



A Phármakon, (Re-)Administered: On the Mainstreaming of Critical Theory, LD50 and the Han-opticon

Throughout a large part of the second half of the twentieth century, roughly from the failed European uprisings of 1968 through to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, critical theory—that variegated agglomeration of doubt associated with the writings of, among others, Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Jean-François Lyotard and Jacques Derrida—occupied a seemingly confirmed position at the margins of public discourse. That marginality was not simply a marker of critical theory’s status as an emerging ‘continental’ heterodoxy sceptical of the rationalist optimism of established modernism, but also, crucially, of a cognate resistance to modernism’s projection of the avant-gardes as harbingers of progressive socio-cultural change. Deconstructivism in particular sought to sustain critical difference explicitly through a witnessing of demonstrable deferrals of signified meaning, as signally performed by Derrida’s coining of the term “*différance*”.

While critical theory remained in principle obdurately resistant to rationalist authority, by the beginning of the 1990s it was in practice no longer entirely edgy. The once deviant uncertainties of critical theory had long-since started to filter into the cultural mainstream of Western liberal-democratic societies on the coattails of a nascent institutionalised postmodernism. As a result, public discourse in those contexts began to be shaped by insistently non-absolutist ways of thinking that would have seemed utterly cranky to most people twenty to thirty years before, but were by that time becoming increasingly normative, not least as unintended adjuncts to the deregulated landscapes of global neo-liberalism. One of the lasting legacies of all is the institutional embedding of post-colonialist and other forms of identitarianism under the general heading of “diversity”.

Among the further consequences of this filtering of the uncertainties of critical theory into the cultural mainstream has been the establishment of the tendency known as “political correctness”, which advocates the rooting out of latent rationalist authority while paradoxically foreclosing on any questioning of its own non-rationalist upholding of difference. Over time that tendency has ushered in quasi-Orwellian restrictions on speech and action so pervasively effective that they have significantly stymied public debate, including on the impact of immigration, multi-culturalism and, in light of the rise of a spectrum identitarianism, women’s rights to equality and gendered space.¹ Those restrictions

have in turn provoked ever-more concerted backlashes on both the right and left of politics that seek to resist the controlling managerialism of institutionalised postmodernism in favour of a return to more straightforwardly dichotomous forms of critical thinking/practice; diverse manifestations of which include the rise of the alt-right and the election of Donald Trump as President in the USA and a Lazarine revival of romantic socialism in the UK at the last general election in 2017, both arguably, as I suggested in a previous article for this journal,² political equivalents of the living dead. Those backlashes against the managerialism of institutionalised postmodernism intersect with public dissent against the socially debilitating effects of neo-liberal globalisation fomented initially by anti-capitalist movements on the far/anarchistic left and more recently the alt-right. They also imbricate increasingly violent conflict in the USA between the alt-right and antifa (anti-fascist) groups, for example at Charlottesville and on the campus of Berkeley University.³

What prevails here however, is not a straightforward stand-off between institutionalised postmodernism and resurgent rationalisms (commensurate with conventional modernist notions of generational disaffinity), but instead a spectral post-postmodernist commingling of those differing outlooks encompassing the paradoxical normativity of the former, and a selective assimilation of institutionalised postmodernist discourses by the latter—for example, an embracing of spectrum identitarianism on the left and claims to an upholding of pluralism by elements on the right, viz. Trump’s pronouncements on “taking a knee” protests at NFL games.⁴ Any categorical distinction between alt-right and antifa groups can also be called into question since both are resistant to the orthodoxies of postmodernist neo-liberalism while engaging in violent opposition to one another.

Critical theory can thus be understood to have been transmuted, by and against its own precepts, into a piously dominant discursive formation susceptible rather than efficaciously resistant to the colonising effects of rationalist thought. To inversely repurpose Derrida’s deconstructive reading of Plato’s *Phaedrus*, in becoming mainstream critical theory has, like writing in general, revealed itself to be a “*phármakon*”—a remedy that also acts paradoxically as a toxin.⁵ Moreover, in doing so it has set itself up—to extend the metaphoricity of Derrida’s reading—as a *pharmakós* (scapegoat) to be sacrificed in order to maintain the purity of the polity.⁶

Also added to the mix are s(c)eptic positions that seek to engage with, rather than peremptorily dismiss views inimical to non-rationalist difference, thereby inviting politically correct censure. Indicative of this third positioning are events surrounding the closure of the LD50 Gallery in London. During 2016, LD50,⁷ an independent gallery situated in Tottenham Road, Dalston in Hackney, staged a conference titled ‘Neoreaction’ showcasing the views of speakers associated with the alt-right, a right-wing white supremacist/exceptionalist movement identified primarily with the USA that distances itself from the neo-liberalism of mainstream Republicanism. These speakers included, among others Nick Land, a one-time philosophy lecturer at the University of Warwick (now living in Shanghai) who has been publicly denounced as an alt-right sympathiser, Peter Brimelow, an anti-immigration activist and Brett Stevens, a writer on “paleo-conservatism”, a rightist tendency advocating significant limitations on centralised government and civil society as well as a rolling back of multi-culturalism and international free trade alongside an upholding of values associated with white Western Christian identity.⁸ LD50 also staged an exhibition, *71822666* which drew its title from a 4chat social media thread predicting the election of Donald Trump as President and whose organisers cite “realDonald Trump” as an “inspiration” on the LD50 website.⁹ This exhibition reportedly included “engraved statuettes featuring images of Pepe the Frog, a cartoon that has been linked to anti-Semitism; and a diagram tracing the emergence of and connections among online far-right movements.”¹⁰



A key aspect of the alt-right views showcased by LD50 is their relationship to the intellectual tendency known as “accelerationism.”¹¹ Accelerationist theory in general looks towards an increasing intensification of capitalist production as a means toward radical socio-economic change. That process is however interpreted from differing political perspectives. While accelerationists on the left maintain the view that capitalism is inherently contradictory and unstable and that a speeding up of production will hasten its emancipatory demise, others on the right assert that a constantly accelerating and thus self-renewing capitalism can be sustained indefinitely. Those on the far right of accelerationism also predict that an increasing intensification of capitalist production will eventually lead to violent conflict between ideologically opposed groups and the death of millions, the breakdown of established neo-liberal democracy and, as an outcome, greater levels of individual accountability and freedom under a radically purged capitalism. Whether this dystopian prediction is intended to be taken literally or as an absurdist provocation is by no means absolutely clear. Land, as the acknowledged ‘father’ of accelerationism, has traced its varied relationships not only to Marxist thinking, but also that of Nietzsche and Deleuze and Guattari (notably their conception of deterritorialisation).¹² Associations with the arguably proto-accelerationist work of the author Ayn Rand have also been made.¹³

Predictably, in the context of a decidedly multi-cultural East London, LD50's public showcasing of views associated with the alt-right proved itself nothing short of incendiary. Initially, the activities of the LD50 Gallery during 2016 passed with little or no public comment. In February 2017, however, the artist Sophie Jung shared a screenshot on her Facebook profile of a text message conversation with Lucia Diego, the gallery's owner and director, in which Diego appears to support the anti-immigration executive order restricting movement from selected Muslim majority countries signed by Donald Trump almost immediately after his inauguration as President.¹⁴ This share ignited social media debate about LD50 and its engagement with the alt-right, which led to the initiation of the #shutdownld50 campaign as a focus for demands that the gallery be closed, as a potential locus for the normalisation of far-right ideology. Placard-carrying protests took place outside the gallery in the name of Shut Down LD50 with the support of the Mayor of Hackney, Phillip Glanville and the group Hackney Stand Up to Racism and Fascism. The gallery was also anonymously daubed with anti-alt-right graffiti and one of its windows broken.

As a result of continuing protests and attacks on its premises, by early March 2017 LD50 was forced to close and the gallery's sign taken down. In an interview for *The Independent* newspaper Lucia Diego acknowledges that the closure had been forced by "anti-fascist" protests and anonymous acts of criminal damage, but also sought to defend LD50 by asserting that the gallery had "only done a show with alt-right people once" and its exhibition relating to Donald Trump's election as USA President was not intended as a political statement. She also claimed in the same interview that protesters had "not listened" to what alt-right speakers had actually said at the gallery, but merely looked at their biographies "trying to find the most outrageous thing they've said or done in the past." In her interview for *The Independent*, Diego also states that,

*We opened the gallery with the idea of looking at the impact of the Internet on society and the world, so most of our shows had dealt with that subject... In the last exhibition we looked at what happened with the presidential election in America. We did these talks in the gallery, and did an exhibition based on all the Internet content that was generated in alt-right forums, on Twitter and other platforms... It was the first time we'd displayed anything political before. It was just merely because it was happening online over the last year and we find it very interesting that all these online platforms were discussing this idea, so we thought we'd curate a show that studies what's happening online.*¹⁵

In addition, Diego asserts that she does "not support the liberal agenda," but is "not an alt-righter at all" and that she had not read enough to enable her to make a decision on the movement and was looking at it as a "form of study, but not as a form of sympathy."¹⁶

The LD50 Gallery responded further by publishing a manifesto on its website. This states that protests against the exhibition 71822666 and associated hosting of alt-right associated speakers had been "exceptionally aggressive, militant and hyperbolic" and that they, the gallery, had "presented a very liberal audience with a speaker knowledgeable of [the alt-right] creating... a dialogue between two different and contrasting ideologies and the possibility for discussion." The manifesto also opines that the gallery was intended as "a vehicle for the free exploration of ideas, even and perhaps when these are challenging, controversial or indeed distasteful."¹⁷ This defence of agonistic public debate by the gallery was upheld by the art critic Jonathan Jones in an article for *The Guardian* newspaper in which he claims sympathy with the anti-fascist views of protesters against the LD50 Gallery while asserting that "art galleries must be allowed to anger and disgust us" and, moreover, that "we risk becoming... extremists ourselves if we give in to the impulse to shut down opponents."¹⁸ Shut Down LD50 retorted by saying



that it considered the LD50 Gallery's claim that it had sought to engender open public debate to be "utterable bullshit."¹⁹ Shut Down LD50's campaign was not entirely successful. In May 2017 the LD50 Gallery reopened with a new exhibition, *Corporeality* involving what the *Hackney Citizen* interprets as a, ... veiled response to protests calling for the gallery's closure, one of the artworks for the new show includes "six computer workstations where participants are encouraged to sit and work through the paper content and destroy it if they find it inappropriate, uninteresting or offensive". In an article about the exhibition posted on the website *Amerika.org*,²⁰ one of its participating artists known as Kantbot, is quoted as saying, "This show explores moral entrepreneurship and what it means to deconstruct and control thought in an age when ideas are completely divorced as digital entities, from any tangible reality as objects."²¹

In light of these various statements, any description of the furore surrounding the temporary closure of LD50 as a sharply divided conflict between righteous anti-fascists (Shut Down LD50) and dastardly neo-Nazi sympathisers (LD50 Gallery) cannot be convincingly upheld. Rather, it is one lynching on differing and in both cases no doubt well-meant attempts to preserve freedom of thought and expression—albeit in ways that take on/engage discomfitingly with contrary forms of authoritarianism. As I write, a similar situation has developed in relation to The Guggenheim Museum New York's withdrawal of artworks purportedly involving violence to animals from the survey

exhibition of Chinese art, *Theater of the World*, in the face of objections from animal rights protesters,²² a potential outcome of which is the gifting of a defence against persistent Western criticism of China's own suppression of supposedly subversive artists and artworks, including a Ministry of Culture notice banning extreme forms of art involving pornography and/or acts of violence against human and animal bodies handed down in 2001.

Hate speech and acts of hate against others, whether in relation to alt-right exceptionalism/suprematism or any other prejudicial ideology (viz. recent events in Myanmar in relation to the country's Rohingya minority) are utterly indefensible. As are accelerationist fantasies of the desirability of conflict as a necessary route to freedom (one must, of course, ask in this regard, who's freedom?). However, moves to foreclose critical discussion in relation to the facticity of those things is itself, as Jonathan Jones rightly argues, a contradictory expression of authoritarian extremism. The LD50's desire to support what is described by Brett Stevens on the Amerika.org website as "a new brand of artist that combines trolling, provocation, surrealism and critical theory into ensconcing art experiences that raise more questions than offer answers"²³ presents a clear and present target for those wishing to attack what can be seen as unjustifiable political prevarication. What protesters against LD50 do not wish to take account of, as Land has argued, is the eminent deconstructability of their own rather simplistic and ultimately suppressive oppositional outlook.²⁴

This is not to support the dreadful implications of prejudicial alt-right thinking which is itself not beyond deconstruction as a locus of suppressive opposition. Nor is it to defend LD50's arguably ham-fisted post-hoc apology for its un-thought through dalliance with alt-right views; Jacques Derrida's defence of the deconstructivist literary critic Paul de Man's complicity with Nazism during WWII should already have started alarm bells ringing in that regard.²⁵ Rather, it is to register the problematic circumstances ushered in by a now institutionalised critical theory. What this suggests is the critical necessity, not of an outright dereliction of critical theory in acquiescence to rationalist authority, nor a return to the unattainable (no doubt mythical) golden age of critical theory's initial marginality, but a refraction of its problematic relationship with authority in relation to present and forthcoming circumstances. The exact viability of such a refractive relationship, which can already be seen to have coalesced under the tentative heading of "neo-deconstructivism"²⁶ remains to be seen.

The situation within the People's Republic of China with regard to criticality is refracted somewhat differently. Translations of standard works of critical theory, including texts by Foucault and Derrida, were available in China during the 1970s, even before the death of Mao Zedong and the ending of the Cultural Revolution. Indeed, members and associates of the critical theory group Tel Quel, including Roland Barthes and Julia Kristeva visited China in 1974, the latter subsequently producing signature articles on Chinese women.²⁷ Since then Western critical theory has been widely discussed by academics and other elites in the PRC.²⁸

There are also official gestures in China towards some of the mainstays of mainstream postmodernism in the West. These include government support, in principle at least, for ethnic minorities, women's rights and the disabled. However, in spite of academic discussion of critical theory and governmental support for diversity, in practice the more virulent implications of the former are strongly resisted. This is not simply an expression of a general scepticism with regard to Western influences on Chinese society and culture, but also crucially a rejection of a specifically deconstructivist undermining of authoritative meaning. In the context of China that undermining is seen as unacceptably inimical both to a historically dominant civilisation-specific conception of Chinese identity, bounded

in principle by clearly drawn geographic claims to sovereignty since the founding of Republican China in 1911-12 (viz. China's recent military occupation of the South China Sea), and the authority of the country's ruling communist party (CCP) to oversee the progressive development of a culturally, and geopolitically Han majority oriented cohesive Chinese society. Under China's current President Xi Jinping, rejection of Western(ised) criticality has intensified in relation to both indigenous and exogenous scholarship to what Graeme Smith has referred to as the "Han-opticon".²⁹ Consequently while aspects of Western postmodernity have been accommodated as part of China's post-Mao modernisation, they ultimately remain marginal to that project.

As media reports outside the country repeatedly inform us, within China the political authority of the CCP has been maintained through often spectacular acts of suppression/oppression. These not only include the summary killing of democracy protesters at Tiananmen Square on 4 June 1989, but also ongoing violence against ethnic minorities such as Uighur Muslims in the Xinjiang region of Western China.³⁰ Such acts of state violence are reinforced by other forms of social control: not only the persistence of a vast, often regionally disconnected and stymieing socialist state bureaucracy but in addition an increasingly pervasive panoptical surveillance incorporating vague governmental directives and laws that allow for mobile interpretation by state officials as well as tight restrictions on the Internet and social media that seek to exclude the use of communication platforms such as Facebook and Twitter as part of an internationally linked public sphere. Further to which there is now a growing adoption of means associated with post-panoptical societies of control in the West, including the use of network surveillance as a way of the tying of access to credit and employment to good social behaviour.³¹

In spite of this combination of violent state suppression and tightening social control networks, there are continuing public protests against governmental authority in China. These include localised resistances to the sweeping away of established communities and ways of life as a consequence of the CCP's centrally driven program of post-Mao modernisation, and strikes against low pay and poor working conditions in relation to an increasingly affluent urbanised Chinese society. With regard to China's indigenous art world however, open opposition to governmental authority is much less prevalent. The beginnings of contemporary art in China are often traced back to public protests in Beijing in 1979, including members of the unofficial art group, The Stars (*Xingxing*), calling for freedom of artistic expression beyond the ideological reach of the state. However, since then the combination of a disarming assimilation of social concerns associated with the mainstreaming of critical theory in Western(ised) liberal democratic contexts against the insistent background of continuing political authoritarianism means that there is no shared public platform from which concerted protest can be effectively launched; a position also reinforced by the elite status accorded to successful artists in China in accordance with the traditional standing of the literati (scholar-gentry) artist-poet.

Under such circumstances, as the situation of a now effectively exiled Ai Weiwei attests, open artistic opposition to governmental authority has little or no long-term traction. Crucially, such circumstances not only suspend oppositional and mainstream deconstructivist resistances to governmental authority, but in addition any public non-governmentally supported contestation of ideas of a kind played out in relation to the activities of the LD50 or the Guggenheim. It is important to acknowledge in this regard that politically conservative traditional Chinese ink and brush painting, both in ancient and modern forms, remains dominant with popular and elite audiences in China, eclipsing the relatively marginal standing of Western(ised) modern and contemporary art—as evidenced by the recent establishment of a major international 'Ink Art' biennale at the Wuhan Art Museum.



The particularities of this multi-faceted closing down on oppositional and deconstructive resistance to authority in China were recently made all too apparent when a conference that I was co-organising, to be staged there next year, was summarily cancelled by government officials after several months of planning. For ethical reasons (that of course also make me effectively complicit with governmental authority), I choose not to give details of the intended location of the conference and those involved to protect colleagues inside China. The openly stated intention of the conference was to bring together an international group of scholars to critically discuss contemporary art in/ from Asia and related diaspora from transcultural perspectives, in light of emerging debates related to contemporaneity³²—a theme very much welcomed by the host institution and one that would be considered relatively anodyne in Western liberal-democratic contexts. Although no explicit challenge was made to government authority in China, the intended focus of the conference is one that runs against its dominant nationalist discourses. It was hoped that such an intervention would open up critical debate in China. Observant government authority saw things differently.

If we compare the discursive circumstances prevailing in Western liberal democratic contexts and in China it would be simplistic to assert that the former supports an expansive public freedom of expression while the latter does not. Although in China there is the persistence of an undeniably suppressive authoritarianism and a consequent limiting of the public sphere, in Western liberal democratic contexts the institutionalisation of critical pluralism has itself ushered in powerful restrictions on open debate in ways that are now tempting in the resistant zombies of (deathly) authoritarianism; and here I include the reactionary politics of the alt-right, radical Islam and romantic socialism as well as the suppressive violence of antifa groups. One might venture the observation that in liberal democratic contexts governmental intervention upon culture has become unnecessary given that the cultural sphere is now effectively self-policing, ostensibly as a critical foil to established authority but in practice as a bulwark to its aims.

As Gilles Deleuze argued as early as the 1990s, we have now entered beyond Michel Foucault's conception of modern disciplinary societies, into those of pervasive open-ended control in which "liberating and enslaving forces confront one another" and where opposed responses of "fear" and "hope" commingle and effectively cancel out one another.³³ As Deleuze puts it, under such conditions even "art has left the spaces of enclosure in order to enter into the open circuits of the bank,"³⁴ an observation clearly lost on those wishing to physically close down LD50. What remains is the question of how such open-ended controls are exacted differently in differing socio-cultural contexts.

Perhaps the only viable line of resistance to controlling authority available to us now, given the contradictorily overdetermined inefficacy of both institutionalised postmodernism and direct rationalist opposition (both of which intersect with one another as fabrics of present-day social control), is a differentiated recourse to the "*phármakon*" of critical theory. In Greek, the term "*phármakon*" not only signifies the opposed meanings of remedy and poison, but also a means of productivity. Critical theory might thus be viewed, as Gerasimos Kakoliris indicates in relation to his analysis of Derrida's deconstructive reading of *Phaedrus*,³⁵ beyond what might on the face of it appear to be the sterile negativity of an indeterminate shuttling between contradictory meanings, towards the prospect, always-already held-out by Derridean deconstructivism, of that negativity as a continuing producer of meanings—albeit a prospect that must perforce play inconclusively under current conditions in the mainstream and at the margins of public discourse. It is also one that arguably inheres most strongly in the minutiae of particular, always shifting historical circumstances rather than in the abstractions that inevitably accompany supposed authority.

Notes

¹ For a discussion of that stymieing of public debate in the Australian context, see <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/identity-politics-now-the-focus-of-university-history-courses/news-story/3127976726e0258e328b04968c57bfb7>; first accessed 17 October 2017

² Paul Gladston, '(Partisans) Kick the Corpse: Post-Truth and the Contemporary Art World', *di'van | A Journal of Accounts* Issue 2, pp. 20-27

³ See Matt Pearce, 'Who was responsible for the violence in Charlottesville? Here's what witnesses say', *Los Angeles Times*, 15 August 2017; <http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-charlottesville-witnesses-20170815-story.html>; first accessed 22 October 2017, and James Queally, Paige St. John, Benjamin Oreskes and David Zahniser, 'Violence by far-left protesters in Berkeley sparks alarm', *Los Angeles Times*, 28 August 2017; <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-berkeley-protests-20170827-story.html>; first accessed 22 October 2017

⁴ See Patrick Strickland, "'Take a knee" anti-racist protests move beyond the NFL', *Al Jazeera*, 20 October 2017; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/10/knee-anti-racist-protests-move-nfl-171019153538456.html>; first accessed 22 October 2017

⁵ Jacques Derrida, 'Plato's Pharmacy', *Dissemination*, Barbara Johnson trans., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, pp. 63-171

⁶ In ancient Greece the term "*pharmakós*" referred to a person, often already condemned to death, sacrificed by a city or other community as an atonement or means of purification

⁷ The name LD50 refers to the term Lethal Dose 50, a scientific measure of the amount of a pathogen or other toxin required to kill fifty-percent of a test sample. The median lethal dose is regarded as a more accurate measure of toxicity than amounts required to kill one hundred-percent of a sample, which are often variable. The intended significance of the LD50 Gallery's appropriation of the term is obscure. However, connotations related to accelerationist notions of conflict and related population decrease, as well as systematic Nazi genocide can be inferred (albeit perhaps outwith the actual intentions of the gallery itself)

⁸ Paleo-conservatism also encompasses a range of conservative attitudes to understanding of the past, including scepticism of evolutionary diversity and common origin theories of human development

⁹ See LD50's website page on the exhibition *7182266*; <https://www.ld50gallery.com/71822666/> first accessed 1 September 2017

¹⁰ Christopher Shea, 'London Gallery LD50's Alt-Right Show Should Be Its Last, Critics Say', *New York Times* online, 25 February 2017; <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/25/arts/design/london-gallery-ld50-alt-right-show-protest.html?mcubz=0>; first accessed 1 September 2017

¹¹ The term "accelerationism" was coined pejoratively by Benjamin Noys in his book *Malign Velocities: Accelerationism and Capitalism*, Alresford: Zero Books, 2014

¹² Nick Land, 'A Quick-and-Dirty Introduction to Accelerationism', *Jacobite*, 25 May 2017; <https://jacobitemag.com/2017/05/25/a-quick-and-dirty-introduction-to-accelerationism/> first accessed 3 September 2017. This post-postmodernist commingling of otherwise divergent discourses arguably has an up-ended corollary in continuing contestations of ideas on the Marxian left, as exemplified by the Badiou-Rancière debate. While Alain Badiou has sought to maintain the possibility of a transformational relationship between art and the truth of events that is both singular and immanent—by upholding simultaneously an arguably neo-Platonic conception of the invariance of philosophical categories of truth alongside a qualified acceptance of the poststructuralist idea that such truths are historically constructed—for Jacques Rancière what remains crucial is a persistently dissenting redistribution of what he refers to as "the sensible" (conventional modes of thought and practice) as a means towards (what he sees as an already existing principle of absolute) social equality running counter to what can be seen as the latent (modernist) propriety of Badiou's idealism. See for example, Alain Badiou, *Handbook of Inaesthetics*, trans. Alberto Toscano, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004 and Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, London: Continuum, 2010

¹³ See for example Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, New York: Random House, 1957

¹⁴ Shea, 'London Gallery LD50's Alt-Right Show Should Be Its Last, Critics Say', op cit.

¹⁵ All cited from May Bulman, "'Far-right" gallery in London forced to close because it "keeps getting attacked"—LD50 has been shut for a month due to "constant attacks"', *Independent* online, 15 March 2017; <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/far-right-gallery-art-hackney-ld50-london-attacked-shut-down-lucia-diego-nick-land-andrew-osborne-a7631971.html>; first accessed 3 September 2017

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ All cited from 'LD50', untitled manifesto, 2017, <https://www.ld50gallery.com>; first accessed 18 March 2017

¹⁸ Jonathan Jones, 'No one should demand the closure of galleries – even for far-right artworks', *The Guardian*, 22 February 2017; <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2017/feb/22/art-galleries-free-speech-ld50-dalston>; first accessed 4 September 2017

¹⁹ Shut Down LD50 Gallery, 'Racists and Fascists out of Dalston! Shut down LD50 Gallery', 19 February 2017, <https://shutdownld50.tumblr.com/post/157441553836/racists-and-fascistsout-of-dalston-shut-down>; first accessed 18 May 2017

²⁰ Amerika.org is the website of Brett Stevens, a speaker at the LD50 Gallery's 'Neoreaction' conference, who has, as the *Hackney Citizen* reports, "previously praised Norwegian mass murderer Anders Breivik, saying 'he chose to act where many of us write, think and dream'"; <https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2017/05/08/controversial-ld50-gallery-dalston-launches-new-exhibition/>; first accessed 4 September 2017

²¹ *Hackney Citizen*, 'Controversial LD50 gallery in Dalston launches new exhibition', 8 May 2017; <https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2017/05/08/controversial-ld50-gallery-dalston-launches-new-exhibition/>

²² For reporting of the furore surrounding the Guggenheim's intended showing of art works involving purported violence against animals in *Theater of the World*, see for example <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/25/arts/design/guggenheim-dog-fighting-exhibit.html>; first accessed 17 October 2017. For critical discussion of the Guggenheim's decision to withdraw the works in question, see Ben Davis, 'Why the Guggenheim's Controversial Dog Video is Even More Disturbing than You Think', *Artnet*, 29 September 2017; <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/so-whats-really-going-on-with-that-disturbing-dog-video-at-the-guggenheim-1100417>; first accessed 1 October 2017; this article includes references to the present author's published work

²³ Brett Stevens, 'LD50 Gallery Launches New Corporeality Exhibit', *Amerika*, 3 May 2017; <http://www.amerika.org/lifestyle/ld50-gallery-launches-new-corporeality-exhibit/>; first accessed 2 October 2017

²⁴ Land, 'A Quick-and-Dirty Introduction to Accelerationism', op cit.

²⁵ See Louis Menand, 'The de Man Case: Does a critic's past explain his criticism?' *The New Yorker*, 24 March 2014; <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/03/24/the-de-man-case>; first accessed 10 October 2017

²⁶ Examples of philosophical/critical texts that explicitly or implicitly adopt a neo-deconstructivist stance have been published by *Re.press*; <http://re.press.org/about/>. The question of (neo-)deconstructivism has been discussed in architectural circles. See the thread, 'Deconstructivism: What comes next?' at Archinect Discussion Forum; <https://archinect.com/forum/thread/31908937/deconstructivism-what-comes-next/>; first accessed 14 October 2017

²⁷ See for example Julia Kristeva, *About Chinese Women*, London: Marion Boyars, 1977

²⁸ For discussion of scholarly contestations of critical theory in China, see Paul Gladston, 'Somewhere (and Nowhere) between Modernity and Tradition: Towards a Polylogue between Differing International and Indigenous Perspectives on the Significance of Contemporary Chinese Art', *Tate Papers* 21, Spring 2014, no page numbers given

²⁹ For an account of current exclusion and suppression in China of scholarly research problematic to prevailing governmental discourses, see Graeme Smith, 'The Han-opticon: The hazards of China research in the Xi era', *The Interpreter*, 10 October 2017; https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/han-opticon-hazards-china-research-xi-era?utm_content=buffercfdcf&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer; first accessed 10 October 2017

³⁰ Anon., 'Why is there tension between China and the Uighurs?', *BBC News* online, 26 September 2014; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-26414014>; first accessed 10 October 2017

³¹ See Rachel Botsman, 'Big Data meets Big Brother as China moves to rate its citizens', *Wired*, 21 October 2017; <http://www.wired.co.uk/article/chinese-government-social-credit-score-privacy-invasion>; first accessed 22 October 2017

³² See Terry Smith, Okwui Enwezor, Nancy Condee eds, *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008

³³ Gilles Deleuze, 'Postscript on the Societies of Control', *October* 59, Winter 1992, pp. 3-7

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Gerasimos Kakoliris, 'The "Undecidable" Pharmakon: Derrida's Reading of Plato's Phaedrus', in Burt Hopkins and John Drummond eds, *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* 13, London: Routledge, 2014