AN UNRULY WORLD?
Globalization, Governance and Geography

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GLOBAL FLOWMATIONS, LOCAL FUNDAMENTALISMS, AND FAST GEOPOLITICS

“America” in an accelerating world order

*Timothy W. Luke and Gearóid Ó Tuathail*

The optimistic future will necessitate accepting the possibilities inherent in our emerging technologies and accelerating the transition to a high technology, information based economy.

(Newt Gingrich 1984: 1)

The men who stood at Lexington and at Concord Bridge, at Bunker Hill and Saratoga, they gave all they had, that the land they loved might be a free, independent, sovereign nation. Yet, today, our birthright of sovereignty, purchased with the blood of patriots, is being traded away for foreign money, handed over to faceless foreign bureaucrats at places like the IMF, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and the U.N.

(Patrick Buchanan 1995: 461)

The central event of the 20th century is the overthrow of matter.

(Dyson et al. 1994: 26)

One decisive consequence of the ever-increasing levels of globalization and informationalization of everyday life in the developed world during the last decade is the growing disorientation in many people’s sense of place. The traditional fixed statics of space are becoming eclipsed by a new fluid dynamics of pace. Whether one labels it “McWorld” (Barber 1995), “time-space compression” (Harvey 1989), or “fast capitalism” (Agger 1989), the condition of the contemporary world order, as Paul Virilio (1986) suggests, is one of “chrono-politics” in which the power of pace is outstripping the value of place. Consequently, geographies are increasingly dimensionalized by speed not territory. Speed rules over every aspect of life now being revolutionized by the acceleration of a “dromocratic revolution” (Virilio and Lotringer 1983). Therefore, the rules set for, of, and by, speed are assuming greater potency in late twentieth-century discourse about geography, globalization and governmentality, rendering old codes grounded in the frozen fixities of realist territoriality more and more “unruly.” These effects are global in their scope and impact, even though their influence is not yet clearly understood.

In this chapter we seek to describe, using the United States as an example, an increasingly pervasive and contentious political struggle between a “discourse of pace” linked, on the one hand, to accelerating transitions, speeding flows, overcoming resistances, eliminating frictions, and engineering the kinematics of globalization, and, on the other hand, a “discourse of place” centered upon solidifying porous borders, bolstering breached containments, arresting eroded identities, and revitalizing faded essences. In outlining this dromopolitical struggle, we argue that geopolitics is undergoing a critical re-conceptualization in the late twentieth century. Coined as a concept at the beginning of the twentieth century by Rudolf Kjellen, our inherited geopolitical imaginations have usually had the fixities of territorial matter (heartlands, rimlands, sovereign states, Soviet bloc, Western bloc, etc.) at their center (Shapiro 1994). As we approach the twenty-first century, the emergent geopoetic imaginations of our globalizing culture have the speed and fluidity swirling through global flows as their register. Federal Express with its world-wide just-in-time delivery apparatus now tells all of its customers “It’s the Way the World Works.” This sort of claim underpins Paul Virilio’s (1995: 23) suggestion “since movement creates the event, the real is kinematic.” This emergent imagination of pace is what we term “fast geopolitics,” and we strive to develop a critical appreciation of how it works.

Our appreciation of the kinematics of geopolitics holds that the current velocity, volume and density of global events is generating cohesive structures of patterned movement on a world-wide scale, or kiniformations, which we want to analyze through the notion of *global flowmations* as structured events flowing in-formation under high-speed acceleration. The discourses and practices of global flows, as Fed Ex asserts, are already a pervasive part of our hyperreal commercial culture (Luke forthcoming). IBM promises solutions for a small planet while UPS, moving at the speed of business, reminds us that it delivers a package somewhere across any of 200 countries it serves every 0.008 seconds with pinpoint accuracy. Microsoft offers us the borderless world of the Internet, asking us where we want to go today, while Reebok proclaims “On Planet Reebok, there are no Boundaries.” Whether projected as McWorld or MacWorld, Planet Reebok or Marlboro Country, the advertising cant of transnational corporate capital discloses the outlines of many fluid geographical imaginations that are self-consciously ecumenical and relentlessly dromological as hyperactive in-formations of people’s wants and needs. Realizing a truly global reach and ever-building pace appears to be the manifest destiny of contemporary transnational corporate capitalism’s latent velocity.
Manifest destinies, however, are fabricated, not fated. Far from being inevitable and natural, the process of globalization has a multiplicity of possible interpretations (Mittelman 1996). Within the United States in recent years, a wide range of intellectual toots for neoliberal globalization have projected an image of transnational liberalism as an unstoppable revolution that will inaugurate a borderless world of frictionless, superconductive capitalism (Agnew and Corbridge 1995). In the first part of this chapter, we provide a review of this increasingly pervasive discourse of the dromo-intellectuals who are championing the values of a dromo-globalism. Among the figures considered here are management gurus associated with McKinsey and Company Consultants, William Gates, CEO of Microsoft Corporation, and Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House in the US Congress. All of them are prophets of the revolutionary acceleration that is remaking our present understandings of space and sovereignty, territory and strategic power, community and national identity.

Just how identities and populations are being remade by global consumption is the focus of the second part of the chapter. Here we explore how governmentalities, an arrangement of order and a specification of population that historically became institutionalized within sovereign states, has gone global as the global flowmotions of transnational corporate capitalism re-master the order of things and respectivity population in terms of consumption codes, behaviors and patterns, thus placing more traditional national identity-assemble processes in jeopardy.

In the third part of this chapter, we explore the emergent resistances to the flow motions of space effected by transnational corporate capitalism and celebrated by dromo-intellectuals. Such negative resistances provide one of the more instructive indicators of the embeddedness of global flowmotions in any particular national setting. In the American context, the rhetoric of Pat Buchanan, the infamous co-host of CNN’s gladiatorial soundbite politics program Crossfire and 1992 and 1996 candidate for US President, clearly affords a rich, and quite recent, crystallization of localized angers, regionalized animosities, and nationalized anxieties about the cross-cutting intrusiveness of global flowmotions inside of a once wholly hegemonic nation-state; we cast this ideology of “Buchananism” as a much more generic global phenomenon. Indeed, it is only one of many different fundamentalist attempts to re-contain and re-essentialize a dissipating/dissolving vision of embedded nationality, like Buchanan’s “America,” in the flows of a high-velocity global capitalist superconductivity.

As Rifkin notes, superconductive capitalism is dividing America between “the new cosmopolitans,” or the new “knowledge class” whose incomes have increased substantially since the late 1960s, and “the other America,” or the growing numbers of working poor caught in dead-end, low-paying jobs, if they work at all (Rifkin 1995: 172–80). Between them, Rifkin sees a declining middle class which now constitutes 63 percent of the nation’s population, down from 71 percent in 1969 (1995: 172). Buchananism plays upon these divisive trends. By reexamining Buchanan’s ideological critique of transnational liberalism, a critique that echoes a long-standing neo-isolationism (Tucker 1972) and “paranoid style” in American political life (Hoefstadter 1965), we snap a picture. This image reveals not only the brave new world of mostly corporate transnational flowmations that is recalibrating the terms of global exchange, but it also freezes a frame of the vertical vertigo with its attendant sense of depletion that rapid globalization has engendered in the United States. While Buchananism appears once again to have passed, the material circumstances that gave rise to it in 1992 and 1996 have not. Electronic populist formations like Buchananism, which were anticipated by Goldwater in the 1960s or Reagan in the 1970s and 1980s, are likely to be a persistent feature of American political life well into the next century.

**“ACCELERATING THE TRANSITION”: A FLOWMATIONALIZED WORLD**

David Harvey has argued that “in money economies in general, and capitalist society in particular, the intersecting command of money, time and space forms a substantial nexus of social power that we cannot afford to ignore” (1989: 226). The power to define classes and institutions, which will redefine “efficient spatial organization” and “socially necessary turnover,” is what establishes the fundamental norms in capitalist societies that labor and capital fiercely contest. Geographers like Harvey tend to emphasize class struggles over time management, capital valorization, and labor speed-up at the point of production. Paul Virilio, on the other hand, interprets the history and geography of modernization in general as a question of speed and politics (Virilio 1986). For him, the Industrial Revolution was a “dramocratic revolution” because what was invented was not only the possibility of mass producing commodities, but, more importantly, the means of moving at greater speeds with the steam engine and then the combustion engine. With widespread motorization, society moved from the age of the brakes to the age of the accelerator. Power came to be invested in acceleration itself (Virilio and Lorritinger 1983: 45).

While not frequently noted, the very idea of acceleration is deeply engrained in capitalist modernity’s categories of change, progress and development (Kern 1983). Modernization implicitly has always suggested something like bringing the means of mobilization, acceleration and intensification to the ends only realized by traditional practices and paces. As imagined by Rostow, for example, using his famous flight metaphors, modernization is the aerodynamicization of flightless geostatic traditionalism; development volatilizes inert matter, channels its launch as fluidized energy, and then takes-off down the runways of global exchange. Conceptualizing the prerequisites of development as aerodynamic imagining,
leaders must find the mobilizational, the fluidized, the flyable components of an economy and society suitable for dromological acceleration. Plotting the national take-off for sustainable development shifts agency to movement, structure to flight as economic propellers and political controls provide the thrust and guidance to lift fixed static national populations into fluid dynamic flows of global technoscientific traffic. Sustaining the flight of development after the take-off requires countries to head directly into the flows of turbocharged global capitalism.

Over the last few decades, the dromological designs long implicit within such visions of capitalist modernization and development have become far more explicit and overt as the processes of globalization and information-alization have deepened and intensified. In the late twentieth century, the shortest runway to sustained developmental flight now is, according to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to be found by dismantling traditional statist barriers and launching one’s economy into the global commercial flows. Globalization is conceptualized as an inevitable leap into friction-free flows of commodities, capital, corporations, communication, and consumers all over the world. All that was once solid melts into air so that the (dis)placed particles of this engineered ectoplasm can mix and match amidst all of the other fluidized particularities speeding along in these universalized flows. Eroding away fixed in-stated places into fluid un-stated spaces now preoccupies the neoliberal managers of globalizing enterprises and their dromo-intellectual celebrants. Space should no longer be mastered by inefficient, bureaucratic, flow-resistant states; rather, space and place should be envisaged as flow-friendly ports of access and conduits of circulation through which everyone will tap into the global economy. Strictly ruled spaces come undone in the unruly rush of flow motions. Places are conceptualized in terms of their ability to accelerate or hinder the exchanges of global flowsmation. The ideology of dromo-globalism, then, reimagines space not as fixed masses of territory, but rather as a velocidrome, with high traffic speedways, big band-width connectivities, or dynamic web configurations in a worldwide network of massively parallel kinemations.

This emergent ideology of dromo-globalism finds widespread expression in the work of academics, management consultants and popular intellectuals as well as in political life. Dromo-globalism represents globalization and information-alization as an inevitable and powerful fluidizing force, which now is actively rearranging the maps and meanings of modernity. Capturing these forces and putting them to use is now, as Reich (1991) claims, “the work of nations.” The manifest destiny of globalization is to (un)make the world. It has a telos, an irrepressible logic that is transforming the very essence of things. One of the most popular expressions of this style of reasoning is found in the work of Alvin and Heidi Toffler who argue that humanity is caught between the crests of a profound transformation from a Second Wave industrial civilization to a Third Wave informational civilization (Toffler 1980). Devotees of hype and hyperbole, the Tofflers argue that humanity “faces the deepest social upheaval and creative restructuring of all time,” because change is accelerating at a remarkable pace.

The First Wave of change – the agricultural revolution – took thousands of years to play itself out. The Second Wave – the rise of industrial civilization – took a mere three hundred years. Today history is ever more accelerating, and it is likely that the Third Wave will sweep across history and complete itself in a few decades. (Toffler and Toffler 1995: 19)

The Tofflerite thesis is a popular, grab-bag amalgamation of observations and arguments about technologically driven change in the late twentieth century. Still, it has become significant politically inasmuch as their expansive polyglot of ideas enters political argot as a shorthand means to reduce the heterogeneity of vast struggles over the shape of the future to a simple and inevitable macro-spatial/macro-historical shift from an old (Second Wave) to a new (Third Wave) civilization. The indeterminacy and uncertainty of change is reduced to a comprehensible “big picture” of a future that offers unlimited opportunities and possibilities as well as serious threats and dangers. The fittest and the fastest, however, will live long and prosper.

Speaker of the House in the US Congress, Representative Newt Gingrich (R-Georgia) adopted the Tofflerite story as part of his campaign to reenergize the Republican Party with a new ideological agenda after George Bush’s defeat in the 1992 presidential election. Gingrich described The Third Wave as “one of the seminal works of our time,” and appropriated its narratives of a coming Third Wave information age to anchor his self-described “revolutionary” agenda of aggressive deregulation in the name of reasserting and renewing American civilization (Gingrich 1995). Gingrich helped establish the Progress and Freedom Foundation as a think-tank to foster and promote neoliberal visions of the coming informational society, what it terms “a positive vision of the future founded in the historic principles of the American idea.” Sponsoring libertarian (not radical) cyberintellectuals and conferences, the Foundation helped launch an informational qua knowledge age “magna carta” by Esther Dyson, George Gilder, Jay Keyworth and Alvin Toffler (1994). This document boldly begins by proclaiming that “the central event of the 20th century is the overthrow of matter.” Echoing the rhetoric of another think-tank, the Electronic Frontier Foundation (headed by Esther Dyson), they argue that cyberspace is the bioelectronic frontier of the future, the land of knowledge the exploration of which “can be civilization’s truest, highest calling” (Dyson et al. 1994: 28). Turning the civilization of mass-production inside out, new information technologies are “demassifying” existent institutions and culture. “Accelerating demassification creates the potential for vastly increased human freedom” (ibid.: 28). Caught between a dying Second Wave civilization and
an emergent Third Wave civilization “thundering to take its place,” the great threat to progress is that governments (“the last great redoubt of bureaucratic power on the face of the planet”; ibid.: 28) will strive to apply “Second Wave modus operandi to the fast-moving, decentralized creatures of the Third Wave” (ibid.: 33). If there is to be an industrial policy for the knowledge age, they conclude, “it should focus on removing barriers to competition and massively deregulating the fast-growing telecommunications and computing industries” (ibid.: 33).

In 1994, the Progress and Freedom Foundation published a booklet distilling the essence of the Tofflers’ ideas: Creating a New Civilization: The Politics of the Third Wave. Soon, the discourses of the Third Wave found their way into the focus-group tested Republican “Contract with America” in 1994, while the book itself appeared on a “reading list” Gingrich recommended to members of Congress and the nation. What is truly striking about Gingrich’s Third Waving is that it is the antithesis of traditional conservatism. As E.J. Dionne (1996: 202) notes, “Gingrich’s goal is not to avoid change, but to speed it up.” “Accelerating the transition” is Gingrich’s mantra. To him, “there will be enormous advantages for America and Americans if we lead the world in the transition to the Third Wave Information Age” (1995: 63).

Just as Great Britain rode the Second Wave to world power, so America can surf the on the Third Wave to tremendous profits if it bravely ventures forth on the turbulent flows of change:

The rhythm of the Third Wave Information Age will be a bit like rafting down the rapids after we have learned to canoe on a quiet lake. Although rafting may be more difficult or dangerous, the skills and conventions are essentially the same. Once we get adjusted, it can even be exhilarating.

(Gingrich 1995: 63)

Despite the frequently reiterated theme of inevitability in global informationization, the struggle against those that would resist dromo-globalism is an ongoing one. As Dionne observes, Gingrich’s most vehement criticism of liberals focuses not upon the supposedly radical or revolutionary tendencies of their credo but rather upon their entrenched resistance to change. All “leftists,” for Gingrich, are techno-phobes and neo-Luddites, labor unions are the equivalent of medieval guilds whose power to arrest change must be broken, and the welfare state is an outdated brake on “the opportunity society” laying latent in global flows: all of them must be dismantled in order to unleash the energies of Third Wave capitalism.

More generally, Gingrich sees America at a crossroads, one path leads to a vibrant, entrepreneurial, future-oriented technological society of cybernetic opportunity, while the other leads to a stagnant, bureaucratic, and risk-averse society of centrally planned big government. Speeding up the transition to the former by deregulating, dismantling and downsizing any and all

resistances to Third Wave informationalism is Gingrich’s goal, because national salvation lies in acceleration.

The works of former McKinsey management consultant, Kenichi Ohmae, are another example of dromo-globalist discourse. In his 1991 book, The Borderless World, Ohmae proclaimed that the world of discrete national economies is over. In the new borderless world of contemporary capitalism, corporations need to restructure themselves, avoiding both the “China mentality” (thinking of oneself as the center of the universe) and “headquarters mentality” (being rooted in one nation) for success in the global marketplace. Mother-country identity at fixed sites gives way to corporate identity set by flow motions. Country of origin and location of headquarters does not matter anymore. No longer rooted in national space, the genuinely global corporation is a transnational amoeba-like network whose very formlessness is its organizational strength. “Once you begin to see the world as a superstructure above and regions below,” Ohmae claims, “the only troublesome part is the unit in between – this thing called the nation-state . . . It’s also a unit that is obsolete. For economic purposes, nation-states have become unnatural, even dysfunctional” (cited in Taylor and Weber 1996: 52).

(On the issue of Ohmae, is the most rational and desirable form of global order. The state apparatus should do nothing to retard global flows; it should instead serve as an accelerator, changing

so as to: allow individuals access to the best and cheapest goods and services from anywhere in the world; help corporations provide stable and rewarding jobs anywhere in the world regardless of the corporation’s national identity; coordinate activities with other governments to minimize conflicts arising from narrow interests; avoid abrupt changes in economic and social fundamentals.)

(Ohmae 1990: 216–17)

Here, once again, speed and ease of access by people to things or things to people in “opportunity societies” is what drives the imagining of flow mobilized development.

In a subsequent book, The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies (1995), Ohmae stresses the obsolescence of nation-states as “building-block concepts appropriate to a 19th century, closed-country model of the world that no longer holds” (1995: viii). Though “public debate may be still hostage to the outdated vocabulary of political borders,” the nation-state is “increasingly a nostalgic fiction” (ibid.: 8, 12). Fixed lines on maps no longer provide any meaningful guide to the new (b)orderless world of global flows. The flowmations of industry, investment, individuals and information (the global “Ts”) have been eroding nation-states, and now leave the world political map as a “cartographic illusion.” Beyond such illusions, the “real” for Ohmae can be found in kinematic “region-states” – discrete geographical units like northern Italy, Wales, Singapore, New Zealand, the
Tokyo region, Hong Kong/Guangzhou. “In a borderless world, these are the natural economic zones” (ibid.: 80). What makes these regions significant is their fluid and flexible abilities to port into the flows of global commerce. They “sidestep the bunting and hoopla of sovereignty in return for the ability to harness the global 1’s to their own needs” (ibid.: 81). In welcoming foreign investment and providing a deregulated environment for business, these region-states “make such effective ports of entry to the global economy because the very characteristics that define them are shaped by the demands of that economy” (ibid.: 89).

Ohmae’s region-states are more hyperreal than real, more sites of neoliberal fantasies than alternative geopolitical spaces (the only thing his region-states have in common is his and their efforts to sell them as “hot” new growth regions in the global economy). Yet, the geopolitical imagination revealed by his concept of region-states is significant. Space is best when it is un-mastered by some ruling national center, and states are best when they are small, dynamic, flexible or open, not large, bureaucratic, central and closed. Those spaces/states that succeed are those that go with the (global) flows. As Ohmae concludes, globalized corporations “will simply choose to avoid bad governments. Governments will no longer be able to decide which companies and industries to favor. Companies will decide where to locate and which government they will work with” (cited in Taylor and Weber 1996: 59).

The implicit equivalence between fitness and floness finds its most striking expression in Ohmae’s (1995) medicalization of the current geopolitical order of fixed nation-states. Nation-states, he argues, “are political organisms, and in their economic bloodstreams cholesterol steadily builds up. Over time, arteries harden and the organism’s vitality decays.” The only alternative “that central governments have to counter this remorseless buildup of economic cholesterol, the only one legitimate instrument of policy to restore sustainable and self-reinforcing vitality” is for them to “cede meaningful operational autonomy to the wealth-generating region states that lie within or across their borders, to catalyze the efforts of those region states to seek out global solutions, and to harness their distinctive ability to put global logic first and to function as ports of entry to the global economy” (ibid.: 142).

This vision of places as portals of for global flowmatizations is given a more vivid expression by two McKinsey colleagues of Ohmae: Lowell Bryan and Diane Farrell (1996). They argue that the global capital revolution – the ongoing and still far from complete globalization of foreign exchange markets, bonds and equities – is creating a tidal wave of global commerce that will refashion the landscape of states and markets well into the twenty-first century. This revolution is serving as a catalyst in the rapid acceleration of all forms of globalization, from production to telecommunications to labor and education. “Economies will now be superconductors of the vast flows of capital and transfer of techniques of production” (Bryan and Farrell 1996: 7). Unlike the past when change was slow and evolutionary, the pace of future change is likely to be discontinuous (or, as Lester Thurow (1996: 11) argues, one of “punctuated equilibrium” when “ideologies and technologies, old and new, do not match”). The “bound market” of the Bretton Woods system of pegged exchange rate has been unleashed by deregulation, technology and, most of all, the relentless pursuit of profits by traders and investors. The market is becoming global because it is so profitable for participants in the market to take actions that severely undermine national regulations and local barriers to globalization (Bryan and Farrell 1996: 38).

The transformations that are being wrought by globalizing capital markets are likened by Bryan and Farrell to transformations in states of matter. They posit a condition of “absolute zero” when the global capital market will become a fully integrated, perfect, frictionless, worldwide exchange. At this point, resistance to all flows disappears and a condition of superconductivity is realized.

What the global capital market is doing as it becomes more efficient, or as it approaches absolute zero, is facilitating the emergence of those discontinuous conditions required for economic superconductivity (ibid.: 153). Sovereign states as states of fixed territorial matter will vary in “their ability to conduct a flow of new techniques of production.” States in general are sources of resistance to flowmatization qua superconductivity. Nevertheless, Bryan and Farrell argue that power lies with the accelerating flows not territorial fixity:

As the global capital market grows in size and power, and as capital mobility speeds up, the resistance to the flow of techniques of production will decrease. Suddenly, the profit drive that is unleashing global capitalism will create changes so rapidly in country after country that the process will no longer be evolutionary, but instead will be discontinuous and the entire local economy will abruptly begin to work differently.

(Bryan and Farrell 1996: 155)

Representing the development of global capital markets as an unfolding of a physics problem about states of physical matter not only lends the process an objective inevitability, but also creates a vivid set of policy imperatives with an apparent scientific logic. In order to succeed in a world where capital markets are working towards absolute zero, states must reduce all resistance to the global market, like “onerous labor regulations” and “entitlements,” and become superconductors. “As more and more countries become superconductors, pressure will be increased on those countries who resist” (ibid.: 165). Global capital markets are weakening government control and state sovereignty, but political authorities should simply accept this: “stop worrying and learn to love the market” (ibid.: 250–3).

Not to be outdone in the contest to imagine “the road ahead” for those who love markets in search of global commerce, Microsoft Corporation’s
Chairman and CEO, William H. Gates III, articulated (along with two associates, Nathan Myhrvold and Peter Rinearson) a vision of “friction-free capitalism” as the essence of global flowmationalization in his combination 1995 book/CD-ROM, The Road Ahead. Indeed, this book documents Bill Gates’s uniquely entwined life-long love for markets and computers. He first used the term “information age,” to refer to his early work, which created a new medium for exchange (ibid.: 20). Gates devoted his life to building this new period of history—a time in which “the new materials men used to make their tools and weapons” (ibid.: 20) would be forged out of digitalized information. Once the transition is made to a world built out of information, “anyone with access and a personal computer [preferably connected into Microsoft Network and loaded with Microsoft applications] can instantaneously recall, compare and refresh it” (ibid.: 21) in the reproduction of these global flows.

In many ways, the global information superhighways will not lead to a Third Wave information society; they will become its sine qua non as Gates commands the reader to do this little mental maneuver: “When you hear the phrase ‘information highway,’ rather than seeing a road, imagine a marketplace or exchange... digital information of all kinds, not just as money, will be the new medium of exchange in this market” (ibid.: 6). Most importantly, as Ohmae argues, the digitalization of everyday life within global flowmations “promises to make nations more alike and reduce the importance of national boundaries” (ibid.: 262). As digitalized computing displaces built environments, fixed work sites, and traditional homes, these dedicated tunneling through the clouds of big bandwidth switches will provide “a place in our everyday lives because they not only offer convenience and save labor, they can also inspire us to new creative heights” (ibid.: 7).

They clearly have inspired Gates to new creative heights, transforming him in the process into the $17 Billion Dollar Man—the world’s richest person. As Gates sees the Third Wave breaking up all existing social formations, he can hardly wait for “this tomorrow, and I’m doing what I can to help make it happen” (ibid.: 7). What “it” is, of course, is the global flowmations’ friction-free capitalism being beamed as a digitalized worldsystem into every last little surviving space of the everyday lifeworld through the Windows of Microsoft. There will be trillions to be made out of accelerating this transition. As Gates sees the world’s coming digital flowmations, the global information market will be huge and will combine all the various ways human goods, services and ideas are exchanged. On a practical level, this will give you broader choices about most things, including how you earn and invest, what you buy and how much you pay for it, who your friends are and how you spend your time with them, and where and how securely you and your family live. Your workplace and your idea of what it means to be “educated” will be transformed, perhaps almost beyond recognition. Your identity, of who you are and where you belong, may open up considerably. In short, just about everything will be done differently.

(Gates 1995: 6–7)

Given this range of (b)orderless possibilities, “at Microsoft,” and in keeping with the kinematics of flowmationalization, “we’re working hard to figure out how to evolve from where we are today to the point where we can unleash the full potential of the new advances in technology. These are exciting times...” (ibid.: 19). Under this horizon, Gates envisions us not to worry about heading out on the information superhighway; these are exciting times and we only need learn to enjoy everything that friction-free capitalism will unleash to help us realize our full superconductive potentials.

Learning to love the market is, of course, the global mantra of neoliberal ideologies. None the less, the accelerating flow motions they describe are already provoking acute chrono-political struggles in the developed world and elsewhere. Struggles over labor conditions, the welfare system and working time are at the heart of politics in the developed world (Aronowitz and DiFazio 1994; Castells 1996; Gans 1995; Gordon 1996). While many devotees of fast capitalism see informationalization creating a friction-free capitalism, Jeremy Rifkin sees this new era in world history as “one in which fewer and fewer workers will be needed to provide the goods and services of the global population,” but this transnational peristrieka of productive capital is taking “a drastic toll on the lives of millions of workers” (Rifkin 1995: xvi–xvii). On the one hand, the acceleration of global exchange will lead to “growing numbers of permanently displaced workers who have little hope and even fewer prospects for meaningful employment” (ibid.: viii); while, on the other hand, those who hang on to their jobs must endure greater frictions, a tighter time-squeeze, and systematically imposed overwork as downsizing, retrenchment, and kanban engineering turn workers into “overworked” superconductors of capital (Schor 1992: 1–16; New York Times 1996).

The typical site of everyday life in an informationalized global marketplace is becoming not a friction-free leisure resort, but rather a terminal destination for widespread karoshi. When long hard work delivers a satisfying standard of living, many ordinary people tolerate its rigors. In the past-1973 era, however, Schor and Rifkin highlight how often and completely overwork not only has not satisfied workers, it actually has been attended by rapidly eroding standards of living. Amidst superconductive capitalism, Buchananists in America are those being burned by friction-free exchange at both the top and the bottom of the social hierarchy. As one supporter in Arizona put it, “two people, the man and wife, are both out
GLOBAL FLOWMATIONS AND GOVERNMENTALITY

Foucault’s exposition of capitalist modernization in early modern Europe centers upon the concept of governmentality which he defines as “the right disposition of things, arranged so as to lead to a convenient end” (Foucault 1991: 93). Governmentality embraces much more than what we commonly understand as government; it ranges from the government of the self to the government of vast territorial spaces. Foucault is particularly interested in devices of governmentality: how they are developed, what ends they are serving, which structures are implicated in applying them. According to his account, power disembodies people from the enduring persistence of localistic traditions and reconfigures them as individual integers of abstract compounded populations in bringing about the “governmentalization of the state” (ibid.: 103).

If we are, in Ohmae’s terms, at the end of the nation-state or, in the imagination of corporate capital, we now live on Planet Reebok where there are no boundaries, then we must rethink how governmentality works without, or, at least, with much weaker, national sovereigns. Perhaps the imperial corporations Barnett and Cavanagh (1994) describe are generating their own consumption-driven devices of governmentality at a global scale. Nowadays, after all, there are multiple centers of biopower generation intent upon fixing their own equilibria of energy and motion in “the right disposition of things, arranged so as to lead to a convenient end.” Global flowmations no longer need to ground their sense of right disposition, convenient ends or even things as such in narrow national terms. For example, the Gillette Corporation’s chair, Alfred M. Zeien, claims that his firm does not “find foreign countries foreign”; and, as a result, it does not “tailor products to any marketplace, but treats all marketplaces the same” (Uchitelle 1994).

This move to tailor marketplaces to products as fast as tastes change, or can be changed, is the dromocracy of global flows.

For Barnett and Cavanagh “[t]he planet is not turning into a single global village but into a highly segmented cluster of consumers sharing a common lifestyle despite being separated by great distances” (1994: 178). Affluent teenagers, whether they be in New Delhi, New York, Tokyo, Caracas or Cape Town, are the geodemographically determined targets for fast lane consumption of fashion and film, music and video in perpetual turnover by corporations like Time/Warner, Sony or Phillips (Goss 1995). Connected consumers from Rio to Rotterdam, Melbourne to Moscow can all join and benefit from the dromocracy of global flows offered by Toyota, American Express and Nike if they have the means. No longer is there a territorial North and South: “There is a Global North that now embraces city blocks and affluent suburbs in and around Manila, Mexico City, Santiago, and Nairobi, and there is a Global South that now claims stretches of Los Angeles, Chicago, and Hartford” (Barnett and Cavanagh 1994: 384).

Transnational businesses, media groups, crime syndicates, and ideological blocs all are feeding these de-stabilized tendencies toward governmentality at a global scale by each advancing their own polyglot imaginations of convenience in seeking extraterritorial ends out of the right disposition of things. The pluralization of global populations “as a datum, as a field of intervention, and as an object of governmental techniques” (Foucault 1991: 102) is the basis of this transnational corporate governmentality. The kiniformations of commodities merge as part and parcel with major dromocratic shifts which no longer “isolate the economy as a specific sector of reality” (ibid.: 102) but, rather, generalize economics as the universal totality of the real. And, once these flowing disruptions get launched, the world’s populations get deported from their Hometowns, Homelands, Homeworlds to the flowmations of Nike Towns, Disneylands, and MacWorlds. There, deterritorialized fast capitalist agencies, and not territorialized nation-states, increasingly generate the discourses and/or delights needed “to manage a population” – not only as a “collective mass of phenomena, the level of its aggregate effects,” but also “the management of population in its depths and details” (ibid.: 102). Flowmationally focused groups, in turn, become group foci for flowmations. High standards of living require living up to the high standards in the flow. High consumption clusters judge their success more often by the goods and services shared by others in the “successful fifth” (Reich: 1991) that also have, rather than the “failed fourths” who, while they are still perhaps your fellow citizens, are no longer your co-accelerants riding the fast capitalist tracks in polyglot global flowmations.

These changes also might be seen in terms of conjoined crises of decollectivization/recollectivization. The modern industrial nation-state represents only one type of social formation in which collectives, or, as Latour (1993: 4) describes them, “associations of humans and nonhumans,” are ordered into centered/stable regimes of discourse and practice. “All collectives,” Latour asserts, “are different from one another in the way they divide up beings, in the mobilization they consider acceptable” (1993: 107). Clearly, there are different types of collectives, and the modern industrial nation-state has been a remarkably resilient and strangely successful mode of collectivization for over three hundred years despite its propensities for practicing internal and external war (Luke 1995). Even now, many observers doubt its prospects for continued long-term survival because so many modern ideologies and economies remain centered within its systems of agency.
and structure. This too is not surprising. After all, as Latour notes, "no one has ever heard of a collective that did not mobilize heaven and earth in its composition, along with bodies and souls, property and law, gods and ancestors, powers and beliefs, beasts and fictitious beings" (1993: 107).

To question the viability of the national in-stated-ness of everyday life-worlds rooted in modernist industrialism, then, is to challenge not only the conjunctural conditions of how humans and nonhumans associate, but also the geographic ontologies they mobilize to survive. Not too surprisingly, the local fundamentalist's defense of the older national-statal collective darkly invokes all of its xenophobic powers and beliefs as it toasts the enduring truths of blood and soil. And, in counterpoint, global neoliberalists sing their praises of the marketplace to create a seamless Worldwide Web of exchange so that anybody anytime can associate themselves with IBM-things and find mutually satisfying "solutions for a small planet." This now is one of the key conflicts in all advanced economies.

One collective imagines applying the brake to keep its dollars and people contained at home, while the other dreams of accelerating them outward in the flows. Buchanan's campaign was pitched to exploit all of those key cleavages in American electoral politics that have framed the basic conflicts of the post-Second World War era, because they are inter- collective frictions dividing intra-national populations. As Ferguson and Rogers observe, the periodic emergence of apparently radical challenges to the powers that be cannot be answered, without reference to those more powerful springs that drive the American political system as a whole. Here, as in all advanced industrial democratic states, the major dynamics of domestic politics and party competition are determined by two factors: the aggregate balance of power between business and labor within the domestic system, and the competition of industrial sectors within the world economy. But the operative significance of the first factor is limited in the American case by the "exceptionalism" of American politics, which features a weak and politically disorganized labor movement. As a consequence, business provides the driving force behind much of domestic politics, and political conflict is often best analyzed as derivative of conflict between different corporate sectors. Such business-centered analysis cannot pretend to capture all that is important in the turbulence of domestic politics. But it can provide a key to understanding the sources of power and conflict that shape the public realm.

(Ferguson and Rogers 1981: 7)

How this local fundamentalism and politics of resistance have found expression in US political culture as Buchananism in the 1990s is what we now turn to examine.
Buchananism, then, expresses the politics of nativist nationalism – of secure national states that remain fixed, stable, and certain. And, if need be, their identities may be altered by external threats to their existence. Buchananism was based on the idea that the world was divided into two camps: those who favored free trade and those who opposed it. Buchananism was a form of protectionism, and its proponents argued that free trade was harmful to the economy and to national security. Buchananism was also a form of populism, and its proponents argued that the government should be more responsive to the needs of ordinary people. Buchananism was a form of anti-globalism, and its proponents argued that the world was becoming too interconnected, too complex, too dangerous. Buchananism was a form of anti-immigrant sentiment, and its proponents argued that immigration was a threat to the nation's culture and identity. Buchananism was a form of anti-elite sentiment, and its proponents argued that the aristocracy was too powerful, too corrupt, too out of touch with the common people. Buchananism was a form of anti-feminist sentiment, and its proponents argued that women were too weak, too vulnerable, too dependent on men. Buchananism was a form of anti-LGBTQ sentiment, and its proponents argued that LGBTQ people were too different, too exotic, too threatening to the traditional family. Buchananism was a form of anti-intellectual sentiment, and its proponents argued that intellectuals were too abstract, too theoretical, too removed from reality. Buchananism was a form of anti-naturalism, and its proponents argued that nature was too complicated, too unpredictable, too dangerous. Buchananism was a form of anti-democratic sentiment, and its proponents argued that democracy was too messy, too chaotic, too uncontrollable.
of omnipotent Cold War America will culminate tragically in autarchic impotence not unlike the stagnation induced in Franco’s Spain, Mao’s China, or Stalin’s Russia. Checking the flows with statis intervention is Buchananism’s bottom line. To Americans concerned about foreign imports, Buchanan promised trade tariffs: “Take a Lexus. What do they cost? $50,000? The buyer is not going to be bothered by another $5,000” (Booth 1996: A13). And, to Americans obsessed with foreign immigration, Buchanan pledged strict controls: “Declare a ‘time out’ on new immigration, secure America’s borders, and insist on one language, English, for all Americans” (Edsall and Claiborne 1996: A10). Still, there is something significant in Buchanan’s program; and, as the thwarted plans of the Viper militia in Arizona or the Montana Freemen show, those promoting friction-free flowmationalization on a global scale need to hear these protests. While former Secretary of Education William J. Bennett sees Buchanan “flirting with racism,” radio talkshow host Oliver North casts Buchanan’s message as the political values of “the overworked, underpaid, God-fearing, much-maligned, off-critcized, rarely commended, unappreciated, sexually harassed, reverse-discriminated, censured, chastized, condemned and demeaned American hardworking family” (Fisher 1996: A14).

**CONCLUSION: FAST GEOPOLITICS?**

Clearly, the global flows that are currently re-mastering global space require us to rethink our inherited geographical imaginations and their associated notions of perspective, scale, horizon, dimensions and time. As originally envisaged at the beginning of the century by Halford Mackinder and others, geopolitics was about putting global space into perspective (Mackinder 1904). It was about producing global space in fixed perspectival scenes, and as a two-dimensionalized register of space it would reveal some eternal truths about geography’s relationship to politics. It was also, for Mackinder and the many other conservative organic intellectuals of statecraft who gravitated towards it, a reaction to the pace of modernity, to the tumult and turmoil of the *fis de siècle* and the disembedding of Great Britain by a world economy in which it was no longer dominant (Ó Tuathail 1992, 1997).

Today, however, the dominant geopolitical imaginations of the twentieth century, which have been centered on formations of territorial mass and matter, are being eclipsed by an ascendant set of geopolitical images organically connected to the dromocracy of global flows. Our inherited geopolitical imaginations were formed in counter-distinction to what Mackinder and others perceived as the chaotic flows of modernity, in opposition during the Cold War — as the doctrine of containment expressed — to the red flood of Communism that many argued threatened to overwhelm the West (Ó Tuathail and Agnew 1992). While highly imaginary and problematic, Cold War geopolitics did give shape and form to world order. With the passing of the Cold War, and, more importantly, with the dromocracy of globalization, that world has lost its shape. Dromo-intellectuals now tout the new (borderless) world order while others fall back upon foundational myths in order to resist the fluid, formless permissiveness of the New World Order.

Critical engaging these struggles of pace and place, flowmations and fundamentalism, acceleration and containment, requires moving beyond the fixed places of mass geopolitics to the fluid velocities of fast geopolitics. Critical geopolitics needs to be careful that its categories do not remain spellbound by a Cold War imagination, deconstructing forever Cold War-like discourses of danger. It needs to problematize how the kinetics of pace are distorting the statics of space. A whole geopolitical order of fast and slow access, wild and time zones, privileged and outsider flows, globalized and localized routes, collectives and singularities, accelerators and resistances, transmitters and containments, requires investigation by critical geopoliticians. Differential interpretations of flowmationalized forms in geopolitics are crucial to understanding contemporary international kinedramas like those of sanctioned and contained states (Cuba, Libya and Iraq amongst others), formless failed states (like Rwanda and Zaire), flow-friendly and flow-resistant regions (the NAFTA states versus Japan) or unregulated and dangerous flowmations (like international drugs, proliferating weapons of mass destruction, terrorist attacks and infectious diseases). Enwined intellectually to the apparently frozen blocs of Cold War conflict, geopolitics has been captured by a static territorial imagination for too long. Unleashed, it now has a critical future tied to tracking the struggles over accelerating flows in a New World Order hooked on speed (Thrift 1995).

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**NOTES**

1 The Progress and Freedom Foundation, located in Washington, DC, produces Gingrich’s televised college course and his weekly television show for National Empowerment Television (sometimes termed GOP-TV) among other things. It organized a “Cyberspace and the American Dream” conference in 1994 and a follow-up conference the year after in the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Aspen, Colorado. It is estimated that approximately one-third of the foundation's funding comes from the telecommunications and computer-industry companies (the PFF has disclosed the names of donors, not the amounts given: amongst the corporate donors are Bell South, Philip Morris, Eli Lilly and Co., and Honda of America). The chair of the Foundation in 1995 was Jay Keyworth, CEO of a Virginia-based company that makes wireless communications devices. Conflict of interest charges were raised in 1995 when a Foundation report called for the abolition of
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the Federal Communication Commission, the government body that regulates the communication industry (Mills 1995). It has also led the attack on the Food and Drug Administration (no doubt pleasing Philip Morris). Among the board members of the FII is Arianna Huffington who has established her own (Marvin Olasky inspired) “Center for the New American Compassion” [sic] within the Foundation.

2 Friction-free capitalism will not, of course, be cost-free capitalism. One of the reasons Gates is the world’s richest man is because of Microsoft’s aggressive campaign to set the operating standards for cyberspace and to stop charging a toll for their use. Using the dominance of Microsoft Windows 95, the company has created application program interface (API) standards for mail, fax, phone and cash transactions in cyberspace. When under review by the US Department of Justice for its conglomeration of Windows 95 to favor its own on-line provider, Microsoft Network at the expense of existing on-line providers (like America-ON-LINE and Prodigy), Microsoft’s legal defense team red-baited the government’s efforts to review its monopolistic practices, asserting would-be “commis-sars of software” and charging that such thinking “should have disappeared with the Berlin Wall. Fortunately for American consumers, we do not have a centrally planned economy” (quoted in Glick 1995: 64).

3 Although the split opened up in the Republican Party by Buchananism has been smoothed over, Buchanan’s candidacy exposed latent contradictions within that party and within American political life in general between conflicting imperatives to accelerate the transition to informational capitalism and contain its consequences, between liberating the flows and blocking them when they erode traditional subjectivities and encourage “permissive individualism.” While Buchanan has his own contradictions (an inside-the-beltway media talkshow host as populist), Newt Gingrich perhaps embodies these contradictions more than most in his simultaneous touting of Third Wave informational capitalism and Christian coalition “family values,” pushing the determinational life of the lifeworld at the same time as its reterritorialization around (etraditional notions of family, fatherhood and nation (Luke 1989). This contradiction is only likely to become more acute as the disembodiment of American life deepens and intensifies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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AMERICA IN AN ACCELERATING WORLD ORDER


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FROM FEDERAL WELFARE TO LOCAL WORKFARE?
Remaking Canada's work-welfare regime

Jamie Peck

CONTEXT: FROM WELFARE TO WORKFARE

"The status quo is not an option," a recent discussion paper on the future of social security in Canada insisted. "Changes in our economy, in our families, in our workplaces, in our communities, and in the financial standing of our country are too dramatic to allow us to tinker at the edges of social policy and programming" (HRD Canada 1994a: 8-9). The report goes on to assert that social policy and welfare reform, themselves rapidly melding into the ubiquitous discourse of "active" labor market policy, are increasingly subject to the imperatives of international competition. What was once the province of domestic political strategy is now apparently a matter of global economic (pre)determination. The new imperative is presented as one of "adjustment" to a fiercely competitive global economic order:

[The] world has changed faster than our programs. In the last decade especially, the sheer relentless force of technological, economic and social change has reshaped our lives and our livelihoods. Government policies and approaches have been too slow in responding . . . The next generation of social programs must not just share wealth, and protect those who are disadvantaged among us, they must actively create opportunity for Canadians and, in so doing, help drive economic growth . . . [The] key to dealing with social insecurity can be summed up in a single phrase: helping people get and keep jobs . . . Increasingly our competitors are not the enterprises and workers down the street or in the next province, or even across the border, but those across the ocean . . . To make the most of our future, we need more jobs. And that means pulling in more investment from inside Canada and abroad to create jobs. We need to be an investment magnet. Key to this is to overcome Canada's "skills deficit" — to offer the best-educated, best-trained workforce in the world, and that must be our common goal in the coming years.

(HRD Canada 1994a: 7-10)