the notion of ritual in the context of religious studies, especially the way in which Victor Turner has formulated the term. Ritual theory is determined by the image of passing across a threshold or a frontier. For Turner, "real ritual effects transformation, creating a major 'before' and 'after' difference."[62] Hence, threshold is a creative space and produces a temporary state of transformation. Ritual refers to practices that describe the possibilities of religious experience more accurately than belief which claims to have the truth in its hands. Furthermore, in "Embodied Anti-theology: The Body without Organs and the Judgement of God," Judith Poxon argues that Deleuze's concept of "body without organs" (or BwO) is a critique of the theological system of the judgment of God, He who makes "an organization of organs called the organism."[63] Poxon notes, "The system of God, and the divine judgement on which it is based, has everything to do with a will to dominate, to impose upon, to limit, to organ-ise."[64] On the other hand, Deleuze celebrates "the nonorganic vitality of the body without organs, understood

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[61] Rebecca Coleman, "Be(come) Yourself only Better: Self-transformation and the Materialisation of Images," in *Deleuze and the Body*, ed. by Laura Guillaume and Joe Hughes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 146.

[62] Ronald Grimes, "Ritual," in *Guide to the Study of Religion*, ed. Willi Braun and Russell McCutcheon (London: Continuum, 2009), 264.

[63] Judith Poxon, "Embodied Anti-theology: The Body without Organs and the Judgement of God," in *Deleuze and Religion*, ed. Mary Bryden (London: Routledge, 2001), 42.

[64] Ibid., 49.

as the refusal of personal identity and the irreducible affirmation of difference itself."[65] Although the emergence of the virtual world at the end of the 20th century sounded to be a significant step toward creating BwOs that are non-identical, it seems in contrary social networks have produced a judgemental system similar to that of God.

In his discussion of the religiosity of "Artificial Intelligence" (or AI), David Noble recognizes the efforts to make computers as an attempt to create minds without bodies; however, it seems as though cameras are the external, communicative bodies of intelligent computers in respect to Deleuze's formulation of the body. Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* is a great example depicting how AI is related to camera. In this movie, HAL 9000 is a supercomputer that controls the spacecraft. HAL, which stands for "Heuristically programmed ALgorithmic computer," is represented in the movie as a red camera eye located on various parts of the ship. HAL is an example of how enchanting and mysterious a camera could be. Through their space flight, the two human pilots have a discussion on whether or not HAL has feelings. The movie comes to the conclusion that, if HAL has some sort of feeling, it is definitely the will to power, and to gain mastery over humankind. When one of the pilots is finally trying to shut HAL down, it starts to sing a song that was the first thing it had learnt to say, a return to its unconscious childhood at the moment of death. It might be incorrect to say that computers have feelings in "reality" outside of this film, but the representation of HAL in one of the most widely acclaimed sciences-fiction movies demonstrates a tendency to divinize computers, and to give them uncanny attributions. The camera, in this context as the eye of intelligent computers, functions as an all-knowing being that wish to gain control over humans.

Generally speaking, there is a distinction between two types of cameras: those that are set at public spaces and those carried by individuals' bodies. The public camera functions like

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[65] Ibid., 50.

panopticon, it is a dark abyss always at work, and one should always assume that it is working. The personal camera however, has created a new form of disciplinary power or control society. It is a step further; the inmates watch themselves as well as their peers through the power of sharing records. The unified, exclusive God power of panopticon has disseminated among millions of individuals. It is not that God is dead, but that everyone has become his or her own God, with his or her own realms of observation. The power of visibility has been decentralized by making the camera something affordable for most of the people. Individuals' bodies, alongside nature, are being carefully watched and recorded by thousands of panopticons. The movements of a plant or an animal can be carefully watched through the precise lens of a camera. Documentaries like BBC's *Life*, with their magnificent high-definition quality, have changed the encounter with the nature. One might argue that camera has destroyed the immediate interaction with nature; it functions as a medium that disenchants the so-called "real" encounter. However, it may have brought along a new form of enchantment, one that includes wonderment about the movement and diversity of the nature, one that by omitting many senses reinforces the visual aspects of both the human and non-human beings. Considering Deleuze's example, camera functions like a highway; it gives more space to the people who are using it, and one is able to watch what many people do all around the world. Nevertheless, with such abundant space comes a carefully confined set of rules. Camera is simultaneously liberating and limitative; though it expands the power of observation, it confines bodies by making them believe that their recorded pictures are going to last in the archive forever.

Chapter 3 The Algebra of Need: William Burroughs on/in Control

> The technocratic control apparatus of the United States has at its fingertips new techniques which if fully exploited could make Orwell's *1984* seem like a benevolent utopia.
>
> —William Burroughs[66]

In *The Bop Apocalypse: The Religious Visions of Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Burroughs*, John Lardas argues that with a broad understanding of religious experience can one recognize the three Beat writers as being interested in things of the spirit. According to Lardas, the religious energy that the Beats once generated is still present, albeit in a different form than it possessed; "Despite efforts by others to 'call the tune' of the Beats' legacy, the nature of their message—to resist that which is given you and create a world as divine as possible out of everyday materials—continues to resonate."[67] Burroughs's writing, in particular, has intertwined this loose religious experience with a critique of "control" in the both social and individual levels. Control, according to Burroughs, happens in a macro, external scale for the benefit of the upper class, as well as in a micro, internal level within individuals' psyche. Thus, the power to observe and surveil is not limited to the government or CCTV, as ego also operates like a camera, recording, saving, and—in the case of selfies—sharing or revealing one's actions. This chapter starts by offering an interpretation of selected works of Burroughs, most notably *Naked Lunch*, and it focuses on his understanding of control as junk—a limitless desire based on waste materials— and its relation to word/image virus associated with the wicked ego. Burroughs's writing embraces a juxtaposition of different esoteric religious traditions—ranging from Egyptian and Mayan mythology to North African Sufism and Christian Gnosticism—that enables him not only

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[66] William Burroughs, "The Limits of Control," in *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays*, (New York: Arcade Pub, 1986), 117.

[67] John Lardas, *The Bop Apocalypse: The Religious Visions of Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Burroughs*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 256.

to critique the control society, but also to suggest modes of resistance by means of challenging the unification of the body and the recorded self.

3.1 Control, Junk and Virus

I can feel a probing insect intelligence behind the camera.

—William Burroughs[68]

Burroughs's body of work has been a source of inspiration for Foucault and Deleuze regarding his formulation of the concept of "control" as the future's total need. Deleuze and Foucault believe that we are entering a new "control society" which is different from both "sovereign society" and "disciplinary society." According to Deleuze, "There have been, of course, various remnants of disciplinary societies for years, but we already know we are in societies of a different type that should be called, using Burroughs's term—and Foucault had a very deep admiration for Burroughs—control societies."[69] Here control refers to the decline in the need for confinement and institutions such as schools, factories, hospitals, asylums, and prisons. Instead, control society has an ever-increasing desire for self-control. Deleuze argues that some have mistakenly thought that Foucault was painting the portrait of modern societies as disciplinary apparatuses in opposition to former apparatuses of sovereignty; yet, "the disciplines Foucault described are the history of what we are slowly ceasing to be and our current apparatus is taking shape in attitudes of open and constant *control* that are very different from the recent closed disciplines."[70] Deleuze attributes "mechanical machines" to sovereign societies, "thermodynamic machines" to disciplinary societies, and "cybernetic machines and computers" to control

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[68] William Burroughs, *The Wild Boys: A Book of the Dead* (New York: Penguin, 1971), 21.
[69] Gilles Deleuze, "What is the Creative Act?" in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapounjade (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006), 326.
[70] Gilles Deleuze, "What is a *Dispositif*?" in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapounjade (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006), 350.

societies, while maintaining that "compared with the approaching forms of ceaseless control in open sites, we may come to see the harshest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past."[71] In contrary to disciplinary societies that were always starting all over again—"as you went from school to barracks, [and] from barracks to factory"—in control societies one never finishes anything—"business, training, and military service being coexisting metastable states of a single modulation, a sort of universal transmutation."[72] It is worthwhile to consider how, for instance, passports and credit cards share the same logic of being universally recognizable and traceable; same as cellphones with GPS (Global Positioning System), also capable of taking selfies for peoples of all ages. Deleuze uses a more tangible example to clarify what he means by open and constant control: "Control is not discipline. You do not confine people with a highway. But by making highways, you multiply the means of control. […] people can travel infinitely and 'freely' without being confined while being perfectly controlled. That is our future."[73] This type of control is to a large extent self-conscious, since one needs to be in the most concentrated state of mind in order to drive in a highway; as Burroughs notes, "We need more consciousness crossing a city street than walking down a country lane."[74]

For Jones Irwin, Burroughs's work is "significantly concerned with philosophical issues such as the relationship between the social and individual, the experience of mortality, the nature

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[71] Gilles Deleuze, "Control and Becoming," in *Negotiations: 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 175.

[72] Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies," in *Negotiations: 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 179.

[73] Gilles Deleuze, "What is the Creative Act?" in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapounjade (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006), 327.

[74] William Burroughs, "On Freud and the Unconscious," in *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays* (New York: Arcade Pub, 1986), 93.

of artistic integrity, and the distinction between morality and immorality."[75] More specifically, Nathan Moore insists that Burroughs's writing is directly concerned with the problematic of control. According to Moore, "Deleuze and Burroughs share a common enemy, but an enemy with many names: globalization, late capitalism, psychoanalysis, representation, Mr. Bradly Mr. Martin [a character from Burroughs's *Nova Trilogy*], information, statistics, word virus… all of these are the names of control."[76] Although Burroughs does not commonly use the term "surveillance" in his works, his frequent mention of "control" generally indicates any type of apparatus of power that seeks to solidify or organize bodies. In order to employ Burroughs's conception of organizing powers as a tool to analyze selfie-surveillance, it is necessary to further explore his control formula: control is junk; junk is a virus, or an epidemic sickness; word/image, equal to ego, is also a virus. This formula helps articulating selfie-surveillance as a desire or a total need with no end that will never be fully satisfied.

In Burroughs's formulation, control is a form of junk, as it creates a desirable yet endless need; "You see control can never be a means to any practical end… It can never be a means to anything but more control… Like junk…"[77] The word "junk" is primarily a "generic term for opium and/or derivatives" such as morphine and heroin, a different category from hallucinogen drugs like marijuana and mescaline.[78] But junk's connotation is not exclusive to narcotics, "Because there are many forms of addiction I think that they all obey basic laws."[79] Junk rather refers to a waste material, or a virus that is attacking the public health. In "Deposition:

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[75] Jones Irwin, "William Burroughs as Philosopher: From Beat Morality to Third Worldism to Continental Theory," in *The Philosophy of the Beats*, ed. Sharin N. Elkholy, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 267.
[76] Nathan Moore, "Nova Law: William S. Burroughs and the Logic of Control," *Law and Literature* 19, no. 3 (2007): 435.
[77] William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: the Resorted Text*, ed. James Grauerholz and Barry Miles (New York: Grove, 2001), 137.
[78] Ibid., 200.
[79] Ibid., 205.

Testimony Concerning a Sickness," an appendix to *Naked Lunch*, Burroughs describes junk in

details:

> Junk yields a basic formula of "evil" virus: *The Algebra of Need*. The face of "evil" is
> always the face of total need. A dope fiend is a man in total need of dope. Beyond a
> certain frequency need knows absolutely no limit or control. In the words of total need:
> *"Wouldn't you?"* Yes you would. You would lie, cheat, inform on your friends, steal, do
> *anything* to satisfy total need. Because you would be in a state of total sickness, total
> possession, and not in a position to act in any other way.[80]

Additionally, Burroughs calls junk "the ideal product" and "the ultimate merchandise," since

"No sales talk [is] necessary. The client will crawl through a sewer and beg to buy… The junk

merchant does not sell his product to the consumer, he sells the consumer to his product."[81] The

latter, selling a consumer to a product, is a fundamental characteristic of any form of junk or

virus. One wonders if the same rule is applicable to recording instruments, specifically the

cellphone since one can hardly move without carrying it in his/her pocket, beside the fact that

some people even line up for latest models of these recording instruments begging to buy them

as soon as possible. As a matter of fact, the economics of surveillance and its connection to the

neoliberal consumerist culture must not be dismissed. As Nils Zurawski maintains in his study

on consuming surveillance, "Data gathering is a major business in itself, and acquiring as much

data as possible seems to be one end in all the control, monitoring and profiling practices

employed today."[82] Burroughs is not adding merely a pessimistic tone to this discussion, but he

is rather reinforcing the relation of this limitless desire to consume with the ego and the evil

virus.

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[80] Ibid., 201.
[81] Ibid., 201.
[82] Nils Zurawski, "Consuming Surveillance: Mediating Control Practices Through Consumer
Culture and Everyday Life," in *Media, Surveillance and Identity: Social Perspectives*, ed. André Jansson
and Miyase Christensen (New York: Peter Lang, 2014), 33.

"The junk virus is public health problem number one of the world today,"[83] Burroughs maintains. Portraying junk as a virus aims at its unhealthy, evil implications, but also its dependency on other organisms in order to live and multiply. Virus, a word which according to *OED* means "semen" in classical Latin, has two main contemporary usages: one in the discourse of *medicine*, "an infectious, often pathogenic agent or biological entity [...], which is able to function only within the living cells of a host animal, plant, or microorganism"; and the other in *computing*, "a program or piece of code which when executed causes itself to be copied into other locations, and which is therefor capable of propagating itself within the memory of a computer or across a network, usually with deleterious results." Interestingly, both these connotations concern the culture of surveillance. Health, as discussed in the introduction, has become one of the major surveillance spaces targeting optimization of bodily fitness by means of self-control procedures and applications. Digital technologies, likewise, play a significant role in collecting both *big data* for the sake of security and marketing purposes, and *small data* as detailed records one collects about oneself. These two discourse, medicine and computing, have also combined together creating a new "digital health" discourse that according to Deborah Lupton promotes normative ideas/behaviours and encourages individuals to "monitor their bodies in the interests of preventive medicine and self-care."[84] Yet, it seems as though some sort of metaphysical undertone is also at the stake in Burroughs's formula, since virus is an emanation of evil and it expresses a gnostic dualism between *good* and *evil*. Gregory Stephenson augments some affinities between the gnostic thought and the ideas of Burroughs, as they "both view the material world as illusory, the body as the primary impediment to true being and

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[83] William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: the Resorted Text*, ed. James Grauerholz and Barry Miles (New York: Grove, 2001), 205.

[84] Deborah Lupton, "Quantified Sex: A Critical Analysis of Sexual and Reproductive Self-tracking Using Apps," *Culture, Health & Sexuality* (2014): 1.

identity, and escape from the body and the world of the senses as humankind's paramount concern."[85] In *The Matrix*, a fin de siècle movie known for its "gnostic themes"[86] that also represents a world within which people are surveilled via computers and have internalized a false reality, a dialogue by Agent Smith—the antagonist—resembles Burroughs's writings in terms of both content and rhetoric:

> I'd like to share a revelation that I've had during my time here. It came to me when I tried to classify your species and I realized that you're not actually mammals. Every mammal on this planet instinctively develops a natural equilibrium with the surrounding environment but you humans do not. You move to an area and you multiply and multiply until every natural resource is consumed and the only way you can survive is to spread to another area. There is another organism on this planet that follows the same pattern. Do you know what it is? A virus. Human beings are a disease, a cancer of this planet. You're a plague and we are the cure.[87]

But Smith himself is also a virus in regards to the two sequels of the movie where he multiplies himself. Perhaps he has become a monster in the process of fighting monsters. Yet, what remains vital in this discourse—of control-junk-virus as evil—is the incapability to go beyond *good* and *evil*. For Burroughs, this powerlessness is the outcome of language invading the human consciousness. Word/image is also a virus and an emanation of evil, and "image and word are the instruments of control."[88]

In his short essay on "The Limits of Control," Burroughs states that "words are still the principal instruments of control."[89] Moreover, "No control machine so far devised can operate without words, and any control machine which attempts to do so relying entirely on external

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[85] Gregory Stephenson, *The Daybreak Boys: Essays on the Literature of the Beat Generation* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1990), 59.

[86] Eric G. Wilson, *Secret Cinema: Gnostic Vision in Film*, (New York: Continuum, 2006), 9.

[87] *The Matrix*, film, dir. The Wachowski Brothers, 1999, Warner Bros..

[88] William S. Burroughs and Daniel Odier, *The Job: Interviews with William S. Burroughs*, (New York: Penguin, 1989), 59.

[89] William Burroughs, "The Limits of Control," in *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays*, (New York: Arcade Pub, 1986), 117.

force or entirely on physical control of the mind will soon encounter the limits of control."[90] This

further explains the word/image-based apparatuses of control society in contrast with the need

for physical confinement in the disciplinary societies. For Burroughs, language is a virus, similar

to the flu virus which may once have been a healthy lung cell but it is now a parasitic organism

that invades and damages the lungs. "The word may once have been a healthy neural cell. It is

now a parasitic organism that invades and damages the central nervous system,"[91] Burroughs

notes in *The Ticket That Exploded*. He believes modern man has lost the option of silence and

surrounder; "Try halting your sub-vocal speech. Try to achieve even ten seconds of inner silence.

You will encounter a resisting organism that *forces you to talk*. That organism is the word. In the

beginning was the word. In the beginning of what exactly?"[92] In fact, Burroughs's conception of

language and the word has a satirical quality that imitates the biblical literature with a quasi-

scientific tone. "Modern man has advanced from the stone ax to nuclear weapons in ten thousand

years… Perhaps the word itself is recent about ten thousand years old. What we call history is

the history of the word. In the beginning of *that* history was the word."[93] It is a fundamental

characteristic of Burroughs's thought to put Homo sapiens in a larger evolutionary scale that also

gives a more comprehensive picture of the planet Earth's long future. This conception of

history—similar to *2001: A Space Odyssey* where the source of human wisdom and the will to

power is a black monolith from outside the planet Earth—affects one's judgment of the quite

recent technological developments as an admirable *progress*, since this could even be a *regress* if

one imagines the Earth in the next thousand years. More significantly, Burroughs's sort of new

historicist approach to language results in identifying (progressive or regressive) shifts through

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[90] Ibid., 117.
[91] William S. Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded* (New York: Grove, 1994), 49.
[92] Ibid., 49-50.
[93] Ibid., 50.

the development of human subjectivity. The word virus is not *a priori* to the human species, and

it is affected by its surrounding environment. In the context of selfie-surveillance, recording

instruments have arguably created new forms of subjectivity, and they have changed encounter

of the self with its images of the past namely by creating massive archives that could last forever.

For instance, it is now the first time in history that a (privileged) person is able to watch the

video recording of his/her moment of birth when coming out of mother's womb.

"Remember that the written word is an image,"[94] Burroughs suggests. Image, likewise,

bears a same formula of evil virus; "Image *is* junk," one reads in *Nova Express*.[95] Through his

gnostic vision, Burroughs questions the reliability of image as the representation of reality;

"*Reality* is simply a more or less constant scanning pattern—The scanning pattern we accept as

reality has been imposed by controlling power on this planet, a power primarily oriented towards

total control."[96] Douglas Baldwin points out that in Burroughs's fiction, "drug addiction mirrors

image addiction, and that, in turn, functions as a trope for State control of the individual."[97] The

direction of this critique is exactly towards selfie-surveillance. What an image does, in general, is

to assign itself to *something* else, and to cover the space-time medium that differentiates between

the phenomenon/representation and the thing-in-itself. Addictively assuming the *image* and the

real as one *thing* is a characteristic of contemporary authoritative discourses, especially

considering the judicial systems that accept *image* as the proof of an act. This notion could be

regarded as the basis of visual forms of surveillance: if it is not possible to control all the bodies,

correlate a body to an image (or a data double) and then control all the images (and data). Yet,

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[94] William Burroughs, "Screenwriting and the Potentials of Cinema," in *Writing in a Film Age: Essays by Contemporary Novelists*, ed. Keith Cohen (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1991), 55.
[95] William Burroughs, *Nova Express* (New York: Grove, 1992), 52.
[96] Ibid., 53.
[97] Douglas Baldwin, "Word Begets Image and Image is Virus: Understanding Language and Film in the Works of William S. Burroughs," *College Literature* 27, no. 1 (2000): 65.

the controlling power could be more effective and widespread when it is not centralized, and the individuals voluntarily record and share images of their selves—an example of which is selfie.

Still, control is not limited to the realm of language and consciousness, since the body is similarly subjected to control and being infected by virus. The "Talking Asshole" section of *Naked Lunch* is noteworthy here; "Did I ever tell you about the man who taught his asshole to talk?" Burroughs writes, "His whole abdomen would move up and down you dig farting out the words."[98] This grotesque story continues for almost two pages, while the narrator notes how "the ass started talking on its own," then "started eating," and found "its way through his pants and start talking on the street, shouting out it wanted equal rights."[99] Gradually, the asshole gains control over the man and it does not need him anymore, since it can "talk and eat *and* shit."[100] Though the man's mouth seals over and his brain dies, there is one organ that the asshole still needs: the eyes, "That's one thing the asshole *couldn't* do was see."[101] At the end,

> nerve connections were blocked and infiltrated and atrophied so the brain couldn't give orders any more. It was trapped in the skull, sealed off. For a while you could see the silent, helpless suffering of the brain behind the eyes, then finally the brain must have died, because the eyes went out, and there was no more feeling in them than a crab's eye on the end of a stalk.[102]

Phil Baker, in his biography of Burroughs, recognizes this story as a representation of the main theme of *Naked Lunch*, "the menace to the human spirit of scientific and authoritarian control."[103] Here, the body is not presented as a unity; each organ has its own consciousness, and anus has successfully taken control of brain to drown the body. It is worth noting that Burroughs's dualism between the mind and the body goes beyond Cartesianism or Gnosticism,

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[98] Ibid., 110.
[99] Ibid., 111.
[100] Ibid., 111.
[101] Ibid., 112.
[102] Ibid., 112.
[103] Phil Baker, *William S. Burroughs* (London: Reakton, 2010), 91.

since there are several bodies, or more exactly organs, and there are several selves, or egos and alter-egos. This is also reflected in Burroughs's appreciation of Egyptian mythology. In *The Western Lands*, Burroughs gives a detailed account of Egyptian's belief in seven souls, namely "Ren, the Secret Name"; "Sekem, Energy, Power, Light"; "Khu, the Guardian Angel"; "Ba, the Heart"; "Ka, the Double"; "Khaibit, the Shadow"; and finally "Sekhu, the Remains."[104] There are portions of the self being connected to the evil, illusionary, material reality, while the other portions could connect to the heavenly, ultimate truth. It is in fact the good/evil binary that represent Burroughs's gnostic, dualistic vision. If a body needs to flee being tracked or observed, it shall first detach itself from integral, organising forces—above all the evil ego.

3.2 Control and Resistance

The razor inside, sir. Jerk the handle…

—William Burroughs[105]

The opposite of control from the mentioned perspective is not freedom or liberty. Burroughs associates the state of control with the conscious ego that opposes any unconscious state of mind. It is helpful here to mention Brian Eno's terminology that introduces the state of "surrender" as the other side of this scale diagram. A term common to the literature of Western Buddhism, Eno's "surrender" refers to those states of mind in which the self flows into its surrounding environment and limits the control of consciousness. A good example of "surrender" is the moment when someone is lying on the grass, watching the sunrise and listening to the birds singing—quite contrary to driving on a highway with a speed limit. Eno, self-proclaimed as an Evangelical Atheist (composer and the founder of Ambient music that emphasizes the role of

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[104] William Burroughs, *The Western Lands* (New York: Penguin, 1988), 4-5.
[105] William Burroughs and Brion Gysin, *The Third Mind* (New York: Viking, 1987), 60.

environment and atmosphere while hearing sounds), formulates the "surrender" in contradiction to "the model of post-enlightenment man" that want to become "better and better at control"[106];

> I think that sex, drugs, art and religion very much overlap with one another and sometimes one becomes another. […] The umbrella that they all exist under is this word, *surrender*, because they are all forms of transcendence through surrender. They are ways of transcending your individuality and sense of yourself as a totally separate creature in the world. All of those things involve some kind of loosening of this boundary that is around this thing you call *yourself*. In Gospel music you do it by surrounding yourself in the inner community, so you are no longer you and become a part of *us*.[107]

Eno's description further explains the state of control in contrast to the state of surrender not as an either/or dichotomy, but as a fuzzy diagram where none of the extremes could be fully achieved. Elsewhere, while emphasizing the role of religion to stop humans from manipulating their surroundings, Eno points out how the essential message of gospel music "is that you don't have to keep fighting the universe; you can stop and the universe is quite good to you. There is a loss of ego."[108] Furthermore,

> We're constantly moving between the control phase and the surrender phase. […] we tend to dignify the control side of the spectrum, the repertoire of our behavior, more than the surrender phase. We tend to dignify people who are good at control. We think those are the masters of the universe. And we don't particularly pay attention to people who are good at surrender. […] the control part of our being is really quite recently evolved. […] if you think of the 99.8 percent of human existence until 2000 years ago, most of the time one was surrendering gracefully and trying to stay afloat, trying to use what little bit of control you had, in a mostly surrendering environment.[109]

If control is to be avoided based on this religion-inspired framework, how is it possible to resist control or make a good out of its (seemingly) evilness?

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[106] Brian Eno, "The Philosophy of Surrender," *The Polymath Perspective*, 2009, http://www.polymathperspective.com/?p=9
[107] Ibid.
[108] Qtd. in Stuart Jeffries, "Surrender. It's Brian Eno," *The Guardian*, 2010, http://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/apr/28/brian-eno-brighton-festival
[109] Brian Eno, "New York Lecture," *Red Bull Music Academy*, 2013, http://www.redbullmusicacademy.com/lectures/brian-eno

Burroughs's suggested type of resistance toward the control society does not primarily target governments but rather the individuals; "If you wish to alter or annihilate a pyramid of numbers in a serial relation, you alter or remove the bottom number."[110] Although his resisting tactic in *Naked Lunch* focuses specifically on narcotic addiction, it could be applied to other forms of junk as they all share a same formula of evil virus or "The Algebra of Need";

> If we wish to annihilate the junk pyramid, we must start with the bottom of the pyramid: *the Addict in the Street,* and stop tilting quixotically for the "higher-ups" so called, all of whom are immediately replaceable. *The addict in the street who must have junk to live is the one irreplaceable factor in the junk equation.* When there are no more addicts to buy junk there will be no junk traffic. As long as junk need exists, someone will service it.[111]

In terms of surveillance, this tactic would not initially blame the security agencies; instead, it challenges people's attitude of recording and sharing their lives. As long as there is a demand for recording and sharing, and as long as people enthusiastically line up to get the newest technological products, someone would take advantage of the possible profit. The neoliberal marketing strategy is similar to that of a drug dealer: give them a sample for free, soon they will beg for more. Simultaneously, Burroughs is not that interested in educating masses, since "Junkies are like that most of them they don't want to know… and you can't tell them anything… A smoker doesn't want to know anything but smoke… And a heroin junky same way."[112] So is the dealer or the surveillor to be blamed in the first place, or are the consumers participating in this evil process the prime suspects? Stated differently, who is responsible for the emerging culture of surveillance? In *The Western Lands*, Burroughs recognizes life as a game called "Find Your Adversary"; "The Adversary's game plan is to persuade you that he does not exist." The first step to beat the enemy is to find out that it exists; then, "you are still a long way

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[110] William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: the Resorted Text*, ed. James Grauerholz and Barry Miles (New York: Grove, 2001), 202.
[111] Ibid., 202.
[112] Ibid., 184.

from a confrontation, a long way. A dreary abrasive dull way, sad voices, dirtier, older."[113] Burroughs is putting the blame on the ego or the word virus—an evil enemy that organizes the body and the self, and can hardly stop consuming junk and/or image. In Guy Ritchie's 2005 kabbalistic movie, *Revolver*, "the greatest con" that the ego ever pulled is to make "you believe that he[/she] is you."[114] Still, "if you change the rules on what controls you, you will change the rules on what you can control."[115] From this gnostic vision that propagates a peculiar form of personal politics, the wicked ego is in control of consuming recording instruments and their by-products, and the manner of change and resistance passes through elimination of the conscious ego rather than removal of the controlling instruments themselves. In other words, *how* to use these tools is the key enigma.

It seems impossible and impractical to completely avoid using recording instruments or other surveillance technological tools. Indeed, Burroughs does not see technology as something essentially hazardous that has disenchanted our world, or has alienated us; he rather embraces the futuristic possibilities of recording instruments. Burroughs condemns those writers who refuse to admit the things that technology is capable of doing; "I've never been able to understand this sort of fear. Many of them are afraid of tape recorders and the idea of using any mechanical means for literary purposes seems to them some sort of a sacrilege."[116] Moreover, one reads in *Naked Lunch* that the narrator himself is "a recording instrument" and "not an entertainer"[117]—a statement highlighting the seriousness of his words as well. So, does Burroughs's approval for technology stand in contrast with his fear of "a probing insect intelligence behind the

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[113] William Burroughs, *The Western Lands* (New York: Penguin, 1988), 12.
[114] *Revolver*, film, dir. Guy Ritchie, 2005, Sony Pictures.
[115] Ibid..
[116] William Burroughs and Brion Gysin, *The Third Mind* (New York: Viking, 1987), 3.
[117] William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: the Resorted Text*, ed. James Grauerholz and Barry Miles (New York: Grove, 2001), 184.

camera"?[118] It seems as though technology has a two-fold characteristic for Burroughs; it is emancipatory as long as it decentralizes singular identity of the user, and reorganizes that integral organism which is controlled by the ego. Baldwin similarly notices this dual characteristic and mentions how, in Burroughs's science fiction tales, cameras "as representative of all society's media become weapons of both State repression and organized rebellion."[119] In short, Burroughs is not romantically singing for the sake of pre-industrial society, but he urges people to keep in mind that "You don't *control* a tape recorder—you *use* it."[120] The best example of how a user could decrease the volume of control (of a recording instrument) is the cut-up method or technique.

The cut-up technique that originated with Burroughs and his friend and collaborator Brion Gysin is practically a method of revealing the truth of a text with a pair of scissors. In *The Third Mind*, co-written by Burroughs and Gysin, they inform the reader to cut-up all sorts of texts—even the sacred ones; "Pick a book / any book / cut it up / cut up / prose / poems / newspapers / magazines / the bible / the Koran / the book of moronic / la-tzu / Confucius / the bhagavad gita / anything / letters / business correspondence / ads / all the words."[121] The cut-up technique first tears apart a text and its given meaning(s), then, it "randomly" generates a new one—not only a new text, but rather a new knowledge, a revelation. Cut-ups reject conscious, evident readings, and they produce new forms of personal interpretation that could reveal *truth(s)* of a text. Still, this would not be the final, ultimate truth, as it is recommended to cut-up even a text that is already cut-up. This technique is used in *Naked Lunch*, arguably "without the author's

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[118] William Burroughs, *The Wild Boys: A Book of the Dead* (New York: Penguin, 1971), 21.

[119] Douglas Baldwin, "Word Begets Image and Image is Virus: Understanding Language and Film in the Works of William S. Burroughs," *College Literature* 27, no. 1 (2000): 68.

[120] William Burroughs, "The Limits of Control," in *The Adding Machine: Collected Essays*, (New York: Arcade Pub, 1986), 117.

[121] William Burroughs and Brion Gysin, *The Third Mind* (New York: Viking, 1987), 40.

full awareness of the method he was using,"[122] as well as some of Burroughs's other novels—all sharing the same theme of control-junk-virus. Although the cut-up method may seem as a mere creative strategy to produce new forms of art, it has a broader connotation of rejecting the given or organic meaning of a text or an image. Burroughs has actually done cut-ups with recorded sounds/voices as well as film negatives in order to reduce the user's level of consciousness. Baldwin believes "Burroughs's random cut-ups are designed to break free from the control of the Word,"[123] and argues that "chance juxtapositions" of word/image produce new realities disputing "societally constructed narratives (especially as generated by the media)."[124] That is to say, cut-ups re-order and re-organize; they contest the (seemingly natural) attribution of an image to an idea (and vice versa). In terms of selfie-surveillance, cut-ups could question association of images of bodies to conscious, fixed identities. For instance, a user of social media could (randomly) fake his/her identity so to dislocate the attributed images and data. But utilizing cut-up as a resisting tactic against (selfie-)surveillance is inseparable from the ways in which the body is recognized.

Body alters. "The human body is scandalously inefficient. Instead of a mouth and an anus to get out of order why not have one all-purpose hole to eat *and* eliminate?"[125] Burroughs identifies the human body as an experiment, a machine that is inefficient and needs reinventions, an infinity of parts in the act of becoming. In *The Western Lands*, "Man" or "homo sap" is described as "God's final product"; it is "an unsuccessful experiment, caught in a biologic dead

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[122] Ibid., 42.

[123] Douglas Baldwin, "Word Begets Image and Image is Virus: Understanding Language and Film in the Works of William S. Burroughs," *College Literature* 27, no. 1 (2000): 69.

[124] Ibid., 70.

[125] William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: the Resorted Text*, ed. James Grauerholz and Barry Miles (New York: Grove, 2001), 137.

end and inexorably headed for extinction."[126] The body should alter in order to become compatible with its surrounding environment; "The human body is filled up vit [with] unnecessitated parts. You can get by vit vone [one] kidney. Vy [why] have two? The inside parts should not be so close in together crowded," one reads in *Naked Lunch*.[127] It seems as though Burroughs would agree with Judith Butler's argument, that "The boundary of who I am is the boundary of the body, but the boundary of the body never fully belongs to me."[128] Burroughs's desire to minimize and simplify the body is reflected even further in (the written description of) one of his dreams:

> People who grow their own meat on their own bodies… like arm bacon and leg roasts. It grows back, but not quick enough to keep up, so that they are always in danger of eating themselves. In fact, so delectable is the flavor of liver, they can hardly restrain themselves from cutting their bodies open and eating it, although they know this is fatal. However, the recuperative growth is amazing. If, say, they only eat half the liver, they can make it. And some have been known to eat their hearts out, and die in gastronomic ecstasies. The brain is especially toothsome, and it is an awesome sight to see a self-eater dipping into a hole on top of his skull and eating the raw brain, with an expression of ever-increasing idiot relish.[129]

Burroughs is inventing a body without organs (BwO), challenging the notion of organism or the natural body which, using Deleuze's terminology, is originally designed by God. Believing that "Western man is externalizing himself in the form of gadgets,"[130] Burroughs welcomes the emergence of an alternative body which is decentralized and dispersed. Similar to the recording instruments, the human body can be both limitative and liberating. As long as the body is an integrated system compatible with the self (and its gadgets such identification cards and cellphones), it can be subjected to control; whereas a body without organs, being torn apart, can

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[126] William Burroughs, *The Western Lands* (New York: Penguin, 1988), 41.
[127] William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: the Resorted Text*, ed. James Grauerholz and Barry Miles (New York: Grove, 2001), 152.
[128] Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?*. London: Verso, 2009.
[129] William Burroughs, *My Education: A Book of Dreams* (New York: Viking, 1995), 153.
[130] Ibid., 22.

escape means of control since it does not have a single identity to be traced easily. It is valuable here to mention Micheal Sean Bolton's posthumanist approach to Burroughs's body of work. Questioning postmodernist recognitions of Burroughs, Bolton argues that Burroughsian subjectivity "is not simply fragmented but is moreover decentralized and dispersed."[131] Furthermore,

> For Burroughs, disintegration rather than unity represents the possibility of freedom of the self. Stable, fixed identities allow for oppression by societal power structures since the subject that can be defined can be subjugated. Consequently, his characters never settle into distinct identities. Whereas conventional autonomy includes a continuity of identity based on the integrity of a character and the coherence of his/her perceptions, Burroughs does not allow characters to maintain any fixed identity or perspective by which to establish such continuity. For him, autonomy [and anatomy] derives not from continuity but from multiplicity of identity.[132]

Representing oneself in the social media is a narrative. Facebook, for instance, has a timeline where life events could be added; Instagram and Twitter initiate dates for all activities. A profile in the social media is continues, and one's profiles on different platforms are interconnected in order to give a more integral image of the self to both the surveillors and the self itself. Apparently, the logic of surveillance is based upon each individual having an integrated identity—one that corresponds a body to a name that can hardly change. It is easier and more efficient to put things in order when they bear a name. If one considers the history of human species, having a *first* and then a *last* name is not quite an old phenomenon. Burroughs's resistance does not go very far indeed; it has nothing to do with educating people or questioning the authoritative strategies of security agencies or marketing companies. Yet, it challenges a basic foundation of our spirit of the age: the integration of body and self; the continuity of fixed identities.

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[131] Micheal Sean Bolton, "From Self-Alienation to Posthumanism: The Transmigration of the Burroughsian Subject," in *The Philosophy of the Beats*, ed. Sharin N. Elkholy (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 66.
[132] Ibid., 67.

Chapter 4 Conclusion

> Surveillance is not everywhere, but its presence has become normalized.
>
> —Henry Giroux[133]

> Contrary to popular belief I don't think we are exactly in the *Nineteen Eighty-Four* universe. The danger is that we can see how [Orwell's] technologies that are [in] *Nineteen Eighty-Four* now seem unimaginative and quaint. […] Nowadays we've got webcams that go with us everywhere. We buy cellphones that are the equivalent of a network microphone that we carry around in our pockets with us voluntarily as we go from place to place and move about our lives.
>
> —Edward Snowden[134]

This July 2014 interview with Snowden further clarifies what he means by "worse than Orwellian" culture of surveillance—mentioned in the introduction. Here, Snowden expresses his concern for the everyday practices of surveillance, but also its *voluntary* aspects. Selfie-surveillance accents this voluntary quality, reinforcing the formation of a new subjectivity as a result of growing obsession with recording instruments, an example of which is the selfie phenomenon. The type of surveillance that, for instance, Facebook and Instagram are using is not limited to collecting data; more significantly, users assign controlled images-of-body to their selves. In addition, social networks have created spaces where people themselves are able to watch each other; in spite of the fact that there is a *report* option for every post and photo, people are also self-aware not to share any kind of data that they please as others will judge them. The images being normally shared are those of the fit, organised bodies. In Giroux's words, "the most dangerous repercussions of a near total loss of privacy involve more than the unwarranted collecting of information by the government. We must also be attentive to the ways in which

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[133] Henry A. Giroux, "Totalitarian Paranoia in the Post-Orwellian Surveillance State," *Cultural Studies* (2014): 6.

[134] Edward Snowden, "Edward Snowden Interview: The Edited Transcript," *The Guardian*, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/18/-sp-edward-snowden-nsa-whistleblower-interview-transcript

being spied on has become not only *normalized*, but even enticing."[135] Burroughs's formulation of control—as junk or an evil virus infecting the ego—challenges surveillance as an attractive, never-ending desire. He describes aspects of control society with his peculiar, esoteric religious perception, inviting the reader to face bare danger of controlling instruments. That is what "Naked Lunch" finally means, in Burroughs's own words: "The title means exactly what the words say: NAKED Lunch—a frozen moment when everyone sees what is on the end of every fork."[136]

That's me! Is this the first thought coming to one's mind when he/she is looking at his/her identification card, profile picture, or selfie? There might be a question prior to that, *Who/what is this?* The initial question has been omitted because of repetition. That's how junk works; it repeats the total need till it becomes normal. Identity is addictive. Perhaps we need to learn more from egoless children and mad schizophrenics in order to resist surveillance; going along with Foucault,

> Ruse and new triumph of madness: the world that thought to measure and justify madness through psychology must justify itself before madness, since in its struggles and agonies it measures itself by the excess of works like those of Nietzsche, of Van Gogh, of Artaud [and of Burroughs]. And nothing in itself, especially not what it can know of madness, assures the world that it is justified by such works of madness."[137]

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[135] Henry A. Giroux, "Totalitarian Paranoia in the Post-Orwellian Surveillance State," *Cultural Studies* (2014): 4.

[136] William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: the Resorted Text*, ed. James Grauerholz and Barry Miles (New York: Grove, 2001), 199.

[137] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 302.

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