

【(Re)membering Lost Futures: vaporwave and the Postmodern Condition】

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POSTMODERN AFFECT



Soviet Tango - virtual love

- The energy of a first love is present in the heartbeat of the bass, yet subdued and submerged.
- A waning of affect is present in society, and a shift in the cultural pathology towards addiction cements itself in the psyche (Jameson).

CITATIONALITY, BRICOLAGE, PASTICHE



death's dynamic shroud.wmv - I'll Try Living Like This

- dds.wmv samples sounds from a plethora of sources: the TV shows, advertisements, 20th century pop and jazz music, as well as video games (YT: Nickster).
- The economization of signifiers (modernisms/ samples) emphasizes their exchange value, supplanting the use value of a nostalgic historicity in the pastiche of vaporwave.

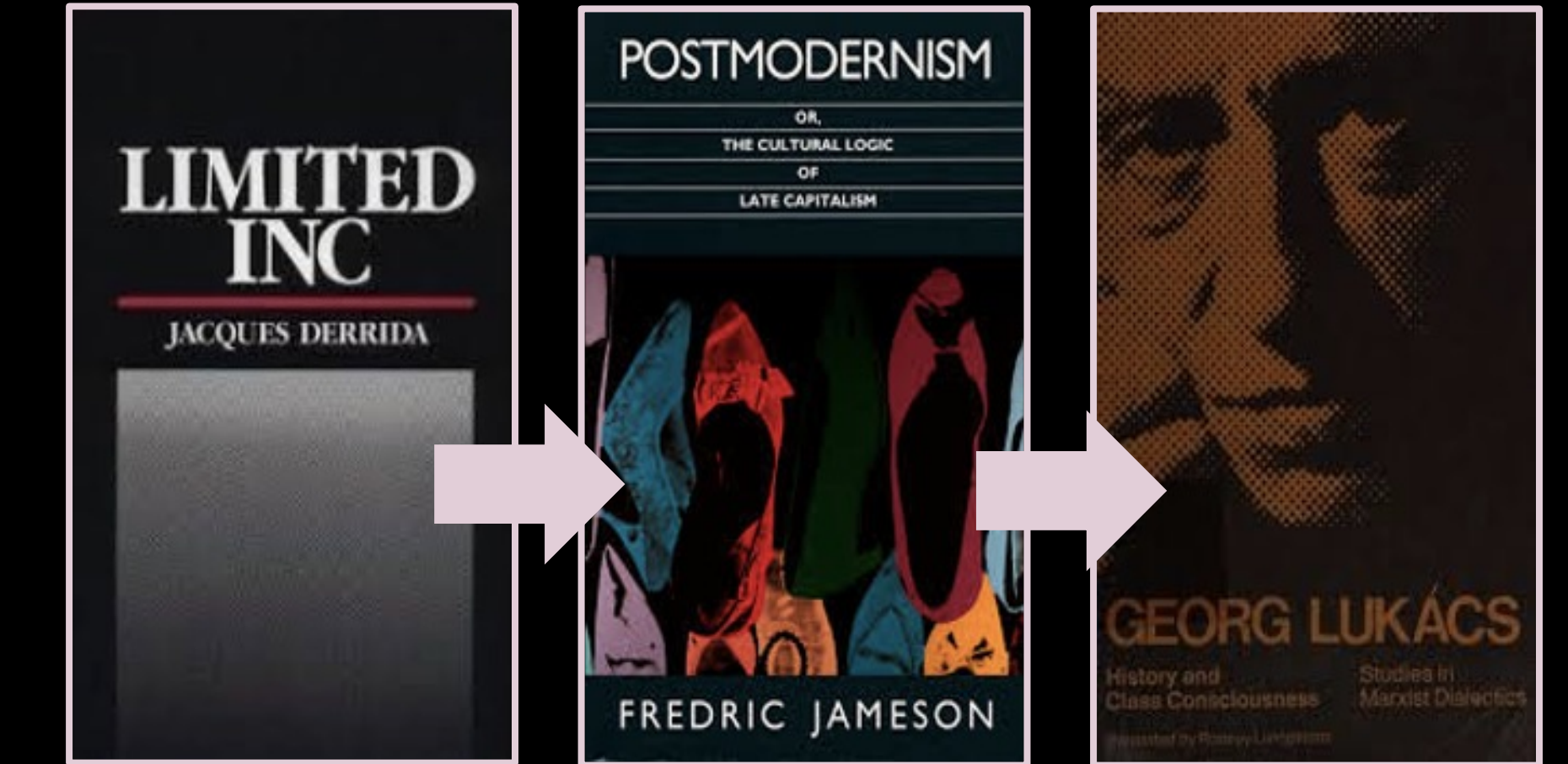
SPATIAL LOGIC



telepath テレパシー能力者 - アンタラ通信

- telepath converts an old disco song into a Mahlerian soundscape amplifying Derridian citationality and reframing the textual in terms of the spatial.
- Lyotard's 'new modernism' springs from the heaping signifiers Jameson identifies in his Lacanian analysis of postmodern aesthetics (Jameson).

GUIDING CONSIDERATIONS



How do we turn a textual analysis into a historico-cultural one?

Postmodernism harbors no room for interpretation via grand narratives. Thus, insofar as vaporwave is postmodern, we must consider its own processes of textualization and production in our analysis.

Historical periodization is useful; it allows us to grasp the minutiae of our situation. We are not just in 'capitalism' (Jameson, Dean).

Sources

Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, 1991. / Deleuze, Gilles. *Dialogues II*, 2007. / Dean, Jodi. Lecture at Birkbeck Institute of Humanities, 2022. / Lukács, Gyorgy. *History and Class Consciousness*, 1923. / Derrida, Jacques. *Limited INC.*, 1988. / Rateyourmusic thread on telepath. / Youtube: Nickster. / Bandcamp Soviet Tango. / Aesthetics Fandom Wiki (image). / *Nostalgia* by Vaporwave Aesthetics (image). /



Why vaporwave? Why postmodernism?

vaporwave is a form of electronic music that samples 80's elevator music, muzak, disco, and R&B, drenching them in reverberation and distorting them in the process. The genre is permeated by commentary on consumer culture, globalization, imagined memories, what it means to make music, and liminal spaces, making it the perfect artform for locating the question of the postmodern.

Questions or suggestions?
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