



MICHAŁ DUDEK

JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY IN KRAKOW

NIHIL NOVI SUB SOLE:
LAW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF POLITICAL
ACCELERATIONISM*

Introduction

Many notions, concepts and even whole theories developed either by committed left thinkers or thinkers who inspired the left without explicitly expressing or admitting their own political attachments and preferences have had a great influence on broader reflections on law in modern societies. Such works contain either original and thought-provoking approaches to the study of law (consider, for example, the deconstruction of law and justice proposed by Jacques Derrida [1992] in the late 1980s and 1990s) or have been used (and continue to be used) as a kind of starting point and inspiration for legal scholars in their attempts to develop new ways of thinking about law (the relatively recent attempts to create Deleuzean or Deleuzoguattarian legal philosophies can be regarded as good examples of this tendency¹).

Keeping in mind this noticeable tendency, we can begin by asking if the same phenomenon exists in the case of some of the more recent developments in broadly understood left critical thought. This article focuses on political accelerationism², one of the most controversial and

* The previous version of this article was presented at the international conference *Radical Future and Accelerationism*, June 18–19, 2016, Kraków, Poland. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the organisers and participants for their inspiring comments. Naturally, this does not change the fact that I alone am responsible for any substantive shortcomings of this article.

¹ Limited only to monographs, see Lefebvre, 2008; Mussawir, 2011; and Murray, 2013.

² Steven Shaviro (2010, pp. 136–137) distinguishes between accelerationism as a political or aesthetic strategy; this article focuses on the former.

lively debated proposals in recent left thought³. Political accelerationism is an idea that postulates a specific reversal of the anticapitalistic agenda. According to this notion, we should not try to stop or interrupt capitalism but instead attempt to use capitalism against itself either by making it as a whole go even faster, pushing it to its limits and beyond until it collapses, or by appropriating some of its elements or tendencies for alternative, emancipatory purposes. The article asks, in particular, whether political accelerationism, as an idea and theoretical current, is similar to certain previous developments in left critical thought in that it either offers a new approach to law or, if it does not contain any explicitly expressed original take on law, enables a novel and fresh conceptualisation of law to be drawn from it. In other words, does political accelerationism bring anything new to the table with respect to law, or can we, on its basis, come up with or reconstruct an original way of thinking about law?

Accordingly, this article offers a preliminary discussion of law from the perspective of the theory and (hypothetical) practice of political accelerationism, and, more importantly, it assesses the broadly understood originality of possible approaches to law based on the political accelerationist standpoint (or standpoints). The thesis of the article is that even though political accelerationism presents a relatively new and undoubtedly refreshing approach to the broadly understood anticapitalistic agenda, it does not offer an original approach to law. Moreover, it seems that we cannot take, draw or reconstruct any original (previously unknown) perspective on law from the debates on political accelerationism.

The article discusses two particular theoretical points of reference with respect to the law-political accelerationism nexus. First, it examines the basic, general and extremely controversial formulation of political accelerationism as reconstructed by Benjamin Noys. It then addresses the more widely discussed, more specific and perhaps more mature vision offered by Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams.

³ This is evidenced by important monographs and edited volumes such as Noys, 2014; Mackay and Avanesian (eds.), 2014; and Srnicek and Williams, 2016. It is also shown by many articles, reviews and commentaries published in various blogs and journals, which can be easily followed using the aggregator <https://monoskop.org/Accelerationism>, accessed 16 June 2017.

For the sake of clarity of argument, the article applies a single framework for the analysis of both selected versions of political accelerationism. First, it briefly presents the particular version (Presentation). Second, it assesses whether law is taken into account and addressed in the original formulation of that version in order to determine how much attention is paid to law by Noys and Srnicek and Williams (Assessment). Finally, an attempt is made to reconstruct an approach or approaches to law from the particular version, and the originality of these approaches is determined (Attempt). The article then offers some general conclusions with respect to political accelerationism's unoriginality with respect to law. It also suggests other aspect of the law-political accelerationism nexus that needs to be addressed separately, especially if we think of political accelerationism as a viable practical proposition.

Benjamin Noys's Version of Political Accelerationism

Presentation

We begin with an analysis of Noys's version of political accelerationism. This can be regarded not only as the most pure and extreme formulation of this idea but also as its first formulation (or, more precisely, reconstruction). Noys presents his understanding of this notion first in *The Persistence of the Negative: A Critique of Contemporary Continental Theory* (Noys, 2010, p. 5). In *Malign Velocities: Accelerationism and Capitalism*, he then provides a thorough, albeit kaleidoscopic, review of its more or less evident roots, inspirations and critiques (Noys, 2014). His references in the latter work are wide-ranging, including Karl Marx (and Friedrich Engels), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Jean-Francois Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Italian Futurism, Walter Benjamin, Bertolt Brecht, Georges Bataille, the novels of William Gibson and Thomas Pynchon, the Detroit techno scene and the work of the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit⁴. However, the way of thinking about overcoming

⁴ Some supplements to Noys's list can be found in the sections *Anticipations* and *Ferment* in Mackay and Avanesian (eds.), 2014.

capitalism noticed by Noys can be summed up in a single statement: The way out of capitalism as an actual exploitative social organisation is not to rupture or obstruct it but to allow for its further expansion and even to make it go faster until it reaches its critical point, collapses, suffers a meltdown or exhausts itself.

Assessment

In the works mentioned above, Noys offers a general reconstruction of this basic understanding of political accelerationism, presenting a genealogy of this particular version and criticising it, albeit in very broad terms. Bearing in mind what Noys actually wants to achieve, it is understandable that any references to law in his writings on political accelerationism are extremely scarce and general. Such references include a few fragments of *Malign Velocities: Accelerationism and Capitalism*⁵. In the introduction to this book, Noys mentions “Lyotard’s weird promotion of the doctrine of mercantilism – as articulated in France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this is an economic doctrine that aims to control foreign trade in order to secure a positive balance of trade.” Obviously, this doctrine was also mirrored in particular legal regulations. In addition, in Chapter 4 Noys comments on the notorious work of Nick Land and the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit, stating that from their perspective “the acceleration of capitalism was held back by State spending and State regulation.” Again, law seems to be only in the background of the analysis, and it becomes visible only when we make the effort to actually discover the more detailed assumptions and presuppositions behind the rather vague statements. Finally, in Chapter 5, we find the statement—a reconstruction of an opinion of Paolo Virno—that “capitalism recuperated and redeployed communist elements (abolition of wage labor, extinction of the state and valorization of the individual’s uniqueness) for its own purposes.” We can safely say that at least the first two of the three communist elements mentioned here are impossible outside the medium of law, not only contemporarily.

Although we can find some legal traces in Noys’s analyses (as shown above), it seems justified to say that in his account law is simply to a

⁵ All points discussed in this section are from Noys, 2014, not from Noys, 2010.

great extent ignored. Nonetheless, we can ask ourselves what can be drawn from Noys's understanding of political accelerationism with respect to law.

Attempt

The attempt to draw the image of relationship between law and political accelerationism (no matter which particular version of it) is of significance for one reason in particular. If we want to analyse in a thorough and serious manner the basic understanding of political accelerationism (or any of its other formulations) as a hypothetically viable political project, then we need to take law very seriously as an ubiquitous element in contemporary capitalistic societies, asking questions about how a political accelerationist agenda and modern law relate to each other. As has been seen, Noys's version of political accelerationism is extremely vague. Accordingly, it should not be surprising that attempts to understand its possible perspectives on law do not—or perhaps even cannot—provide a certain and unequivocal answer.

Ultimately, anyone who starts thinking about law from the perspective of political accelerationism is likely to come up with the following question. Is law in fact an inseparable part of capitalistic organisation that should also be accelerated along with the whole of capitalism in order to overcome it? If we venture to answer “yes”, then this political accelerationist approach to law is extremely similar to, if not simply identical with, the original Marxist approach to law based on the classical base–superstructure distinction (see, for instance, Marx, 1977; on the original Marxist approach to law, see also Treviño, 2010, pp. 93–110). In this, law, as part of the superstructure deriving from the economic relations constituting the capitalistic base, is ultimately determined by the base and cannot cause any fundamental change in social organisation. Law also cannot act as the motor of the acceleration of capitalism beyond its limits because it is merely a specific shadow or reflection of much deeper economic processes and regularities. Change has to come from within the base, not from the superstructure above.

However, while this approach seems to be all-encompassing, it is not the only one available. We can also come up with different ideas for the

relationship between law and political accelerationism, as can be expressed by the following question: Is law more or less independent from economic relations and thus able to be used as a tool against exploitation? If we answer “yes”, then this particular political accelerationist approach to law is similar to, if again not simply identical with, the approach of the famous Austrian Marxist theorist Karl Renner (see, most notably, Renner, 2010; see also Treviño 2010, pp. 119–124). In the diverse Marxist legal theory tradition, Renner is commonly known as the author of the thesis that law is a capacious form—a specific vessel that can be filled with different content (including socialist content) that can be in opposition to capitalism. According to Renner, law is not an exclusively “bourgeois” construct, and on this ground it will not “wither away” with capitalistic social organisation and its derivatives, as famously argued by another influential Marxist legal theorist, Evgeny Bronislavovich Pashukanis (see, most notably, Pashukanis, 2003; see also Treviño, 2010, pp. 113–117). Consequently, law as a construct that is to a certain extent autonomous and independent of economic relations (rather than simply derived from them) seems to have the potential to be used for actual emancipatory accelerationist purposes. However, as will be shown in a moment, it is not quite so simple.

As can easily be guessed at this point, the adoption of either of these two general approaches raises further questions. If we adopt the first perspective that assumes that law is part of the problem (as an inherently capitalistic construct) and that it should be accelerated as well, then we need to know how or by what means we can accelerate the whole of capitalism, including its law. This standpoint, according to which law as a product of economic capitalistic relations cannot bring any change to these relations, forces us to return to the dispute about the motor of acceleration. For instance, when we exclude law from this particular role, we can come up with a solution similar to Land’s thesis on involuntary acceleration and argue that capitalism (or money itself) is an accelerator (see, for example, Land, 2014, p. 515)⁶, or we can argue

⁶ Land’s radical, if not extreme, approach according to which capitalism itself is its own accelerator is sometimes referred to as “right accelerationism”; see, for instance, Mackay and Avanesian, 2014, p. 35. However, keeping in mind the general anticapitalistic focus of political accelerationism, it seems questionable to introduce a distinction between “left” and “right accelerationism.” Accordingly, this article

that something else can be treated or used as an accelerator, such as labour—an approach criticised by Noys (see Noys, 2014).

On the other hand, if we adopt the second perspective according to which the position of law in relation to capitalistic organisation is much more complex than a simple relationship between a part (or a derivative) and a whole, thus accepting that law can act differently or even go in the opposite direction to the logic of capitalism, then the political accelerationist approach to law stops being so passive (and, in a way, pessimistic) and becomes instead more complicated. Ultimately, we are able to observe the specific dual nature of law with respect to capitalistic organisation. As already suggested, law can be considered as having the potential to be one of the main tools for accelerating capitalism, for instance through hypothetically removing the legal restrictions imposed on capitalism's operations (e.g., by freeing markets or reducing the obligations of employers towards their employees resulting from labour laws). By contrast, law can also be regarded as one of the main obstacles to bringing capitalism to its end by allowing for its free expansion, because of, for instance, the already existing legal protections of human and workers' rights, assuming that they are actually effective and realising their official goals. Accordingly, there is a significant inner tension in law with respect to the broadly understood anticapitalistic agenda, including political accelerationism. Almost simultaneously, law can be used as a tool against capitalism and as a tool against anticapitalism.

To conclude, Noys's version of political accelerationism does not offer a new take on law. He seems to barely touch upon the legal dimension of some of the phenomena he addresses. Moreover, not only can we not find an original vision of law in Noys's work, but also the arguments that can be drawn from Noys's version of political accelerationism with respect to law seem to be merely a repetition of basic standpoints in Marxist legal theory. Ultimately, from the perspective of Noys's basic understanding of political accelerationism, law can be considered either as something that is inherently capitalistic or as something that is not genetically connected with capitalism (i.e., as a capacious form that can carry content in favour of a political accelerationist agenda as well as

consistently identifies political accelerationism with the left.

content opposing it).

Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams's Version of Political Accelerationism

Presentation

After the above discussion of the basic understanding of political accelerationism, we can now look more carefully at the much more complex vision elaborated by Srnicek and Williams. First presented in the concise form of *#Accelerate: Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics* (Williams and Srnicek, 2014), then expanded in *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work* (Srnicek and Williams, 2016), Srnicek and Williams's bold, consistent and thought-provoking version of political accelerationism has aroused great interest among academics, activists and cultural and political commentators. Although Srnicek and Williams provide a plethora of diverse arguments in the course of presenting their vision, their political accelerationism basically proposes the use of various "tools" now employed by capitalism itself, especially technology, in order to go beyond capitalism and its constraints towards a particular vision of a postcapitalistic future (modelled around four demands: a far-reaching automation of work, a reduction of work, a universal basic income and a change in attitudes towards work).

Naturally, we might have some doubts as to whether the term accelerationism is appropriate with respect to the ideas of Srnicek and Williams. In fact, they seem to have these doubts themselves, as evidenced in one fragment of *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work* (Srnicek and Williams, 2016, Chapter 1, footnote 55). Moreover, their use of this term in the context of their proposal is criticised by many other thinkers, including Antonio Negri (2014, p. 372) and Patricia Reed (2014, pp. 523–524). Although these criticisms seem correct and some other term (e.g., "reorientationism", as suggested by Reed) would be more appropriate, the following discussion uses the term political accelerationism consistently with respect to Srnicek and Williams's vision, in accordance with the nomenclature widely adopted in the relevant discussions.

Assessment

Srnicek and Williams differ from Noys not only in the meanings they give to political accelerationism but also in the general goals they want to achieve. They do not discuss apractical genealogy but focus on a much more practically oriented critique of contemporary left politics, sketching a vision of the main goal for the left today—a specific utopian future that should be wanted and that is, in their opinion, perfectly achievable (they even suggest some ways in which to reach it). Given the evidently practical political ambitions of their work, it should not be surprising that in the course of their argument in *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work* there are many references to law. A closer examination of these references will provide an assessment of how much attention they pay to law in their work. It will also allow for a more detailed presentation of their vision and a reconstruction of their approach to law, as well as an evaluation of whether this is in any way original and novel⁷.

First, much of Chapters 1 and 2 is devoted to a broad sketch and critique of the mostly Western contemporary context for their proposals. They focus on contemporary left politics, which they criticise for lacking a precise and far-reaching vision of the future to be fought for and for being defensive rather than proactive (responding only to certain particular and locally noticeable injustices, even though their causes appear to be global or deterritorialised). Contemporary left politics are also attacked for being emotional, *ad hoc* and prefigurative (against political representation). The movements and actions they refer to, such as the well-known actions of the Occupy movement, have been the subjects of various legal responses, both in favour of and against them. Additionally, in their diagnosis of the contemporary left, they explicitly say about the use of law to “undermine solidarity” on the left, while also pointing to the legal recognition of some of the left’s ideas, all the while criticising the left’s noticeable dislike and distrust of political representation. As will be shown later, the latter critique has been

⁷ All points discussed in this section are from Srnicek and Williams, 2016, not from Williams and Srnicek, 2014.

transformed into an argument in favour of the left using legal parliamentary structures. Ultimately, the complex systemic nature of the contemporary global capitalistic economy, in which everything seems to be interconnected, requires to abandon faith that horizontal, bottom-up, local and overly emotional politics consisting of smaller or larger mass protests can actually make any substantial difference. Instead, Srnicek and Williams stress the need for a comprehensive vertical politics that not only formulates bold and all-encompassing goals but also specifies the means for achieving these goals, responding to the multidimensionality of the phenomena they want to influence. Such a politics seems implausible without the law. Unfortunately, this is barely addressed in the first chapters of their work.

Nevertheless, they see in the success of neoliberalism an example of, or even specific role model for, the kind of left politics for which they argue. In Chapter 3, which is devoted to this particular phenomenon, they suggest certain legal dimensions of neoliberalism, such as its focus on noninterventionism, private property rights and the legal construction of economic markets. However, these are still only brief remarks. Moreover, their neglect of the importance of law for the agenda they sketch continues throughout the rest of their argument.

Chapter 4, which is devoted to a presentation of the deep philosophical and anthropological assumptions underlying their project, elaborates on the authors' concept of synthetic freedom—a specific combination of negative freedom with guarantees of substantial conditions for realising this fully by human beings treated in an anti-essentialist way. This synthetic freedom is marked by “the provision of the basic necessities of life”, such as a universal basic income, healthcare and education (all of which take a legal form and are rather implausible outside the context of law, at least currently). It is also marked by, among other things, “the development of technological capacities”, such as “cyborg augmentations” and “technologically mediated reproduction” (whose introduction would be likely to be subject to significant legal controversies or even obstacles). Certainly, the legal dimension with respect to these elements constituting synthetic freedom seems obvious. Despite this, it is not addressed in an explicit manner by Srnicek and Williams. Once again, we often have to carefully analyse particular fragments of their work with the following question in mind: “How does

law relate to this, and how does this relate to law?”. Otherwise, the legal relevance of their vision of political accelerationism and its particular elements will remain unnoticed, with the obvious exception of their few explicit references to law.

We can also see law as underlying the arguments of the very important Chapter 6, which covers the core four demands or conditions for a postcapitalistic and postwork future: an automation of work, a reduction of work, a universal basic income and a change of attitudes towards work. Most of these demands are relevant to law in a very direct way since their actual realisation needs appropriate regulations. For instance, the broad automation of automatable work and its acceleration requires changes in public funding, which is regulated by law and takes the form of administrative decisions. Moreover, a modification of wages as an incentive for automation is also needed and is nearly impossible to imagine other than in the form of legal regulations. In order to implement the automation of work as far as possible, this also has to be economically attractive. The costs of automation should be lower than the costs of leaving certain work unautomated. To achieve this, it is necessary to make wages for unautomated work that is potentially automatable significantly higher than the costs of automation. Although this may not appear to be an overtly legal issue, the proposed process most probably will not happen unless the appropriate modification to wages is legally guaranteed and confirmed. This is also the case for the reduction of the working week and the implementation of a universal basic income. They are implausible without law.

Finally, in Chapters 7 and 8 the authors address certain possibilities concerning how and by what means the postcapitalistic future can be achieved. At times Srnicek and Williams suggest legally relevant solutions without highlighting their legal significance, while on other occasions they explicitly say about the need for legal instruments for their agenda. They emphasise such tasks as building a hegemony in opposition to the neoliberal one and influencing the education system. Not only will these very broad goals most likely not be reached without legal mediation, but also attempts should be made to adjust the law to the ideas and beliefs that they would like to successfully disseminate among society. Otherwise, a significant discrepancy will emerge that will most probably be detrimental both to the law (which will be inadequate for

disseminated postcapitalistic ideas) and to attempts to build a counter-hegemony (with the laws in force supporting a different set of beliefs).

These passages require careful reflection on the part of the reader in order to discover the legal issues connected to them. However, in the last parts of their work Srnicek and Williams also refer to the law explicitly. For instance, they advise the left not to avoid the party political system, as mentioned above, and argue that legal support is needed as a background to organisational issues. Naturally, anyone who comes to their work on political accelerationism with the question “where is the law in all of this?” will find many other legal traces, ranging from a brief reference to human rights (Chapter 4) to a bold demand for the abolition of interstate border controls (Chapter 5).

The above review justifies the statement that law is generally taken into account by Srnicek and Williams. However, this is very often in a broad, implicit manner that requires some analysis to see a particular argument in its actual complexity, including its legal dimension. Even when they are explicitly referring to law, legal institutions and regulations, their remarks remain vague. They focus on what to demand but not on how exactly a demand can be realised from the standpoint of a particular person or group at a particular moment. In the end, there is a significant difference between expressing a demand to abolish interstate border controls and actually knowing how to do this in the contemporary world. Nevertheless, we are still able to reconstruct the general approach they take to law.

Attempt

In comparison to the vague and indeed unclear idea of political accelerationism reconstructed by Noys, Srnicek and Williams’s vision is much more detailed. Consequently, it is possible to observe in their work a consistent approach to law. For them, law is merely a form that is able to accommodate a variety of different contents—in favour of as well as against their agenda. They do not assume any particular substance to law that would determine their assessment of law in general as positive or negative for the project they propose, as was the case in the first approach to law discussed from the perspective of Noys’s formulation of political accelerationism. For them, law is neither inherently bad nor

good, nor is it genetically connected or unconnected with capitalism in the neoliberal era. On this ground law can be used for different reasons. Their approach, then, is similar to, if not identical with, the approach of Renner mentioned earlier. If this diagnosis is correct, then we can venture to say that their approach to law, with its specific anti-essentialism, can be regarded to a certain extent as analogous to their explicit remarks on human nature (Chapter 4) and to their approach to technology and material infrastructure that can and should be repurposed for postcapitalistic ends, given that these are not inherently capitalistic or neoliberal constructs—a recurring theme in both *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work* and *#Accelerate: Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics*.

It can be argued, then, that anti-essentialism with respect to various phenomena, including law, runs throughout Srnicek and Williams's political accelerationism. However, this does not change the fact that their work, like that of Noys, does not offer a new approach to law. Certainly, they seem to be much more aware of the legal entanglements of their political accelerationism. However, the approach to law that seems to underlie it can be regarded as nothing more than a repetition of well-known perspective from Marxist legal theory as it is broadly understood.

Conclusion

Although it might seem quite harsh, the above analysis can be summarized as follows: *Nihil novi sub sole* (nothing new under the sun). At least to date, political accelerationism has not offered any explicit original conceptualisation of law. Moreover, the approach or approaches to law that can be reconstructed or drawn from the viewpoints on political accelerationism discussed above are similar to, if not simply identical with, certain basic positions in Marxist legal theory.

Naturally, Marxist legal theory was chosen as a point of reference for this analysis for a particular reason. If we can find the roots of political accelerationism in the original works of Marx himself⁸, then it is

⁸ As evidenced not only by Noys, 2010 and Noys, 2014 but also by the *Anticipations* section in Mackay and Avanesian (eds.), 2014, which begins with nothing other than

understandable to attempt to investigate the legal dimensions of accelerationist politics from Marxist perspectives. However, this does not mean that we cannot also choose other points of reference that might perhaps lead to different results from those presented—a conclusion that a particular reconstructable political accelerationist approach to law does not fit the particular framework used for comparison and thus does not repeat its more specific and detailed standpoints⁹.

Moreover, law, from a political accelerationist perspective, can be analysed according to the following framework that is in a way stripped of any explicit affiliation with any particular thinker or intellectual current. Ultimately, we can make a distinction between a precritical or noncritical approach to law, which does not assume any particular substance to law or any specific major function that is realised by it, and a critical approach to law, which assumes a hidden and controversial function of law that is not easily noticeable on the surface. Just as Noys's reconstructed vision can accommodate the original Marxist approach to law as well as the significantly different perspective of Renner, it can also go perfectly well with a more general critical or noncritical standpoint. In contrast, the diagnosis of Srnicek and Williams is unequivocal—the perspective on law in their work fits Renner's thesis or, if one does not like explicit Marxist references for whatever reason, the noncritical perspective.

Leaving aside other similar theoretical variations or modifications, it seems that lawyers and legal scholars simply do not need political accelerationists, for they do not seem to offer any new take on law or even suggest anything of novelty between the lines of their arguments. This does not, however, mean that there is nothing left of significance in the law-political accelerationism nexus. Indeed, political accelerationists who treat their ideas seriously as a practically realisable political project urgently need lawyers and legal scholars, for they are the ones who can adequately diagnose particular legal regulations and institutions from the perspective of their agenda and propose legal solutions and strategies for their cause. The realisation of this very specific legal task is required

an extract from Marx's *Fragment on Machines*.

⁹ I owe this remark to Nick Srnicek.

for the further development of political accelerationism¹⁰. However, due to its complexity, this needs to be addressed in a separate study.

¹⁰ A similar argument, but with reference to the state in general and not to law in particular, is made by Power, 2015.

REFERENCES

- Derrida, J. (1992). Force of Law: The “Mystical Foundation of Authority”. In D. Cornell, M. Rosenfeld, D. G. Carlson (eds.), *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice* (3–67). New York and London: Routledge.
- Land, N. (2014). Teleoplexy: Notes on Acceleration. In R. Mackay, A. Avanesian (eds.), *#Accelerate#: The Accelerationist Reader* (509–520). Falmouth and Berlin: Urbanomic and Merve.
- Lefebvre, A. (2008). *The Image of Law: Deleuze, Bergson, Spinoza*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Mackay, R., Avanesian, A. (eds.) (2014). *#Accelerate#: The Accelerationist Reader*. Falmouth and Berlin: Urbanomic and Merve.
- Mackay, R., Avanesian, A. (2014). Introduction. In R. Mackay, A. Avanesian (eds.), *#Accelerate#: The Accelerationist Reader* (1–47). Falmouth and Berlin: Urbanomic and Merve.
- Marx, K. (1977). Preface. In K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. With some notes by R. Rojas. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm>, accessed 16 June 2017.
- Murray, J. (2013). *Deleuze & Guattari: Emergent Law*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Mussawir, E. (2011). *Jurisdiction in Deleuze: The Expression and Representation of Law*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Negri, A. (2014). Some Reflections on the #Accelerate Manifesto. Trans. M. Pasquinelli. In R. Mackay, A. Avanesian (eds.), *#Accelerate#: The Accelerationist Reader* (363–378). Falmouth and Berlin: Urbanomic and Merve.
- Noys, B. (2010). *The Persistence of the Negative: A Critique of Contemporary Continental Theory*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Noys, B. (2014). *Malign Velocities. Accelerationism and Capitalism*. Winchester and Washington: Zero Books.
- Pashukanis, E. B. (2003). *The General Theory of Law & Marxism*. Trans. B. Einhorn. With a new introduction by D. Milovanovic. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.
- Power, N. (2015). Decapitalism, Left Scarcity, and the State. *Fillip*, 20, Fall.

<http://fillip.ca/content/decapitalism-left-scarcity-and-the-state>,
accessed 16 June 2017.

- Reed, P. (2014). Reorientate, Eccentricate, Speculate, Fictionalize, Geometricize, Commonize, Abstractify: Seven Prescriptions for Accelerationism. In R. Mackay, A. Avanessian (eds.), *#Accelerate#: The Accelerationist Reader* (521–536). Falmouth and Berlin: Urbanomic and Merve.
- Renner, K. (2010). *The Institutions of Private Law and Their Social Functions*. Trans. A. Schwarzschild. With a new introduction by A. J. Treviño. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.
- Shaviro, S. (2010). *Post Cinematic Affect*. Winchester and Washington: Zero Books.
- Srnicek, N., Williams, A. (2016). *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work*. Revised and Updated Edition. London and New York: Verso.
- Treviño, A. J. (2010). *The Sociology of Law: Classical and Contemporary Perspectives*. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.
- Williams, A., Srnicek, N. (2014). #Accelerate: Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics. In R. Mackay, A. Avanessian (eds.), *#Accelerate#: The Accelerationist Reader* (347–362). Falmouth and Berlin: Urbanomic and Merve.

ABSTRACT

NIHIL NOVI SUB SOLE:

LAW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF POLITICAL ACCELERATIONISM

This article focuses on political accelerationism—an idea that proposes to use capitalism against itself either by making it as a whole go even faster, pushing it to its limits and beyond until it collapses, or by appropriating some of its elements or tendencies for alternative, emancipatory purposes. It analyses two significant versions of this idea—that of Benjamin Noys and that of Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams—from the perspective of the following question: Is political accelerationism similar to certain previous developments in left critical thought in that it offers a new approach to law or, if it does not contain any explicitly expressed original take on law, enables a novel and fresh conceptualisation of law to be drawn from it? The article concludes that so far political accelerationism does not offer an original approach to law and that any perspectives on law that can be drawn from this idea are reminiscent of basic Marxist approaches to law.

KEYWORDS: political accelerationism, Benjamin Noys, Nick Srnicek, Alex Williams, law, critical theory, Marxism

NIHIL NOVI SUB SOLE:

PRAWO Z PERSPEKTYWY POLITYCZNEGO AKCELERACJONIZMU

Niniejszy artykuł skupia się na politycznym akcelercjonizmie—idei proponującej by użyć kapitalizm przeciwko niemu samemu, albo przez przyspieszenie go jako pewnej całości, popchnięcie go do jego granic, a nawet jeszcze dalej aż upadnie, albo przez przejmowanie niektórych jego elementów bądź tendencji na rzecz realizacji alternatywnych, emancypacyjnych celów. Analizuje się tu dwie istotne wersje tej idei—Benjamin Noysa oraz Nicka Srniceka i Alexa Williamsa—z perspektywy następującego pytania: Czy polityczny akcelercjonizm jest podobny do niektórych wcześniejszych osiągnięć lewicowej myśli krytycznej, w tym sensie, że oferuje nowe podejście do prawa, albo, jeśli nie zawiera jakiegokolwiek jasno wyrażonego oryginalnego ujęcia prawa, umożliwia zrekonstruowanie na swojej podstawie nowatorskiej i świeżej konceptualizacji prawa? Zgodnie z konkluzją artykułu, na razie

polityczny akceleracjonizm nie oferuje oryginalnego podejścia do prawa, a perspektywy na prawo możliwe do zrekonstruowania na jego podstawie przypominają podstawowe marksistowskie ujęcia prawa.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: polityczny akceleracjonizm, Benjamin Noys, Nick Srnicek, Alex Williams, prawo, teoria krytyczna, marksizm

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Michał Dudek – PhD in Law, works at the Department of Sociology of Law, Faculty of Law and Administration, Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Author of monograph *Komunikowanie prawa w dobie pluralizmu kulturowego* [*The Communication of Law in the Age of Cultural Pluralism*] (NOMOS, Kraków, 2014) and various publications on the influence of multiculturalism on law-making and law-applying, legal policy, axiology of law, visibility and law and application of selected threads from contemporary philosophy of technology and science & technology studies to sociology of law.