

Politics, Value and Labour: Three Selections on the Significance of Oikonomia

By Mark Gawne

Firstly, I want to say thanks to Karen for organizing this forum, and also to Angela and Karen for getting me involved with it. Thanks also to all contributors. I feel very privileged to have been able to participate in this, and to learn so much from everyone's contributions. I very much appreciate it.

Unfortunately I have not had time to write anything completely new for the forum, so I have sent selections from existing pieces. The first selection *Unsettling accounts & contested futures* is an excerpt from a review. This excerpt is chosen to offer some basic comments on how C&C is important as a political contribution to contemporary debates concerning organisation, emphasizing the infrastructural and infra-political over the institutional, the Party and the Prince. The second selection, modified from another paper and chapter of my thesis, is a brief comment on the recurring limits of substantialist accounts of labour and value within classical and recent political economy. Most specifically, recent attempts to theorise affective labour have re-inscribed a substantialist account of labour and value as "value-affect". The critique of this re-inscription is an important part of my work elsewhere, and my development of the critique has been informed by Angela's work in C&C as well as her work elsewhere. The final selection is notes from a talk I gave in December 2012, looking at ideas of affective composition and disaffection.

...

1. *Unsettling Accounts & Contested Futures*

The title of Angela Mitropoulos' *Contract and Contagion* (C&C) points the reader immediately to two terrains of tension and contestation: first, the interplay between contract and contagion, and second, the shifting conceptual prisms of biopolitics and oikonomia. Mitropoulos argues throughout C&C that the particular chemistry of contract and contagion, the taking of form of the valorization of contingency, is the pivotal problematic of capitalist re-/production, and thus futurity. The contract is that form and rule which traces a past into the present and projects a future as a specifically capitalist form of life, in that 'the interaction between contracts and contagions models the recomposition of an open field into the closed system of capitalism' (168). However, the apparent neat alignment of the contractual, projected *way of life* with the theoretical framework of *biopolitics* is ultimately insufficient to the task of grasping the real novelty of what Mitropoulos calls neocontractualism – the infinite contractualism of post-Fordism. The prism of oikonomia sharpens the critique of re-/production as a historically specific capitalist form, and of the present arrangement of such as an infinite contractualism. Further, the critique of oikonomia gives critical expression to the complex weaving of genealogy, the 'household', work and the extraction of surplus labour and value. It is ultimately in this latter theoretical innovation that Mitropoulos succeeds in articulating with precision what often passes unproblematically as the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism, in identifying the dimensions

of the asymmetries in the relationship between labour and capital, as well as in destabilizing many inherited assumptions of left political thought. This is, then, an unsettling of the received accounts of political economy, subjectivity and activity, and a relocating of the clinamen as that political force and moment which might project a different future. In a time when questions of political representation and organisation as Party recirculate heavy with nostalgia, foreshortening not only left critique but also the political horizons of contemporary anti-capitalism, Mitropoulos's arguments for a radically queer Marxian and Lucretian materialism that resists the pull for the 'princely seizure of power' and the 'restoration of foundations', is both timely and important.

Most crucially, it is in Mitropoulos' insistence on the critique of the restoration of foundations, and the refusal of the normative genealogical lines through which property and right pass, that sets C&C apart. This is not merely an academic question, but one which political movements must confront. Against the return to foundations left and right, against the re-inscription of normative positions as the basis for politics, C&C opens a debate for politics to pursue a 'genealogy otherwise' and a 'non-genealogical approach to life'. This is a serious question, and a very difficult challenge. Indeed, what a response to this question might look like in practice is hard to formulate.

Nonetheless, Mitropoulos' response to this question, whilst not made exactly explicit, or at least not at length in the pages of C&C, remains I think consistent with the kind of practical, Lucretian materialism developed throughout the book. The 'annotation' titled '*Infrastructure, Infra-political*' ultimately sets the terms for confronting the problem of politics conceived as genealogy otherwise. Mitropoulos' argument for infrastructure and the infra-political concerns the question of politics as one that allows for activity to occur, for different, open attachments and affinities to form, and others to fall away. Infrastructure and the infra-political become, for Mitropoulos, the necessary terms for the refusal of the politics of mediation and representation.

This is an important contribution to the contemporary debate on political organization and form. C&C's insistence on infrastructure and the infra-political counters the calls for the institutionalization of movements (for example Hardt and Negri, *Commonwealth*), for the reformation of the Party and the necessary hammering down of the line that comes with it (for example Jodi Dean, *Communist Horizon*, or 'Party in the USA'), for the re-occupation of formal political institutions, and for the re-glorification of the Prince as he who makes the political decision to affect change in consciousness (for example Mark Fisher's comments in *Give me shelter*, Frieze Magazine). Whilst the latter arguments all insist, in one way or another, on the delimiting of politics, space and form in time (and arguably the rearrangement of both hierarchical and idealist foundations of subjectivity, for eg see the footnote on Negri on page 10), the infrastructural and infra-political insists instead on movement and relation, the establishment of the conditions that allow for such, and the refusal of representation. It is not, then, about '*the*' organization and its political line that the infrastructural is concerned with, but rather the amplification of politics as lived reality. The problematic is that of whether 'infrastructure can be a field of experimentation and variation rather than repetition of the self-same'. In a pithy formulation, Mitropoulos puts it as follows: 'the infra-political...revisions activism not as representation but as the provisioning of infrastructure for movement, generating nomadic inventiveness rather than a royal expertise' (117). In the essay 'Autonomy,

Recognition, Movement' published in 2006, discussing the autonomy of migration and movement, Mitropoulos pointed out that 'mediation always risks positioning itself as an instance of capture'. The discussion here in C&C, is a deeper explication of what it will take to refuse such a politics of mediation. In this, politics is expressed as a series and variability of attachments and detachments, affections and disaffections, visibility and invisibility. The 'royal expertise' of the Prince and the Party is rejected, and instead emerges a politics that emphasizes the movements and swerves of bodies as that which animates political composition. As Mitropoulos points out, it is by definition impossible to pin down and predict with exactitude the clinamen, but the emphasis on the infrastructural and the in-between space of the infra-political is based firmly in the perspective that it is in the unpredictable swerve that political contestation and the possibility of new worlds arise.

2. The recurring limits of substantialist accounts of labour and value

One of the most powerful challenges I have taken from C&C is the rethinking of labour and the law of value as the law of the household. The framing of this problem in terms of contract allows the argument in C&C to move beyond a series of blockages in classical, as well as traditional Marxist, political economy, and to analyse in what ways the contractual is always in play when we speak of surplus value and labour. I agree with Angela that this is a revisiting of Marx's theory of value and of labour, and it is without doubt a necessary break with so much of "Marxism's" conception of labour in substantialist terms (and the politics that flow from that conception). That said, I also think that there is a consistency between Angela's argument and the direction Marx moves (alienation, fetishism of the commodity, surplus value). Or in other words, whilst Marx did break with a substantialist account of labour and value, and whilst the political implications of which remain pertinent, C&C develops an argument concerning the micro and macro materiality of the stakes of such a break in novel ways. As one illustration of this, the history of political economy, of much traditional Marxism, and even heretical Marxisms, has shown that the critique of capital has struggled to move forward without reinscribing various foundational accounts of labour and value. The appearance of the foundation has shifted over time, but the reliance upon foundation has remained. C&C I think helps us to cut across this.

To sketch this in the briefest of ways: Since the emergence of political economy, much of the controversy and debates concerning value have turned upon the role of labour within production generally, as well as on labour in its specific forms, but nonetheless often as an ahistorical or transhistorical category. One of the earliest foundations of an emergent labour theory of value is that the value of a commodity is equal to the amount of labour embodied in it. This foundation is in many ways the crux of substantialist accounts of the labour theory of value, and it is a limitation on the critique of value and labour that continues today. With the emergence of, and since, classical political economy the problem of thinking and theorising value is also a problem of how one understands labour: a given understanding of the theory of value will necessarily disclose something about how labour is understood. In this way the historical development of conceptions of labour occurs alongside, or entwined with, theorisations of value. For example, for the physiocrats agricultural labour was productive, for later theorists it was manufactures and industry took centre stage, whilst some contemporary theorists argue that informational, affective or immaterial labour is now the site of key productivity and the ontological anchor of any transformative politics. All of these debates have in various ways articulated labour theories

of value. However, a common limitation within each variation of these labour theories of value is that each tends to reproduce a substantialist conception of value, particular to the specific form of labour that it valorizes. Of course, the shifts in foundational forms of labour arise in relation to numerous other contributing factors, for example changes in technological development, political struggle, legal architectures and so on. However, what is of interest here is that otherwise ostensibly anti-capitalist perspectives, that is those that would seek the abolition of labour and capital, have also relied upon various remakings of foundational and substantialist accounts of labour and value.

As noted briefly above, I do think Marx can be removed this lineage, in so far as he broke with a substantialist account of labour and value. Whilst Marx wrote of the substance and magnitude of value in terms of labour and time, it is clear enough that he was not talking about this in terms of homogenous, concrete units of time and that the problem of the form of value, that is the historical specificity of capital, could not be reduced to these former categories. Indeed for Marx 'the vulgar economist has not the faintest idea that the actual everyday exchange relations can *not be directly identical* with the magnitudes of value' (Letter to Kugelman). However, I won't spend any time in this post as to why I think this is important in terms of Marx's theory of value, as it is of secondary importance. And to be clear this is not a disagreement with Angela's points concerning the wage contract, and the 'logical and political' necessity that 'surplus labour is that which is not recognized in or by the wage contract' (161). Nor do I disagree that Marx was writing at a time when women and children were being moved out of the factory, and as such there is much to gain from reading Marx's analysis of the factory acts and working day against the development of, as one example, family law (as C&C does, and also for example Janet Halley, *Family Law: a genealogy*, 2011). In this regard I think C&C is right to point to how Marx 'misunderstood the character of the wage contract as the organisation of right and surplus labour in its socially amplified senses' (165). However, in this post I would simply like to quickly place C&C's analysis of oikonomia within the frame of contemporary debates on the question of value and substance.

For the sake of simplicity I would point to two contemporary Marxist perspectives that are important and useful in confronting this question of substance and value: that associated with value-form theory, and that developing out of the perspective of operaismo. These perspectives represent two poles in the limit concerning contemporary critiques of value, labour and substance, but they are more instructive than most for that reason. I would suggest that C&C's development of oikonomia helps us to pick up the insights from these perspectives whilst simultaneously cutting across them.

To continue with extreme brevity: The limit associated with first pole of value-form theory, is that an over-emphasis on the value-form, whilst breaking with substantialist accounts of labour, makes it extremely difficult to speak of what I would call the micro-materiality of (re)production – what C&C might call genealogical economies and the 'meshing of gender, class, sex and race'. For one example from the perspective of value-form theory, Michael Heinrich (2012) argues that 'the "substance of value" as a figure of speech has frequently been understood in a quasi-physical manner: the worker has expended a specific quantity of abstract labour and this quantity exists *within the individual commodity* and turns the isolated article into an object of value' (44). In a similar manner to I.I Rubin, Heinrich also emphasizes that abstraction is a real

event that occurs through exchange, and that moreover, the relationship between exchange, abstraction and value disrupts the substantialist account of value and labour. Heinrich argues that 'abstract labour cannot be measured in terms of hours of labour: every hour of labour measured by a clock is an hour of a particular concrete act of labour...abstract labour, on the other hand cannot be expended at all. Abstract labour is a relation of social validation that is constituted in exchange' (50). Exchange and abstraction take place and mediate the relation between the individual labour and the total social labour, value is expressed in this process: 'only with the act of exchange does value obtain an objective value form'. As a result, it is not possible to see value as a particular thing that simply exists in a commodity at the end of production.^[1] Moishe Postone has made a similar point in arguing that 'what renders them [immaterial or material commodities] commensurable is value, a historically specific form of wealth that has nothing to do with their properties, whether material or immaterial, but is the crystallized expression of a historically specific form of social mediation that, in Marx's analysis, is constituted by a historically specific form of labor'. So, in this manner, whilst value-form theory powerfully undercuts the substantialist concept of labour as a transhistorical category and source of foundational value, and complicates the relationship between time and value, a significant limitation to this perspective lies in its inability to take up the lived temporalities and dimensions to work, whether it be waged, unwaged and so on. The theoretical plane of value and equivalence is in this respect ill equipped to deal with the punctuations (or lack thereof) of work and the stratifications of class along lines of race, gender and sex. In much the same way as exchange-value, for Marx, contains not an atom of use-value, or inasmuch as abstract labour cares not for the concrete forms of labour, value-form theory has little to say about the life, arrangements, and refusal, of work.

The second pole, that of post-operaismo, moves in a different direction. Post-operaismo rejects the substantialist account of labour and value, primarily (if ironically) because it accepts the Ricardian rendering of the theory. However, the paradoxical result of the rejection of the substantialist theory of value is its re-inscription 'from below' as value-affect. The post-workerists', particularly the Negrian variant, engagement with value and labour flattens labour and value into a singular, smooth, productive and ontological substance. As Antonio Negri has put it: 'In this paradoxical way, labor becomes affect, or better, labor finds its value in affect, if affect is defined as the "power to act" (Spinoza). The paradox can thus be reformulated in these terms: The more the theory of value loses its reference to the subject (measure was this reference as a basis of mediation and command), the more the value of labor resides in affect, that is, in living labor that is made autonomous in the capital relation, and expresses...its power of self-valorization'. From this point of departure, the ontologisation of labour qua affect is similarly, albeit for different reasons, unable to speak of the stratifications of labour. Indeed, the reconfiguration of value and labour as value-affect becomes a new foundation.

It is somewhere between and beyond the above perspectives that I think oikonomia can be an important critical lens. That is C&C presents an argument that does not reside in a substantialist account of value, that refuses to refund politics in a valorisation of the labouring subject, and which through oikonomia and contract traces the asymmetries that necessarily underscore the formal equivalence of value and exchange. Maybe I am stretching the terms too far, but I think it is also possible to take up questions of the content and form of value with these terms of oikonomia and contract. Anyway, perhaps paradoxically, despite this attention to detail in terms

of surplus labour and value, or perhaps precisely because of it, C&C ultimately rejects any productivist foundation for politics. Which of course is a part of what is meant here: 'ultimately this is a question about the abolition of labour (and capital) that is not premised on the mystification of either labour or capital.' Whilst arguments for the abolition of labour and value (as much as I like them) can tend to be lost at such a level of abstraction that it is difficult to find where to begin with 'politics', the posing of the interplay between contract and contagion may help see beyond this abstraction.

The following are notes from a talk I gave at the *Crisis and Commons* conference in Tokyo, December 2012 (<http://crisisandcommons.wordpress.com/>), which draws heavily from *Contract and Contagion* and tries to play with a couple of concepts from the book.

3. (under)commons of affect and the critique of labour: disaffection & affective composition

'When we can only confide in each other enough to speak of struggle (communal, abstract, heroic), but not of sadness (aloneness, in this minute...) then we have not done enough, we are not doing enough for each other's liberation' – Anwyn Crawford, 'The politics of sadness'

'What I would like to see emerge is a new approach to politics that doesn't see "personal" or "interpersonal" problems (mental illness, harassment, violence) as issues best kept to the private sphere, but which regrettably overflow those boundaries and unfortunately interrupt the real business of revolutionaries... This perspective offers me nothing.' – J, reproduced from personal correspondence

The following is an attempt to move beyond the impasse of post-workerist theories of affective labour and the common, and to develop instead a process of affective composition that takes place within an undercommon.^[2] Specifically, the underlying question approached throughout is that of what would it involve to make affective infrastructures^[3] of political movement in such a way that we are not required to excise the messiness of our lives from the terrain of politics: for example our mental health, grief, sadness, illnesses and so on. If there is to be a politics and/of the common, these are as much of it as anything else. To be sure, there is much in the world to ruin our bodies' capacities to make relationships that don't reproduce capital and the gendered, racial, sexual and familial attachments that mark this reproduction. And yet despite this we do make different relationships, and we do so in a way that isn't just reactive. However, our collective negotiation of these tensions arguably needs more thorough theorisation and work in practice.

In what follows two elements within an affective circuit are proposed^[4] as one contribution to carrying out such theorisation, and to reflect on some practices: one of disaffection, another as affective composition.

Disaffection can be thought of in this context as a refusal arising from our experience of being

variable capital and re/productive labour, as well as the forms that our traumas and tensions take, within our bodies and between them. As Alondra Nelson has stated, 'health is politics by other means',^[5] so within this term is included those questions of our emotional, mental, bodily health. Affective composition, as the second element in a circuit, is the making of 'other' relations to those of reproduction, which are created in processes of movement/struggle. This is not to imply a clear separation, rather that participation in movement, draws into play our disaffections, as well as allowing us to make new ways of relation.

The infrastructures through which political movement forms, which draw into play our disaffections as well as compose new relations, what I refer to as a circuit of disaffection and affective composition, is something different to reproduction. If, following Mitropoulos, we understand reproduction to be the fundament or axiom of capitalist futurity, in which 'reproduction [is] a specifically capitalist form of foundationalism',^[6] then when we succeed in these struggles, we are not involved in reproduction but the formation of different ways of living: against reproduction of the same and for variation, generation and recombination.

Affects at work and the rejection of biopolitical auto-commoning

The significance of linking the critique of capital with that of affects can be pointed to most simply in terms of the problem of work. Firstly, an engagement with certain labour processes involved in re/production and circulation involve an affective dimension. This may not warrant the novelty it is accorded in post-workerist thought, particularly given that various forms of 'affective labour' have long pre-existed contemporary or post-Fordist work arrangements. Still, there is a need to talk about affect in relation to work specifically across the present conjuncture. More specifically, it is necessary to come to terms with how intimacies and affects are (re)arranged for the reproduction of the normative conditions for the production, circulation and accumulation of value. In so far as the managerial techniques for the discipline and control of labour increasingly turn to affective discourses and practices in order to integrate labour in the valorisation process, the critique of affects is important. In this latter sense it is possible to argue that today management through affects constitutes an element of the technical composition of class relations.^[7] It is therefore important to come to terms with the arrangements of intimacy, affects, and how these are gendered, racialised and mobilised in the reproduction of capital today.

It is thus necessary to create a break with the sense of auto-commoning that is produced in many autonomist Marxist and post-workerist theories of affective labour and biopolitical production. This auto-commoning is often said to emerge directly from the labour processes of various post-Fordist forms of work, such as service work, cultural production or care work. This argument tends to valorise existing forms of labour and relationship, rather than carrying out a critique of labour within capitalism. This allows these theorists to avoid a series of the contradictions of intimate/emotional/affective forms of work, and also misarticulates the affective processes involved in developing political composition and struggle. As Federici has argued against the perspective of post-workerism, the alleged common that is internal to labour and external to capital within these labour-processes does not in fact exist in many cases, that 'in no case is commoning a given, an automatic development immanent in the work itself'.^[8] For example, as Emma Dowling has shown, there is nothing inherently commoning within the

affective labour of restaurant work.^[9] Following this, the idea that it is ‘human sociability as such that is valorised’ in affective labour, is deeply flawed.

Work, Capital, Disaffection

It is against the perspective of affective labour and the auto commons that a new perspective on the critique of affect and work can be developed. As Mitropoulos argues, ‘it is not...authentic human sociability that is valorised in affective labour, but the apparently genuine circulation of affect as *if it is not work*’.^[10] Mitropoulos links this perspective with the analyses of emotional labour in Hochschild’s *The managed heart*: ‘Workers who refuse to perform emotional labour are said to go into robot...Under conditions of speed-up and slowdown, covering up a lack of genuine feeling is no longer considered necessary. Half-heartedness has gone public’.^[11] Throughout her analysis and critique of the oikonomia, a concept of the household that functions as a prism in which the reproduction of capital, the distribution of work and surplus are racialised, gendered and ordered along familial and national lines, Mitropoulos goes further than Hochschild in showing how intimacies and affects are mobilised in the valorisation of value.

Mitropoulos speculates that, in a condition of public half-heartedness, ‘perhaps the oikos is haunted not by communism – at least not as it has come to be understood as party, or state or policy – but by disaffection, a detachment from the oikonomic that signals attachments otherwise, and for this reason, barely decipherable by conventional political analyses’.^[12] Of importance here are the tensions involved in reproducing the norms of reproduction on one hand, and the desire and actuality of breaking, detaching from these norms on the other, with disaffection as the bodily expression of this tension.

An undercommons of affect and infrastructures for affective composition?

The discussion so far does not point to an auto-commoning condition of affective labour, in which a natural sociability and common producing life is expropriated by capital. Rather, what we see when we acknowledge the arrangements of intimacies and affects in the reproduction of capital, and the mobilisation of affect in re/production and circulation, is antagonism and struggle across the forms of these arrangements. Not a cooperative common present at the beginning, middle and end of the production process, expropriated externally by capital as rentier, but terrains of work to be critiqued like all other forms of labour within capitalism.

Rather than this visible common that animates work, it is perhaps useful to look instead to an undercommon of affective life. Developing the term from Fred Moten and Stefano Harney,^[13] Shukaitis has argued that ‘while the undercommons are from capital’s perspective the unacknowledged self-organization of the despised, discounted, and anti-social, from an autonomous perspective they are something else entirely: the self-organization of the incommensurate. They embody a process of self-organized dis-identification’.^[14] With a slightly different inflection, we can point from dis-identification, to disaffection and detachment, with the potential for attachment otherwise and composition. The actuality of our (dis)affective knowledge of the world is incommensurate with the necessities of capitalist reproduction, and is thus scattered throughout an undercommon of affect: our anxieties, joys, sadnesses, illnesses, hopes.

To take a recent example here, we could look to stories from Occupy. We have heard of the 'resignations from the American Dream'^[15] that emerged as a part of the Occupy phenomenon, as well as the re-emergence of occupy infrastructures in the form of #OccupySandy in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.^[16] Circulating throughout these examples are relations of disaffection and detachment, as well as the making of infrastructures for relating differently. However, there remains the problem, within these processes, of the potential re-inscription of 'normal' standards and forms of living. The homeless question within occupy raised the problem of such a re-inscription.^[17] Within this 'question', and in keeping with the financialised context in which Occupy emerged, the homeless were considered variously as either an asset or a risk: does the homeless body prove the genuine truth of the camps, or does it detract from the real fight. The question of 'why are you here', which arose through the homeless question, with the emphasis on the issue of what one was contributing to the 'movement' as the index against which measure was made of politics and the individual, provides this reinscription. Similar issues arose around more explicit questions of mental health.^[18] Each of these issues raises the question of how to let the complete complexities of our affective life circulate throughout political composition, and the struggle to resist the reimposition of normative forms, and indeed, how to negotiate these tendencies. The example of Occupy is raised not to condemn it, indeed many infrastructural projects such as the Mindful Occupation^[19] reader arose to address these problems, but rather to illustrate the difficulties with which a political manifestation that spreads across such an array of bodies is confronted, when organising across the myriad disaffections our bodies express.

This last point brings us to a final question concerning an affective undercommon, again looking into the spaces in between and beyond those that are usually visible and spoken, returning us to the quotes at the beginning of this paper.

Eight years ago, a friend wrote: 'When we can only confide in each other enough to speak of struggle (communal, abstract, heroic), but not of sadness (aloneness, in this minute...) then we have not done enough, we are not doing enough for each other's liberation'.^[20] Whilst more recently, another friend has written, 'What I would like to see emerge is a new approach to politics that doesn't see "personal" or "interpersonal" problems (mental illness, harassment, violence) as issues best kept to the private sphere, but which regrettably overflow those boundaries and unfortunately interrupt the real business of revolutionaries: unionising workplaces. This perspective offers me nothing.'^[21]

The above concerns were expressed within the context of broader conversations about political organisation in Australia and its limitations, eight years apart. I would argue that they express a variation of the problematic outlined in the above notes. Perhaps this could be described as a refusal of representation: a rejection of imposed affective performativity, and a desire for an actual affective recomposition. The problem identified in each of the above quotes is that of how the ostensibly 'political space' reinscribes norms of affective performativity, a clear delimitation of 'politics' and an assumption of the need to keep certain things outside of political organising. Within each perspective, that which is left out is the area of emotion, mental health, illnesses and so on. Moreover, not only is there an assumption to keep a 'space' clear, but we struggle to find the ways in which to speak this area of our lives as if it is political. It is with this problem in mind that we could consider an undercommon of affect. An emphasis on an undercommon of

disaffections and composition, challenges us to not excise these areas of our lives, but to move and speak through them, moving across disaffection and affective composition.

[1] It is of course implausible to reduce value-form theory to the perspective of Heinrich, as there are significant debates concerning value-form. Indeed there are disagreements over the specificity of the significance of exchange as outlined by Heinrich. However for the sake of this post, the example of Heinrich suffices. For a useful overview of some common points of value-form theory see, 'Communitisation and value-form theory', Endnotes 2: 68-105.

[2] The ideas developed throughout this paper are drawn largely from Angela Mitropoulos, *Contract and Contagion: from biopolitics to oikonomia*, (Minor Compositions, London: 2012). The term 'affective composition' is developed from Jason Read. Read uses this term to indicate the layers, forms and dynamics of relationship and attachment that we make in struggle. Jason Read, 'The affective composition of labour', URL: <http://www.unemployednegativity.com/2011/05/affective-composition-of-labor.html>

[3] Infrastructure is posed rather than institutions or networks, as 'the answer given to movement and relation', whilst the infrastructural itself 'is a question not of who...but of how affinities take shape, or not'. Infrastructure/infra-political points to the spaces in-between, which allow, or block, affinities and composition. 'As an answer to the question of movement and relation, infrastructure is the "promiscuous infrastructures" that have sustained the occupations and encampments of Tahrir Square, Wall Street, and Oakland. The infra-political builds toilets in homeless encampments in Sacramento; by-passes pre-paid water meters, trickler systems and privatised water piping in Durban; formulates vocabularies of reconfiguration rather than foreclosure and standardisation; delivers health care to noborder protests and undocumented migrants; creates phone apps for evading kettling by police in London; digs tunnels under national boundaries; and more – the infra-political, in other words, revisions activism not as representation but as the provisioning of infrastructure for movement, generating nomadic inventiveness rather than a royal expertise.' *Contract and Contagion*, pp117; 116; 117.

[4] The term affective circuit is used to name a way to think how different but related forces, those of disaffection and composition, are mutually constituted in our lived experience of the world.

[5] Alondra Nelson, *Body and Soul: the Black Panther Party and the fight against medical discrimination*, (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis: 2011).

[6] *Contract and Contagion*, p28.

[7] I have written a little about this in 'The modulation and ordering of affect', in *Fibreculture*, 21.

[8] Silvia Federici, 'On affective labour', in Michael Peters and Ergin Bulut (eds) *Cognitive capitalism, education and digital labour*, (Peter Lang Publishing, New York: 2011), p 70.

[9] Emma Dowling, 'Producing the dining experience: measure, subjectivity and the affective worker' in *Ephemera*, 7:1, 2007.

[10] *Contract and Contagion*, p174

[11] Arlie Hochschild, *The managed heart: commercialization of human feeling*, (University of California Press, California: 2003), p129. Also cited in *Contract and Contagion*, p175.

[12] *Contract and Contagion*, p175

[13] Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, 'The University and the Undercommons: seven theses', in *Social Text*, 22:2, 2004.

[14] Stephen Shukaitis, 'The wisdom to make worlds: strategic reality and the art of the undercommons. URL: <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0311/shukaitis/en>

[15] Marco Roth, 'Letters of Resignation from the American Dream', in *Occupy: Scenes from Occupied America*, (Verso, London: 2011).

[16] Sarah Jaffe, 'Power to the people: occupy's afterlife, a dispatch from New York's dark zones', in *Jacobin Magazine*, URL: <http://jacobinmag.com/2012/11/power-to-the-people/>

[17] Christopher Herring and Zoltan Gluck 'The homeless question', in *Occupy: Scenes from occupied America*.

[18] Nathan Schneider, 'Radical mental health in Occupy', URL: <http://wagingnonviolence.org/2012/06/radical-mental-health-in-occupy-open-minds-and-open-source/>

[19] <http://mindfuloccupation.org/>

[20] Anwyn Crawford, 'The politics of sadness', in *Arson Zine*, 2004.

[21] Personal correspondence.

Mark Gawne is finishing a PhD at the University of Sydney, which develops a critique of the political impasse produced in the ontological turn of recent post-operaista theory, specifically through a critique of the particular postworkerist entwining of labour, affect and value.