# Things Are Not Enough

Bond, Stiegler, and Technics

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Discussions of Bond's relationship with technology frequently centre around the objects he uses, the things he has at his disposal: what make is the car, what products have been placed in the film, are the film's technical inventions realistic, visionary even? This can be observed in cinema foyers, fan circles, the media, as well as academia. Often these discussions take an admiring turn, with commentators dazzled by the technological foresight of the filmic ideas;[1] quite often too, especially in academic circles, views tend to be critical, connecting Bond's technological overkill to some compensatory need in the character, seeing the technological objects as "props" that would and should not have to be

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1   See, for instance, publications like *The Science of James Bond* by Gresh and Weinberg (2006), who set out to provide an "informative look at the real-world achievements and brilliant imaginations" behind the Bond gadgets, asking how realistic or "fantastic" the adventures and the equipment are and promising to thus probe into "the limits of science, the laws of nature and the future of technology" (back cover). Parker's similar *Death Rays, Jet Packs, Stunts and Supercars* (2005) includes discussions of the physics behind the action scenes (like stunts and chases), but there remains a heavy preponderance of "amazing devices", "gadgets and gizmos", "incredible cars", "reactors" and "guns" (v-vi). Web pages and articles about "Bond Gadgets that Have Become Real", "Bond Gadgets You Can Actually Buy", "Bond Gadgets that Could Work in Real Life" and the like are legion.
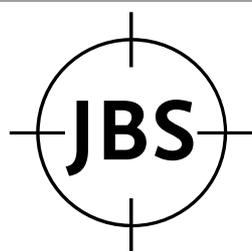
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there, let alone celebrated to such an extent, if Bond and the films were more meaningful and valuable in their own right. Both Bond contexts and paratexts support such an object-centred reading of the texts heavily: on film posters, Bond's gun and other central technical elements of the films usually feature prominently,[2] while, within and outside the films, the important textual form of the Bond silhouette, as Monika Seidl has suggested, shows Bond having become one with the gun-object as his right arm is "extended cyborg-like with a long-barrelled hand-gun" (2011, 39). A similar claim can be made for the 007 logo, whose digit identifying the agent is a fusion of personal number and gun image, not to speak of the welter of merchandise objects that, in the marketplace, have come to be identified with Bond: mobile phones, watches, Corgi Aston Martin toy cars. There have been, in the words of Tony Bennett and Janet Woollacott, countless "sedimentations of Bond in the world of objects" (1987, 44).

TECHNOLOGY AS PROP AND FETISH

The objects employed by Bond or the villains have also been found to organise large parts of the texts themselves, especially when compared to the role of technology in the literary pretexts (152), structuring the plots, involving and attracting audiences, becoming "highly distinctive" (16) parts of the Bond formula. Commentators veer between reading the devices as serious testimonies to the power of technology (especially for the 1960s films) and according them a comic and ironic effect (especially for the 1970s and 80s films), between seeing them as having a "logical narrative purpose" (Chapman 2007, 83) and regarding them as mere and fairly unmotivated spectacle. In addition to these various – and rather conflicting – functions, there is also the oft-repeated claim of fetishisation: Bennett and Woollacott argue that "Bond's sexuality has become fetished [sic] on to machinery, cars, guns, motorcycles, and what have you" (203), and that this undermines his putative virility and power, while James Chapman more broadly suggests that Bond films from *Goldfinger* (1964) onwards "contributed to the obsession with technology by fetishising it" (94). Clearly there is a lot that would need to be tied up with respect to these readings: how does fetishisation go together with the attested irony and self-parody of the films? Does the spectacular

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2   Of the many official film posters collected in Dougall (2012) and Museum Folkwang (2012) only a handful do not feature any technical objects; most show Bond and his gun, some add other technology that plays an important role in the film at hand (harpoon, submarine, Little Nellie, cars etc.), some present their content through a gun-barrel frame. The few posters lacking technology are offset by an equally small number of posters that show nothing else but Bond's weapon of choice.

use of the gadgets push or undercut ideological identification with technological progress? How will the representation of technology manage to fetishise technology if the latter can be perceived to have weakened the main character's powers of attraction? The aim of this article, however, is to shift the focus of attention slightly, away from the objects (and their alleged functions) to the use of these objects by Bond and the way they (do not) function within the stories – not in order to complicate matters unnecessarily or evade the issue, but, on the contrary, to gain some crucial insight into the films' construction of the technological. It will be argued that Bond's relations to technology are practical rather than object-centred, that the ideas of fetishisation and cyborgism do not hold, and that the texts in fact proffer a completely different take on technology than their contexts and paratexts seem to suggest. Bond himself does not invest in technological objects: neither sexually, financially, emotionally, nor ideologically. Why should the audience (think he does)? And he is far from being part human, part machine, not made up of or relying on technical replacements (as implied by more conventional readings), but rather exhibiting a prostheticism that consists in technical practice and is thus constitutive of the technological field outside of him.

A good academic example of such a more conventional reading of Bond's technicity, this time of one of the later films, can be found in Jack Halberstam's *Female Masculinity* (1998). For Halberstam, Bond, in *GoldenEye* (1995), lacks "credible masculine power". While, for him, Bond's charms seem "as old and ineffective as his gadgets", his masculinity is "primarily prosthetic and [...] signifies [largely] as a technical special effect" (3). Halberstam reads Bond as being dependent on external technical objects as well as on those who provide him with these objects: M, read as a butch older woman representing female masculinity, and Q, read as a queer science nerd representing gay masculinity. Such dependency, the argument runs, undermines Bond's powers and position. Even as it is his technical relations, rather than biology, that define his gender identity, "extend[ing] his masculinity" (4), Halberstam holds that it is the prosthetic nature of these relations that undermine his heterosexuality. Thus, the critic sees technicity, on the one hand, as a (contested) instrument of the character's identity performance, and on the other, as a means for a queer reading (for which performance *per se* is not the central problem) to call into question the workability of that performance. Halberstam's conceptualisation of Bond's technical prostheticism is informed by notions of lack, (over)compensation, dependency, and by a clear subject-object juxtaposition of human beings and technology, a contiguous relation-

ship that can be prised open and exploited by a skilful queer reading. Bond needs objects to perform power, a performance to define him, as he is essentially lacking competence and shape: "[w]hen you take his toys away, Bond has very little propping up his performance of masculinity" and remains "a hero without the action or the adventure" (4), as Halberstam puts it.

Halberstam's reading is stimulating and intriguing, if – for me – not fully convincing. It may well be that M's counter-performance of female masculinity in *GoldenEye* is on the whole much more credible than Bond's performance of heteronormative masculinity. Also, it seems justified to comment on the pronounced role of technological hardware in Pierce Brosnan's Bond, as has been done by others too (Willis 2003). But it appears that Bond's powerlessness and dependency are massively overstated, that the text is not just read against its grain, but that the reading overlooks much contrary textual evidence: Bond laughs at Q, he bests M, he shrugs their criticism off, gets away with it, and ultimately is not dependent on technology, especially not more so than the other characters (who are supposedly more powerful than him by, mark, giving that technology to him in the first place). How can M, depending on Bond *and* his use of technology, be more technologically independent than Bond himself? How can Q, whose job it is to develop technological objects and whose seriousness and impracticality about this is frequently offered up to ridicule by Bond and film alike, come across as less dependent or fixated on the world of gadgets and special effects than 007?

STIEGLER'S PROSTHETICISM

What, then, is Bond's exact relationship with technology? If it is prosthetic at all, we may think of it in terms of Stieglerian prostheticism. In *Technics and Time: The Fault of Epimetheus* (1998), Bernard Stiegler argues that technics, far from being surplus gadgetry, is "at the heart of what it is to be human" (Howells and Moore 2013, 2). For him, a prosthesis is not a mere extension of the human body, but the "constitution of this body qua 'human' […], not a 'means' for the human but its end" (Stiegler, 153). Building on and going beyond Heideggerian conceptions of technology as delusive and constricting for human experience, and rereading the ancient Greek myth of Prometheus and Epimetheus, Stiegler develops the idea of humanity's constitution through technics: Epimetheus's fault to bestow a distinctive character trait on human beings in their creation is made good by his brother Prometheus's gift of fire to the species. Fire, as the first technical prosthesis, thus defines the human, but does not replace "what would have been there before it and would have been lost" (152). Not only in its mythological origins but

also in its later cultural development, Stiegler sees the role of technology as constitutive of humanity: human consciousness "is always already technical" (Howells and Moore, 3), with techniques of externalisation (such as writing) only making personal thinking possible and externalised memory (such as in cultural traditions) only making human survival possible. If the external technical object, however, is important for the human self, it must be noted that the external is as such a product of human interiority projected outwards:

> Man invents, discovers, finds [...], imagines (*mēkhanē*), and realizes what he imagines: prostheses, expedients. A pros-thesis is what is placed in front, that is, what is outside, outside what it is placed in front of. However, if what is outside constitutes the very being of what it lies outside of, then this being is *outside itself*. The being of humankind is to be outside itself. (Stiegler, 193)

Technical interiority and exteriority thus are two terms and conditions not opposing each other but composing with each other a kind of simultaneous complex. Tools are made and used in anticipation of a result, the technical environment is constituted by human beings just as that environment constitutes the human, and human beings "are nothing but the internalisation of [their] prosthetic *ek-sistence*" (Howells and Moore, 5). One of Stiegler's main concerns, apart from the question of how humanity relates to technology in general, is to look into the ways in which technology has been written out of the history and self-understanding of philosophy in particular. According to Stiegler, modern philosophy is predicated on the very negation of its own technicity, starting from a separation of *logos*, philosophy's privileged concept of reason, from *tekhnē*, "which is linked to (implicitly inferior) practical skills" (6). This, for him, is a denial of the integral role played by external memory supports (drawing, writing and other cultural artefacts) for organised thinking to become possible in the first place. Across the many fields of his interest, Stiegler thus identifies a complication of neat subject-object, interior-exterior and theory-practice positions in the relations between humans and technology: the sphere of the human and of the technological are mutually constitutive. For humans, there is to be no place outside of technology; technology cannot be taken away (as, for instance, implied by Halberstam's reading of Bond's technicity), and while a particular form of technological being may be inimical to human experience (as suggested by Heidegger), it is only through technology that social improvement can be achieved.

The suggestion here would be to see Bond as representing such a Stieglerian understanding of technology: Bond uses technical objects, but is not dominated by them. He does not renounce them, but keeps his distance, especially when they threaten to take his place or become an end in themselves (Nitins 2011, 459; Willis, 153). Bond resists technological intrusion from outside, remaining sceptical of big technology, preferring small technical solutions instead and showing a rather relaxed attitude about what, for instance, the gadgets can ultimately do for him. He may keep using a number of contraptions that are meant to surprise or amuse the audience, but these will eventually remain insignificant for his defeating the villain: Bond is victorious because he keeps his nerve, has the better ideas and physical fitness, not because he is in possession of a super-weapon that helps him solve his problems. In fact, most of his fights with the opposition involve muscle power, presence of mind, resourcefulness (especially in the final confrontations with the villains) as Bond finds himself in face-to-face combat situations, kills his adversary with his hands or by skilful technical improvisation (more of which in a moment).

Now, there is a sense in which technology frames and constitutes Bond's experience: usually he has to solve a problem that is also related to a technological threat (missile toppling, biological or nuclear contamination, solar weapon or Stinger missile attack, theft of submarine navigation system, global media manipulation, cyberterrorism). At the same time, the gadgets which he is given by Q – and which he dutifully and happily puts to use one after another – seem to turn him into the object of a technological plan or narrative: how can he be in control while mechanically following all the cues provided? Usually nothing he is given in the Q scenes remains unused, while he hardly needs anything that has not been given to him. Still, if Bond is thus constituted through the technological environment, there is also a clear sense in which Bond constitutes the technological. Bond's adventures are not determined by the number and kind of his gadgets, his experiences cannot be reduced to technological influence. He is not put out if technology fails him; he laughs at the gadgets and Q, destroys the villains' hyper-technological plants, breaks whole wagonloads of technical objects, or throws them away. Just think about the brand new VW Beetles in *Skyfall* (2012) or Q's complaints that Bond does not return cars and other things in one piece when back from the field. What is shown by this, and what is more, is that Bond ultimately does not care for objects, but for practice. Bond *does* technics as he constantly "invents [...], imagines [...], and realizes what he imagines" (Stiegler, 193), usually within split seconds, quite intuitively: through the quickest of externalisations. Bond clearly also does not care for technology as a substitution/com-

pensation. Both his relations to substitutionary prostheticism – not the supplementary kind represented by him – and technical practice I now propose to look at in more detail.

BOND'S ANTI-CYBORGISM

Bond is far from being a cyborg as technologically "enhanced" characters and those that feature mechanical body parts quite obviously belong to the realm of the villain. Bond, it could be argued, is decidedly anti-cyborg. He is up against Dr No's metal hands, Tee Hee's steel pincers, Jaws's steel teeth, Klebb's poison-tipped shoe, and Mr Hinx's metal thumbnails. Bond fights Max Zorin, who is the product of prenatal steroid manipulations; Raoul Silva, who wears a dental prosthesis to hide his facial deformations; Zao and Colonel Moon, who undergo gene therapy to change their looks; and Renard, whose bullet in the brain makes him immune to pain and increases his stamina. Apart from featuring mechanical body parts, many of the criminal masterminds in the films suffer from overidentifying with their big technological projects. They concentrate their wishes and desires on the technical solutions, which sometimes are means to an end for them, but quite frequently appear as a misdirected libidinal end in itself. Technology is elevated in the altar-like control rooms of their plants which often provide the scene for the films' final battles. It is shown to be a highly problematic phallic investment, for instance, when Goldfinger points his laser beam at Bond's crotch; Scaramanga can only find pleasure in (using) his golden gun and solar weapon; Renard seeks to insert his fuel rod into the submarine reactor; and Elektra King fastens Bond to a torture chair and attempts to screw a piston through his neck. The majority of Bond villains are characterised by their sexual, ethnic and moral "deviance" (Black 2005, 171 and 175) as well as their failure to keep the right distance to technology.

Bond, on the other hand, is careful to avoid technological penetration of his body, although this has become a recurring problem for Daniel Craig's Bond. In *Casino Royale* (2006), M plants a tracking device in his arm, which he resents and which is removed – ironically – by the villain; in *Spectre* (2015), a GPS microchip is injected into his bloodstream, but not activated by Q, giving him relative freedom of movement. In general, it is important for Bond to be able to track people, but not be tracked by technological systems, or at least to stay in control over when to use the devices. The glove-compartment defibrillator he hooks up to in *Casino Royale*, together with the implanted chip, both helps and does not really help him stay alive by getting long-distance medical advice from HQ, as ulti-

mately Vesper Lynd has to finish the job manually and on the scene (in an interesting inversion of what commentators usually see as a much more physical and bodily autonomous Bond as performed by Craig). In *Skyfall*, he decides to use the retro-style radio transmitter provided by Q to capture Silva (with mixed results), just as in *Goldfinger* before, he uses similar devices to follow the villain through Switzerland and to try to point out his plans to the CIA when held captive in Kentucky (a plan that threatens to fail and is saved only by his technology-free winning Pussy Galore over to his side). At the end of *A View to a Kill* (1985), he escapes MI6's prying eyes when in the shower with Stacey Sutton by throwing a towel over Q's radio-controlled dog robot; and at the end of *For Your Eyes Only* (1981), he breaks contact by passing his radio watch to Melina Havelock's parrot, which then goes on to have a chat with the Prime Minister, while Bond takes a moonlight swim with Melina. All of these examples are doubly significant in that they show how Bond resists outside technical control and prefers personal, physical, and sexual encounters to technical ones.

Even a recent film like *Spectre* faithfully reworks these patterns: Franz Oberhauser's technological megalomania – of controlling information, establishing total surveillance, penetrating governments worldwide, rewriting history and colonising memory – is driven by a form of Oedipal complex, sexual aberration, and personal revenge. Oberhauser observes, acts, fights, and kills by (technological) proxy (Bond calls him a "voyeur"; Oberhauser calls himself a "visionary"), his headquarters is a cathedral to big data processing, and his employees are soulless screen workers. With the help of his surveillance technology he has penetrated the British government to "kill off" the double-0 section and, in the torture chair scene, sets out to destroy important parts of Bond's brain, wishing to rob him of the gift of recognising people (and thus of parts of his memory), before ultimately killing him as well. Oberhauser operates the drills of the dentist's chair by typing orders into a computer, the drills penetrate Bond's head, but do not have the predicted effect. On the contrary, Bond feels the pain, but makes important connections about the past and the future while suffering the treatment. In a scene also hotly debated in online fan circles (in threads like "how does Bond survive the brain operation without adverse effects?") Bond shows that his anti-cyborg humanism is so strong that he resists the effects of technical interference even after such interference has taken place. Oberhauser needs cameras, computers, and digital storage space to master and manipulate psychology, and even then fails to come to terms with his childhood "trauma" – Bond ignores trauma inflicted by technical instruments and can rely on being himself for keeping his memories, values, and affections. Bond brings Oberhauser down by using rather

small technical instruments (compared to the villain's bigger ones), his technical and physical skills and his superior willpower, and by being helped by friends. It is Madeleine Swann who throws the exploding watch in Oberhauser's direction; it is Bond, with some support from Madeleine, who chases and shoots down a helicopter with a hand gun. It is rather unusual for Bond not to engage in a physical fight with his adversary, but Oberhauser himself remains physically passive throughout, turning the confrontation of the two alter-ego characters into primarily a mental battle, which Bond wins when he walks away from Oberhauser deciding not to kill him and become like him. Their confrontation is, among other things, one between a humanist and a technological understanding of the workings of the brain and the possibilities of human thought.

Oberhauser's technological attempt to revenge his trauma and untangle his relationship with Bond is also shown to be self-defeating in another way. Pointing the drills to Bond's head, he tells Bond "I'm going to penetrate to where you are" and, a moment later, goes on to reveal that he is "the man inside [Bond's] head, Ernst Stavro Blofeld". If we accept this, Oberhauser is virtually drilling into his own memory and identity. He will destroy Bond's ability to recognise people from the past, even as it is essentially important to him to be recognised by Bond. Oberhauser is shown to fail because he fails to make his technical instruments work the way he wants them to work *and* because his technological plan, from the outset, has been a doomed enterprise, a bad investment. Bond acts as the guarantor of the notion that the human mind cannot be colonised by technology.

How do earlier Bonds react to the villains' attempt at technological penetration of their body, country, and culture? Bond scuffles with Goldfinger, who accidentally shoots out a cabin window and is sucked out of a plane (like penetration reversed), and he usually manages to turn the technical objects against their owners after tooth-and-nail fights: Renard is staked by his nuclear rod; Elliot Carver is bored by his sea drill; Alec Trevelyan is most probably staked by the feed horn of his satellite dish (Willis, 158); Scaramanga is shot dead in his hall of mirrors while his island is destroyed by his own solar weapon; and Hugo Drax is simply pushed into space, which he himself has endeavoured to colonise before. The villains fail at the hands of Bond, who uses "their own technologies" (158) against them, and because they can no longer control the technology they have devised and blown up to monstrous proportions. And it is important to note that Bond's "counter-penetrations" of his opponents are accompanied, if not fully framed, by countless other pleasurable and painful experiences and practices

(driving, drinking, gambling, sensing danger, enduring hardship) as well as numerous instances of sexual penetration, which in turn come to appear as examples of "a 'natural' act of human interaction in opposition to the previously 'unnatural' acts of technological intervention" (158) practised mainly by the villains. Bond's technological exploits are thus always additions, not substitutions.

TECHNICAL PRACTICE VS TECHNOLOGICAL OBJECTS

If the villains thus basically embody Heidegger's critique of the modern individual's technical being in the world – man seeking domination over nature, people being perceived "as raw material for technical operations" (Blitz 2014, 63) – and serve as a warning against the technological excesses of modernity, Bond's *tekhnē* (i.e. his practical orientation towards technics) also comes to the fore in his relations with Q. Whereas the villains represent the demonic, mad-professor side of technological progress (and the disadvantages of a fixation on planning; Black, 173), MI6 headquarters, Q, and diverse government officials still represent a (too) bureaucratic and theoretical approach to technology. Q is closer to Bond in preferring small practical technology, but again and again fails to make the grade as a practitioner. Martin Willis has pointed out that, in each of the Q scenes, "Bond is a chameleon figure who moves indiscriminately from amateur to expert to hubristic scientist" (155). Like a child, Bond is often told off by Q for not taking the briefing situation and the objects presented seriously. Yet, after a short introduction (and sometimes none at all), the agent manages to operate the devices more skilfully than their inventor, knows all about their scientific background, and goes on to put them to his own irreverent uses (adding mocking comments like "nice Christmas present", "new pet, Q?" or "it's not exactly Christmas, is it?"[3]). In these encounters, Q comes across as "schoolmasterly and patronising", a lab-theoretician representing the "hierarchical approach to scientific power" (155). His professional seriousness and practical uselessness are played off against each other, and both sent up, not least by the ridiculous and quixotic experiments often unfolding in the background. The scenes suggest that "the application of Q's inventions should be left to the expert, Bond. Science, even applied science, is portrayed as comic, pompous and self-inflated, and its value shifts to use and application" (156).

Willis suggests that, in the Q scenes, Bond's expertise – application – is positively contrasted to the work of the scientist, who privileges "creation and invention" (156). I would hold, though, that Bond's regular technical mode is applica-

3   Bond's reactions to Q's inventions in *From Russia with Love* (1963), *A View to a Kill*, *Skyfall*, respectively.

tion with a difference, one that integrally includes creation and invention. It is one of Bond's distinguishing characteristics that strikingly often he does not use technical objects in the way intended by their producers. It is the very point of the character that he improvises and creates his own uses for objects, that in "misusing" them he adapts them to his wishes and improves their function. Sticking to instruction manuals is for the villains, Ms, and Qs of the series. Bonds are the attractions that, in part, come with the general anarchic potential of a secret agent figure (Palmer 1973; Merry 1977, 222-224). It should be remarked that the usual focus on the gadgets and their funny and "spectacular use" distracts commentators from the possibility to identify the moments when Bond spontaneously devises his own tools and practices as the much more spectacular and attractive points in the films: there certainly is audience pleasure when objects are used in accordance with the audience's "foreknowledge of the gadgets" (Bennett and Woollacott, 152), yet what makes Bond special from audience and other characters in the film (such as the villains, who sometimes also possess spectacular tools) is that, in addition to having and using these objects, he frequently redefines their purpose and creates new technical constellations with them. These are *ad hoc* uses, irreversible singularities (with nothing objectified or commodified about them), that come as a total surprise, and prove his superior technological skills.

Taking a closer look at Bond's technical solutions in *A View to a Kill*, arguably an extreme example in this respect, we will find Bond's gun – so important for paratexts and contexts – having no significance whatsoever. He only uses it once when chasing May Day up the Eiffel Tower, and misses her. Later in the film, in a slapstick scene, he uses a rifle loaded with harmless rock salt. In the ensuing fight, he has to go back to using his fists. In all other encounters with the enemy in this film, too, he either has to rely on his physical strength and skills or turns objects that come his way into weapons. He uses a climbing rope to pull an opponent from a snowmobile, he uses the ski of a broken snowmobile as a snowboard, and then uses this to knock out two more opponents; he uses a signal rocket to blow up a helicopter; he has a fistfight with two of Zorin's men and uses a conveyor belt to pack them off in crates; he uses air from a car tyre to stay underwater and escape May Day and Zorin; he uses his balancing skills to escape from a lift and a fire hose to save Stacey; he uses the back part of a fire engine to fend off his pursuers, and the movement of a drawbridge to lose them; he uses a chair to smash a window and deflect bullets shot at him; and he uses an axe lying about to cut loose Zorin's airship and thus avoid being killed by Mortner's dynamite. Techni-

cal objects for all kinds of purposes (locomotion, spying, communications, safety) are appropriated by Bond and turned into tools for fighting. But creative appropriation also works across these and for other uses: Bond uses diving gear to jam and escape a turbine, he travels on top of a lift rather than in it for spying purposes, he uses the speed controls of his submarine for bedding his fellow agent, he uses a stethoscope (for the treatment of horses?) to open a safe, he uses a mining trolley for hiding and spying, and hangs from the rope of an airship rather than travelling the normal way.

Bond's Stieglerian prostheticism, his distinguishing mark, can be observed even in a film like *GoldenEye*, which presents a "new Bond that was to be technological rather than physical" (Willis, 151) and which started a series of films that increased the character's reliance on technical objects, be they standard issue or of the gadget variety. Brosnan's Bond uses standard weapons much more often than Roger Moore's, shooting his way out of tight situations with automatic rifles or throwing explosive devices. Improvisation is almost exclusively used in confrontations with the enemy, though it remains a recurring element. Bond uses a car door to pressurise a CIA agent into uttering his password; he uses a sauna stove to escape Onatopp's deadly squeeze; he uses his head to activate an ejector seat; he topples a row of book shelves to close a door; he uses a tank to chase Ourumov through the streets of St Petersburg; and he uses a combination of gun, rope, and helicopter to break Onatopp's back, and then downs the helicopter. As in the films before, all these quick and creative technical solutions come effortlessly to Bond and, as in them, run the whole gamut of modes and moods, from serious and suspenseful to tongue-in-cheek and self-parodying. In creating these solutions, Bond collapses the distinction between theory and practice, as most of his improvisations are not simply trial and error responses but are well calculated for effect; also, Bond's creative presence in the process of repurposing objects undermines a simple subject-object conception of the technological in the films: the scenes construct the technological as an interactional process between different human beings and different objects going on at a particular time for a particular end, with Bond acting as an "agent" in a different sense of the word (i.e. a person or thing that produces a particular effect or change).

CROSSING BRIDGES WITHOUT BRIDGES: BECOMING TECHNICS

Bond's technical skilfulness is such that he is able to drive across a bridge that is no longer there. In *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1974), Bond performs a corkscrew jump over a broken wooden bridge. An amazing feat, though heavily ironised by Sheriff Pepper's antics and a silly slide-whistle sound effect, Bond's

technical practice produces the bridge for the audience to see in the trajectory of his car. Bond performs a similar technical transformation in *Diamonds Are Forever* (1971), when he makes his car pass through a narrow alley on only two wheels, effectively turning it into a kind of bicycle. We can read this as something more than just using a technical object for a new purpose. Bond enters into a relation with an object to temporarily create a new technical object out of this relation.

At the danger of mixing theories (and basically humanist and basically anti-humanist approaches to boot) I would propose to draw on Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's figure of thought of the "machine" (2007, 4) to elucidate the connection that takes place in these moments. Thinking of all life, as Deleuze and Guattari propose, as "literally a machine" (Colebrook 2002, xxii), an endless process of connection and interaction, we may conceive of Bond as what they call a "desiring-machine" (i.e. "the outcome of any series of connections"), the site where new relations are produced, difference multiplies, and life forces are actuated (xxii; 98-100). Desire, for Deleuze and Guattari, is not grounded in lack or the need to overcome separation or loss, but it is a flow that creates and destroys, connects and dissolves structures. When Bond, behind its wheel, turns a car into a bicycle to turn it into a rubbish heap or submarine in the next instant he plays a part in a series of such connections and disconnections. Bond enters into temporary "machinic assemblages" (Deleuze and Guattari, 4 and 73) with things and flows surrounding him, constellations that make and unmake him in the process, turning him into a figure or site of *becoming* rather than *being*, as privileged by the two French thinkers: a good example of this may be found in the sequence in *The World Is Not Enough* (1999) in which Bond moves from helicopter to pipeline pig, then acts as a human coupling and buffer when his pig engages with another one, and then jumps off before the device explodes and destroys the pipeline. Other examples are not hard to find: in *GoldenEye*, Bond takes a motorbike over a cliff to go after a plane, in mid-air disengages from the bike to turn into a kind of plane or projectile himself, to make a connection with the real plane and turn its pilot; in a similar scene from *Moonraker* (1979), Bond is pushed from a plane to skydive after a parachutist, to engage with the latter, to become a parachutist himself after connecting with Jaws and disconnecting with him again by pulling the cord of his parachute (just in time before being bitten by the steel teeth). In these instances, Bond, in the terminology of Deleuze and Guattari, is becoming-plane, becoming-parachute, becoming-bridge, becoming-coupling. The Deleuzian aspect of the character goes beyond the sphere of literal technical constellations to include other machinic activities. Bond does not really care for

objects and possessions, but is more interested in experiencing intensities like speed, taste, and danger; he is not seriously hampered by lack, but lives in profusion, enjoying making and breaking connections (with women, agents, information), smoothing space, going from water to air to earth and back again.

As represented by their central character, Bond films thus primarily suggest that technics and technology do not exist in opposition to or substitution of the human, but that they are supplementary and controllable. Bond, as has been repeatedly argued, acts to alleviate fears of an increasing advance of technology and its colonisation of human beings, its becoming abused by sinister powers or its becoming fully autonomous (Nitins, 459; Willis, 153). It may be part of the character's conservative side that he does so in the interests of the Western nation-state and traditional gender hierarchies – yet it is part of Bond's potentially progressive side that the character suspends the notion that there is a clear difference and opposition between the human and the technical, a thought that traditionally sees technics and technological culture grounded in the need to overcome some essential human lack (and a thought that both Stiegler, proposing the concept of prostheticism, and Deleuze and Guattari, proposing the concept of the machine, have argued against). Bond feels no lack, does not fetishise objects. He has possibilities. This is why his character may point the path to a way of thinking that can overcome what Erich Hörl, following Stiegler, has called the limitations of "the industrialisation of our wishes" and the current "spirit of industry", which are both geared towards the correction of a fundamental human defect (2009, 20 and 21; my translation). This potential, I think, is contained in the machinic parts of Bond's character, and can be linked up with, even if it is all but hidden behind the commodifications, fetishisations, and industrialisations that frame and contextualise the films.

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