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"On the Genealogy of Media" invokes a tradition for thinking about technology, which passes from Nietzsche through Heidegger and Freud. As a collection on media, however, these texts gathered together in this special issue include few Nietzsche readings—or even Nietzsche references—in their thread count. Indeed, Nietzsche is not typically considered a thinker of media technologies. But his genealogical interpretation of the Mass media as being on one uncanny continuum of valuation from Christianity to nihilism influenced, together with either Freud's or Heidegger's input, the media essays of Walter Benjamin as much as the media oeuvre of Friedrich Kittler. Following Nietzsche, then, a *genealogy* of media means, as in Heidegger's questioning of technicity, that whatever technology may be it presupposes assumption of a certain (discursive) ready positioning for (and before) its advent as actual machines to which the understanding of technologization cannot be reduced. Freudian psychoanalysis views media technologies as prosthetically modeled after body parts and partings. A primary relationship to loss (as the always-new frontier of mourning where reality, the future, the other begin or begin again) is, on Freud's turf and terms, the psychic ready position that is there before the event or advent of machinic externalities.

In "A Mathematics of Finitude" Friedrich Kittler generates genealogies of "progress" in science, mathematics, and media spanning centuries out of a single story by E. T. A. Hoffmann. Media machines are shown to intervene as makeshift stopgaps where the

ability to produce certain material effects is not yet theorized or understood. In Hoffmann's "Jesuit Church in G." a painter performs the heroic feat first of constructing perspective under technically difficult conditions. The semiround altar niche the painter has been commissioned to simulate cannot be caught in the right angles and lines of Renaissance perspective. The painter proceeds and succeeds by ignoring analytic geometry. He improvises with a technical medium where he would otherwise have required trigonometry and higher math. The painter sets up a torch with which he projects the shadow of the square grid onto his semicircular canvas on which he can fill in the dotted outline in perspective.

But when the narrator, who turns out to be a Romantic author, encourages the painter to serve a higher genre than architectural painting, which merely illustrates mathematics, the painter proposes in response a divine division of labor: God requires man for math just as man, even though himself machinelike, still requires the machine; man's purpose, moreover, is to be better at math than God or Satan. Against the reign of the subject's introduction into literature, which the narrator author champions, the painter replaces God, man, and animal with the trinity of God, man, and machine—and thus in effect introduces literature into the industrial age. But following the introduction of a working model, understanding nevertheless arrives after the fact, creating shifts in the discourse of mathematics and new gaps for media machines to fill. In Kittler's reading, the story skips the direct line from linear perspective to the machines of Hoffmann's age and goes directly to the computer. God, Devil, and man, all of the above, have by now been surpassed by the machine's mathematical *overskill.*

In *Book of Kings,* Klaus Theweleit charted the devastating effects of technology and group psychology on gender relationships. The woman must go, so that Orpheus, the artist-thinker, can renew his vows with his productivity over her dead body. Through the cabling system that thus gets laid, he keeps in teletouch with all the ghostly coordinates of his unstoppable line of production. *Book of Kings* also differentiated the sound bytes that cultural critics tend to broadcast on the basis of Benjamin's directive that fascism folds out of the "aestheticization of politics." Theweleit introduced instead the notion of "artist states" running parallel to the political states with which they must negotiate their own diplomatic status and immunity. Theweleit interrogated the psychosocial formations in artist states as models for the new native habitats of relations with new technologies. The prospect of future generations coming soon is not the immortality plan of choice for the artist. In states of art,

productivity, energy flow, and merger with the machine take over where reproduction, coupliﬁcation, and mourning were already left undone because outmoded.

In "Radio Nights," originally a section of *Book of Kings,* Theweleit interprets instances of catastrophe and concomitant installation of a new technical medium (together with its media czar). In the case of Juan Péron's rise to power, for example, Péron first rose to the occasion of catastrophe (a 1944 earthquake in San Juan, Argentina) by turning up the newest media technology (radio at that time in Argentina) full blast. Catastrophe, to be sure, creates momentary displacements. But when mediatization meets match and maker in catastrophe, the consequential relationship is turned around or internalized as one of preparedness. Péron succeeded at sustaining his emergency power surge via the mass medium of readiness by allying himself with the radio star Evita, whose continued existence, live or as corpse, stood surety for Péron's absolute rule.

In "Sublimation as Media," Craig Saper attends to the liminality of a concept that already as word lies disjunctively between noun and verb. In Freud's reading of the figure of Prometheus, the bequest of fire becomes technology's eternal flame only once the homosexual impulse to match the flames with streams of urine can be renounced. Thus, as Saper emphasizes, sublimation, as the midstream renunciation of the urge to piss on the fire, is about the by-production of smoke just as it would appear that in its sustained liminality as concept it produces its own smoke or clouds. Over and beyond its association with artistic activity, its duo dynamic and race with repression, sublimation is one of the stray leads media technology takes in Freud's science. But its disjunctive situation between celebration and mourning means that sublimation is mediated by the fragments, details, and digressions it would contain as concept. Like smoke and mirrors, these sublimation effects undermine the conceptualization of sublimation—as, for example, the common high ground for understanding creativity—with imitation, excess, trickery. In Saper's reading, sublimation is not only one of the placeholders for a psychoanalytic theory of media but also becomes the discursive hot spot where psychoanalysis and media have already met and crossed over.

While Saper takes Victor Tausk's reading of the delusional cinematograph in the case study of Natalija A. on an update not as hypnotic suggestion but as interactive influence, Gregory Ulmer in "Walden Choragraphy" balances the rise of new media with a commemorative inclusion of literacy. To mourn *Walden* means to remake it as its electronic version. Thoreau belonged to the

correspondence school of macrocosm and microcosm: anything and everything in and around Walden Pond could be turned into a device for exploring a value, a belief, a question. Ulmer's approach, derived thus from the inter-net of associations and questions that Thoreau could already cast out while remaining on location between his pond and the train line, opens up a relay of references to and through a wider world of free association. In Saper as in Ulmer the googly I of consumer eclecticism contains itself as computeracy.

Ulmer gives an account of a prosthetics of the unconscious that returns with computing to restore to thinking the spirit of place or locale. Ulmer's "choragraphy" refers to the sense of place Derrida derived from Plato's *Timaeus*—one that would admit being and becoming at once. What would also thus be admitted, and here lies Ulmer's investment, is a coming together of theory and practice. While the pages of literacy were formatted according to topos, computing's monitor screen, interface, virtual reality mechanisms press for a place of their own in chora. The electronic link, which goes from particular directly to particular rather than via the general, means that thinking no longer books passage through the various -ductions that the writing of passage established throughout the history of literacy. Affect and sensation rush back in from the edge of their page-old exclusion once the local thinking of a particular body finds support in front of the computer screen.

All media technologies of the day were engaged in the impossibility of Proust's memory search, which is at the same time the form of its possibility. In "Impressions: Proust, Photography, Trauma," Rebecca Comay reads the prints of hand and photograph in *Remembrance of Things Past* as twisting in the winding sheets of loss. Following Benjamin, Comay sees photography offer against the advertisement of the camera's supersavings for and through memory the counterevidence of shocks that extend all the way through life, even into the afterlife of mourning.

When the narrator visits his grandmother, he sees or foresees her reduction to a ghostly version of herself and, at the same time, his own absence. This self-omission in the face of the other's departure coming soon meets the uncanniness of photography more than halfway. The narrator's role is that of a photographer summoned to take pictures of places no one will ever see again. Indeed, the process of proleptic mourning whereby he counted himself out, as seen on the visit with his grandmother, was, the narrator concludes, already a photograph. When the narrator revisits this photographic scene in the absence of his grandmother, who,

in the interim, is gone, the death wish does not so much fulfill as exceed itself. While undressing for the night, he finds he has taken his grandmother's place: in this place it was she who would get him ready for bed. The narrator stumbles across a retraumatizing relay of substitutions right at the most intimate moment of self-proximity. The moment in passing cannot be internalized in memory. Instead the self finds itself an empty apparatus, wherein loss keeps getting lost.

By following out Philip K. Dick's famous android test through a relay of texts in which the mediatic reception in psychosis as in our relationship to the animal is, as rehearsal or repetition, put to this test, "Half Life" rereads Freud's notion of reality testing as the very work of mourning to which, in theory, he assigns it as auxiliary support. In the course of mourning, the ego revisits all the scenes in which the relationship to the object was happening. But even as the ego reality-checks out the scenes as blank, the relationship to the lost object is at the same time extended. In time the decision, which at the start of mourning is so pressing, whether to join the departed or turn away and affirm one's own survival, need no longer be made. Reality testing opens the frontier of "loss reality." Both parties to the loss can be conceived, along the lines of Dick's science fictions, as each losing and remembering the other, as each lost to the other, whose memory each keeps and is.

In the closing three contributions we are presented close readings of the genealogy of media in Nietzsche—as the background for his highest thoughts, as the context for his declaration of future wars of transvaluation, and as the call he took for revalorization of "technology" in the opening up of its testing sites. In "On the Future of Our Incorporations," Barbara Stiegler discovers in Nietzsche the diagnosis of all the ill effects coming our way when media influence understood and applied as extension cord of the nervous system undermines spontaneity, empathy, and digestion. In lieu of the existing metabolism of adaptation, Nietzsche called for incorporation of flux. Flesh slows down the flux, which accumulates and organizes itself in the flesh. Only thus can the surging of events become possible. Media require a certain slowness that only the incorporation of the flux in flesh—in the mode of Eternal Recurrence—can provide. Hence the importance of music for Nietzsche: it is the slow-mo medium through which we first learn to love the things we love. But is this recasting call of media as new organs of incorporation descriptive or prescriptive? The catastrophe of Wagner in Nietzsche's thought makes this undecidable as issue or delegation.

In "Zarathustran Bird Wars," Tom Cohen takes the reading of Nietzsche's genealogy of media to the movies, also because that's where Wagner's total work of art went when it died as opera. For a post-global era Cohen conceives a countergenealogy that challenges the notion of media as lying between. He turns to Hitchcock, for whom the film medium was on one continuum with buzz and nuclear bombs. But these bombs are not split off from their destructiveness and projected into the dread future: they've already exploded and the era we've lent them lies in pieces, which are in turn destructive or toxic. As the nth strike in retaliation against a prior dose of annihilation, Cohen dedicates his essay to the bird war effort pitching prehistorical technemes and animemes against the auratic community of earth-eviscerating humans.

In "Nietzsche Loves You," Avital Ronell catches "the test drive," her postulation of the plain test of modern philosophical and/or scientific inquiry, in acts of love between endurance and low-fidelity improvisation. Love is how we test ourselves: in turn, it is the excess or "narcissism" of love itself that drives the experimental disposition beyond its assumed goals. Since it is not clear that something is known until there is a test for it, it proves to be the nature of testing to be ongoing indefinitely. But when Nietzsche recognizes the heady interminability of testing as incarnated in the "American," identified as the one who believes that he can play any role, he heads himself off at the impasse between being on location with experimentation and the dire exile of improv nightmare. We are left, then, with ambivalence as the personal trace arising when the test site, proving uncontainable, makes ethical demands.