

Fiction

Seven moments in a fiction about fiction.

1 Fiction obeys its own logic.

When politics (and ethics) becomes just more-of-the-same, when discourse repeats the already said *ad infinitum*, then fiction mixes things up, scrambles the known codes, upsets the accepted formulae. Fiction introduces the crazies into an all-too-human situation. Why all this and not something else? Why not give a different account of the-way-things-are? Fictions are problems for a situation with too many ready-made solutions. This strategy will follow its own rules and protocols, utilising the same base level material (what else is there but the world?) but in a specifically different combination. There is almost always a logic of sorts in these proposals, but it is not one you will find in your textbooks or on your TV (note: it is a fictional logic).

Fiction is a name for an alternative logic and for the production of alternative worlds (fiction is a *different* thing).

2 Fiction stops making sense.

When fiction really is fiction (and not just the offering up of a little novelty for a relief from the same) it moves away from typical signifying regimes, stymieing meaning and producing hybrid portmanteau word-things. Fiction names this weird asignifying signification, this complex assemblage of the said and the unsaid, when words emit strange part meanings and non-meanings, when words demarcate an area of intensity, a 'region in flames' (Lyotard). Fiction: to hate all languages of masters and the various priest and cops that almost always follow in their wake (Deleuze). Stammering a language always opens up a little space, a moment of confusion, a point indetermination. An event like this is always against knowledge (Badiou). These moments are the crucible in which a new world is clamouring to be born.

Fiction is the name for the re-adjustment of the ever-so-slippery-relationship between propositions and things (fiction is a wedge, a lever-point).

3 Fiction is myth-science.

For those who do not recognise themselves in the image clichés that surround us fiction offers new stories - new myths - for our troubled and turbulent times. For those who are alienated by the temporality of nine-to-five careerism and commodity obsession fiction offers up a selection of different times (play-time versus work-time (Bataille); cosmic-time versus clock-time). Is it possible to live without a narrative, a progression-through-time of some kind or another? Perhaps there are those who live in the now, who have accessed and actualised that 'Third kind of knowledge' (Spinoza); for the rest of us a temporality of sorts, however stretched, twisted, is required. A schizo-temporality for a schizo-subjectivity. A hybrid of the various pasts, presents, futures - and of futures-that-did-not-come-to-pass.

Fiction is what is left to us after the 'total subsumption of Capital' (Negri) (fiction mimics the pre-emptive strategies of the latter but *in reverse*).

4 Fiction slows us down.

Speed. More and more contact and communication; ever-increasing accessibility and always-being-switched-on. Information and career development followed by overload, burnout and the fall into despair. Productivity and the endless deadline. Fiction allows us to unplug and to enter a different duration. All the moderns knew this quirk: story telling is boredom, 'the dream bird that hatches the egg of experience' (Benjamin); story telling is fabulation, producing a gap for those who choose to hear between stimulus and response from which creativity arises (Bergson); story telling is a break in habit and a catalyst for the idleness that is the progenitor of any truly creative thought (Nietzsche).

This is the productivity of anti-productivity, in fact the *super*-productivity of that which is, from a certain point of view, always useless.

Once upon a time there are no happy endings in a pharmaceutically deadened reality (depression = the inability to believe). But fiction is magic and alters our space-times.

5 The world is already a fiction.

The media increasingly operates through affect (and sad ones at that) (its a veritable nervous system) but make no mistake reality is always the construction of narratives. Events are made-sense-of through causal logic and other framing devices (what is seeable? What is sayable?). Fiction is thus not opposed to reality but is productive of it. When you look beneath the paving stones you will find the shifting sands of fiction. There is no one essential or transcendent place outside this logic of insubstantiality-impermanence. What's needed is a proliferation of fictions, a multiplication of other possible worlds. A performance and the construction of avatars perhaps (after all, why not be someone else for a change?). The writing of alternative histories and of manifestos that announce the as-yet-to-come.

When we grasp the world as fiction we release the powers of the false. Any critique must operate below the radar of the what-is and on the fictions that make us who we are.

6 Fiction calls forth a people and a world.

Fiction always has a futurity, a prophetic tenor; its addressee is never just the subjectivity in place but one as yet to come (the stories for those already here are invariably about what is already here even when, especially when, they seem to promise something else). Thus the misunderstandings about fiction (fantasy, escape – having nothing to say about the situation as is) *and also* its power. Released from the political obligation fiction imagines another place in another space-time. How might such a fictional programme be joined to a concrete project of the production of subjectivity? As a stuttering fringe - a

mad corrective and point of inspiration - for those regimes and modes-of-organisation that tend to alienate and ossify the imagination almost despite their very correct intentions.

Fiction is always a fragment of the future placed in this time by a traitor prophet (and this may be a future that was imagined from within a certain region of the past).

7 Fiction produces the new.

Fiction is a naming at the edge of things, a collective enunciation of a thing that is on-the-way. Shapeshifter. Invent a word and the thing will follow; fiction gives form to the formless. A ritual survey and a creative act; a probe from the known into the unknown...fiction is any function *contra* the what-is; any invention beyond the norm. A break in habit, an experiment against the so-called real. When all the chips are down, the spaces colonised and time just-about-all-run-out then fiction – as a lived practice – allows us just a little room to manoeuvre, just a little bit of something that is still creative, creaturely and creating (fiction allows us to breathe once more). Through fiction we realise our potential and become the makers of worlds and of situations that are beyond what we already know.

In a time when the new is often just more of the same, fiction changes the coordinates ever-so-slightly, tips the assemblage *slowly* allowing a different vista, a different landscape, at last, to come in to view.