The coming of cinema was expected on earth.

Ice-age paintings on the walls of caves evolved and spread. Each new iteration interfered with its predecessors, modifying their motives, and extending a hand…

Postures corrected, and cortexes assembled. Rituals repeated and syncopated, sacred spaces cooled, and fused, and layered myths like clastic tissue.

Hierarchies interlaced, extended.

Webs got tighter.

Sections narrowed.

Intensity increased.

And the authorities read-out the sentence:

This guy will be imprisoned underground.

And every day, a bird will come and feed.

On his reactions.

**
Welcome to this moment.
We are happy you are here.
You must have questions. This is natural.
Everything will be explained in time.
We are your friends.
We want to help.
But the situation needs discretion.
Not everybody can be trusted.
They are not human.
They work through structures; and they operate the system.
And they want you. But rest assured.
That we have everything in hand.

**

Welcome to the next five minutes.
The great connection has proceeded.
The liquefaction has continued.
Screens play scenes of violent glamour.
All stations leak last minutes.
Two fingers snapping.
Windows breaking.
On the impact of a feather of a flicker of erotic interest...
You have mail.
Fresh intrigues, and great offers.
This world turns fast.
This drug works fast.
This life goes fast
Every component has been present from the start: the shot, the screen, the frame, the shadows. But technology rearranges the rules of the game.

The camera are the eyes and sensors, the montage the brain and the computer. The image is the information, which burns itself onto a medium, such as a brain.

Cyberspace generates a new montage of voices, recycled myths, connections and transmissions, in the context of a giant database, like a double of the world.

This world is now merging with the real world to create a total global system of enhanced reality. Every surface is a sensor, and everybody has a signal.

You walk into a bar, waving a smart phone, and an application identifies potential sex partners and/or the readers of your blog.

Would you like to know more?
Every machine produces time. Produces, leaks, secretes, implies, compels, consumes, revokes provokes routines.

Through flashbacks, fades, and cuts, the cinema pinpointed forks in the historical time-space continuum, which the nineteenth century had imagined as a train.

Time remained linear, but became pregnant with holes, like the cigarette holes made by editors to mark cuts, or the hole in the twister that brings tourists to Oz.

Other worlds were realized at the moment they were needed. Each one implied a moment of decision, or selection.

Modernity had raised contingency into a principle, creating the crowd and the industrial city, trailing smoke and conspiracies, secret policemen, and waste.

The new world now turned in two directions, creating mass anonymity, and at the same time deepening interiority, which followed from the former with the cutting of connections.

The liquidation of communities pulverized their personalities. New forms of life and modes of being were created.

The cinema channeled, and reported, on the situation.

The camera searched reality for arrant impressions; the close-up of woman’s face, the black magic of the great dictator, or the sight of falling bombs. Film faced the challenge of fabricating new indexes, composed of material that no-one had noticed, and rearranged into sequences of visual principles.

Distinct realities became acquainted, and revealed their deep connection. Editors edited and rationalized time -- like a patient etherized upon a table.

In isolating details, moments, and perceptions, rescued from oblivion, the cinema redeemed them. If a camera could be here, it could be anywhere.

Every moment smoldered with adventure, because every moment was a strait gate through which the cinema might enter. But the reality consisted in consumption, not romance. And so the silver screen was put to work in practice.

Would you like to know more?
The post-cinema works through participatory voyeurism, which implicates its systems while its strips their users.

Art works are theorized as positions in an abstract global system, which appears to have anticipated every move in advance. The situation reflects and condenses media-complex imperatives, now preoccupied with the problem of selling your own issues back to you.

After the funeral of Hitler, avant-garde film from Germany, and the destruction of Hiroshima, whose atomic flash photographed the silhouettes of its victims, cameras spread across the world. Tourism increased, and signals accelerated.

New machines for mining came online. The cinema expanded, and the world became a giant set. Fantasies become more personal. The filmgoer modernized into the search-engineer, accepting the invitation to coerce a world that was right for you.

The interface advances. Cinema and matter merge. Recording becomes lighter, faster and immersive, so every move you make creates a chain of your own needs.

Information proliferates, and the market is rationalized. Silence is obsolete, and uncompetitive.

Every line becomes a cliché in advance, a variation on the theme: now everything can be recorded, processed, sold.

Cyberspace produces new connections and exposures, and new proximities, which outflank the cinema through professionalized intimacy. The new media connects to your unconscious, not to you, tapping into its issues, and then selling them back to you.

Users are detached from old allegiances, traditions, forms of thought and knowledge, and connected to the network (if one exists) of the locales that find them useful. ‘I want to buy your opinions,’ states the Malay dealer Schlink in a Chicago-set Brecht play. The internet introduces a secondary market, in derivatives, and search strings, well-tested themes and angles, madness.

The computer holds the center of the system, processing the orders, and organizing the supply chains, while deploying still darker powers as the idol of our civilization. After all, what is the contemporary besides calculation, (dis)connection and stratagems?

Would you like to know more?
Once, in a cheap science fiction novel, Fat had come across a perfect description of the Black Iron Prison, but set in the far future. So if you superimposed the past (ancient Rome) over the present (California in the twentieth century) and superimposed the far future world of The Android Cried Me a River over that, you got the Empire, as the supra- or trans-temporal constant. Everyone who had ever lived was literally surrounded by the iron walls of the prison; they were all inside it and none of them knew it. (Dick)

Every generation reworks its connections, and refines its pitch: We are caved-in or -out and/or the world is mined. Inside brackets, second natures, evil demons, brains in vats compete for light. In the distance, the outside takes on a lucrative value. The world creates secure facilities, unique machines, and discrete forms. They add-up, and subtract, divide and multiply. They multiply like ghosts. They subtract nothing.

Bodies must be synchronized, and information redirected. Signals must be sharpened, tipped, wrapped-up and sold. The passage twists from light to shadow, copies or shadows to primary causes, incarceration to freedom, illusion to truth, and philosophy to revelation. Seductive doors to hidden truths appear like whores on corners.

_Hast du lust?_
A group of prisoners have spent their lives inside a cave, consuming silhouettes and re-runs. They stagger dusk till dawn from page to page, and point to point.

The space is a theater of shadows, controlled by mysterious forces for reasons obscure.

One day, a prisoner is dragged from cave and released. He blinks into the blazing sun and coughs.

A red desert world buzzes infinitely.

He is hysterical, terrified, blind and disoriented.

He learns to crawl.

He learns to walk.

He learns the logic of the sequence and casuation.

He returns home....

Exit the cinema, pursued by a mouse.
Man is a media animal, wrapped-up in language and technics like a body in plastic.

Searching for a metaphor to describe the human soul, Plato reached for his empty writing tablet, and grasped: *tabula rasa*. Newton, in an age of clocks, managed to present the universe after the likeness of a clock. The mechanics of muscle transformed into the cybernetics of nerves; theorists started to describe decentered subjects, rhizomes, disseminations.

But ‘poets like Blake were far ahead of Newton in their response to the challenge of the clock.’ He spoke of the need to be delivered "from single vision and Newton's sleep," understanding that Newton's response to the challenge of mechanism was merely a mechanical repetition of the challenge.’

Blake imagined other beings, burning tigers, flying worms; the outlaw beings of the dark zone that lies beyond scope of Newton’s physics.

The sun has needs (it sucks young blood) the star wants fans, I just need love. The system holds our hands. It holds them tight. You get your coffee by the clock. You check your e-mail (it checks you) & Chekhov’s gun appears, and waits its turn...

**
It walks through Paris with a lobster before the telegraph was born. It smokes hashish with Flaubert, and then heads east. It visits Istanbul, Tbilisi, Brussels, meets with Nietzsche in Turin, and betrays no emotion in the philosopher’s embrace. It walks across the Neva around December 1913, and attends the Black Square’s birth, icon of the desert, royal infant, and machine. It attends a funeral in Berlin, and hears the priest start speaking of the film of film itself in flames, and becomes a journalist in Japan, reporting on a flash which had impressed the shadows of its victim-audience onto the surviving city walls.…
In April 1990, it washed up on American television. The series served as the sigil for a new kind of television, built around a central absence, like Laura Palmer, and our lives. In the space behind the lines, as cameras swivel, expression searches from new outlets, streams and torrents, broadcasting episodic attractions to distributed audiences.

The watercooler was the beachhead of network television in the nineties, on the strength of its pivotal position in office space. The drones would gather daily to discuss their views. The center now is everywhere and nowhere, pushed by blogs and social networks around a wired conversation, draped in shadows, made by mad men. The new TV grabs the territory that the mass media abdicated, creating mirrors of prosumption, silhouettes of their own networks, swimming like a salmon back to cult-value.
Now the liver appears on a red-eye from Berlin to Tokyo, housed in a plexiglass vitrine on its own first-class window seat. The stewardess distributes drinks and polished smiles. The courier takes tomato juice, the liver, dry white wine.

They sit in silence. Ten thousand miles high above the terraqueous globe, they feel at peace.

The liver is heading towards a high-level business meeting. A couple teenage hackers in Shinjuku, working on transcoding, have come-up with a real-time system of synaptic capture. He broods on acquisitions strategy. The courier reads the magazine.

The movie is a double-feature: Hitler: A Film from Germany and Hiroshima, Mon Amour. The courier has seen both before.

He takes a pair of pills, one red, one blue, and falls asleep. In the dreams he is incarcerated in cave. He is subjected to strange programs, so that time distends to years. He explores the endless landscape. A young widow in wreaths informs him: ‘There is one clock in the world. One clock with many faces....’ He wakes up in a sweat with the stewardess standing over him calmly. She says: ‘We are now beginning our descent.’