

# Reality is What You Can Get Away With: Fantastic Imaginings, Rebellion and Control in Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*

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## '8.49PM. Somewhere in the Twentieth Century' – Opening Credit (*Brazil*)

One of the themes fundamental to dystopian fiction is that of control and how it is achieved and maintained within structures as chaotic and complex as human societies. Concurrently, this trend is reflected in such political non-fiction as Noam Chomsky's *World Orders, Old and New*. He says:

'population control' to borrow the jargon of counterinsurgency doctrine ... is the major task of any state that is dominated by particular sectors of the domestic society and therefore functions in their interest; that is, any 'really existing state.'<sup>1</sup>

In diametric opposition to notions of control are those of restlessness – humanity's drive towards creativity and imagination – and if most prognostications of the twentieth century are to be believed, the two are unable to co-exist simultaneously. Ontologically – in an echo of Harry Lime's famed analogy<sup>2</sup> – one may find a society that abounds with artistic and philosophic information, or a society characterised by control and therefore relative entropy. Debates over the most effective forms of subjugation vary from vision to vision. In Zamyatin's *We* physical mutilation in the form of the lobotomy is the prescribed remedy. In Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* and Orwell's *1984* one finds an emphasis on the power of semantic systems (the polyglot classifications of *nadsat* and *newspeak*) to engulf the individual into a collective consciousness. Huxley warns of the dangers inherent in the lunatic march of progress. Each vision contributes to both our understanding of what it means to be an individual in a rapidly shifting modern world, and of the implicit and explicit internal and external political processes that govern our lives.

Each idea finds a similar expression in Terry Gilliam's 1985-film *Brazil*. It is my intention here to explore the fictional and non-fictional texts that may have informed (or are at least isomorphic to) the sentiments articulated in this seminal dystopian film. The film centres on the struggles of protagonist Sam Lowry (Jonathon Pryce), a cog in the impersonal machinery of the bureaucracy that governs *Brazil's* society who desires anonymity within consensus reality, but in his dreams is a winged warrior fighting noble battles with symbolic adversaries. Sam finds he is increasingly unable to successfully reconcile or differentiate these paradoxical existences as they begin to bleed into one another throughout the film.

### 'Reality' – Graffito at the Shangri-La Towers (*Brazil*)

Merriam-Webster define reality as:

**1**: the quality or state of being real

**2 a (1)**: a real event, entity, or state of affairs <his dream became a *reality*>

**(2)**: the totality of real things and events <trying to escape from *reality*>

**b**: something that is neither derivative nor dependent but exists necessarily

Reality is assumed to be something that exists in a state of independence or is non-derivative. The assumption of this essay is that realities – of the type that we can know and see existentially – are indeed derivative; cannot be considered independent; are plural and variable according to the who, when and where of individual perception; and crucially can be manipulated or programmed (or deprogrammed) using the correct tools. A major influence in this area has been Timothy Leary who – despite some of his later extravagances – began at Harvard as one of the original, systematic pioneers of inner space, endeavouring to structure altered states that gained valuable educational insights within the conscious mind. As he says of this time:

I believed the brain to be a bio-chemical-electrical network capable of receiving and creating a changing series of adaptive realities if and when the chemical key for altering consciousness was found and employed in the context of adequate theory.<sup>3</sup>

The work of Carlos Castaneda, whose descriptions of 'non-ordinary reality' form a large part of his anthropological account of his training

in sorcery and shamanism, also seems influential to *Brazil*, as do some of the tenets of existential philosophy, transactional psychology and general semantics. What all these writings and disciplines have in common is the idea that individual realities are controlled by manifold influences and exerted pressures. This is central not only to *Brazil*, but all Gilliam films.

Michael A. Persinger and Gylsaine F. Lafrenière write:

We, as a species, exist in a world in which exist a myriad of data points. Upon these matrices of points we superimpose a structure and the world makes sense to us. The pattern of the structure originates within our biological and social properties.<sup>4</sup>

If humans remain conscious of this process it is probable that they will continue to learn throughout their lives and behave in a liberal manner. If someone should become unconscious of the process by which his or her central nervous system receives, edits and re-arranges the information that reaches the brain, their behaviour may become dogmatic and even paranoid. It is apparent from the optics section of any elementary physics class that when light emissions from any space-time event reach the eye, the lens reverses them allowing the image to be captured on the retina, similarly reversed. We do not see things upside-down, however, because the retina is part of the synergetic eye-brain system, and before we have a conscious perception of the space-time event the brain has already interpreted and edited the signal into its system of classification, which includes turning it around to mesh with the general geometrical co-ordinate system the brain uses to file data.<sup>5</sup> Gilliam's films are often concerned with the way in which these structures (maps and models) can form unshakeable concrete edifices that control and govern the life of the individual. More often than not they reflect the attempts of a single individual to challenge or escape such a paradigm, with varying rates of success.

Gilliam's films – *Brazil* in particular – engage with the idea of an essential resource for humanity located within the realms of inner space. Negation of this aspect of the self is shown to cause dysfunction that borders on lunacy throughout *Brazil*. In Sam Lowry it is shown to be a revolutionary force, hostile to stasis and hypnosis and communicating primarily through dreams. These are by no means new ideas, having roots in Freudianism and finding a specific ally in Carl Gustav Jung. Sam is depicted as an individual governed by imposing forces that are – despite his best efforts – beyond his control, emphasising the theme of

escape from a paradigmatic mindset, or reality, in which the individual feels trapped. In *Brazil* the state apparatus represents a system that penetrates and controls those enmeshed with it to the point of automation. The machinery of the system – geared towards the maintenance of a population isolated and paralysed by fear – sees the ideological threat that Sam poses and crushes his miniature rebellion. As Nevill Drury says in his *Mythology of Inner Space*:

The idea behind all ventures into inner space is that man ... can become more aware of his spiritual side. In doing so he loses the more animalian, aggressive and self-centred approach to his fellow human beings and gains a new perspective.<sup>6</sup>

Ventures of this sort are anathema to the society described above, a society that requires its members to be caught up in paranoid tunnel realities in order that they misperceive the nature of their predicament. In order to understand this more clearly an analysis of the topology of *Brazil* is necessary.

**‘The Moderna Wonder-Major all-automatic convenient centrette gives you all the time in the world to do the things you really want to do!’ – advertisement (*Time Bandits*)**

A major part of Gilliam’s oeuvre can be seen to address the ubiquitously demoralising nature of social modernity. Modern life – as witnessed by Sam and countless others – proves throughout the film to be a messy and painful experience filled with complicated contraptions and suspect devices. When the viewer encounters Sam for the first time in this world he is late for work due to his electrics being ‘Up the spout again!’ Within minutes we see a device in his kitchen confuse the relatively easy task of toasting bread and making coffee, and when he returns home later his thermostat is broken. A ‘bug’ in the system sets off a chaotic chain reaction that has ramifications throughout the film. It is of little wonder that the terrain of Sam’s dreams contrasts so sharply, at first, with that of his waking hours. Throughout *Brazil* the aesthetics of the modern are portrayed as an oppressive force, infesting Sam’s imagination after disturbing his dream flights. In the film’s second dream sequence the serene pastoral landscape of Sam’s subconscious is ripped apart as ‘monolithic stone skyscrapers’ erupt from the ground with ‘nothing whatsoever to

interfere with their clean, harsh, rectilinear design.<sup>7</sup> These huge impersonal blocks are representatives of the modernist artistic temperament, which as David Harvey has asserted, boasts a 'prevailing passion for ... uniformity and the power of the straight line.'<sup>8</sup> Another frequent characteristic of the topography of Brazil is the tiled square, apparent in Jill's bathroom, windows, public transportation and the torture chamber of the final scene. The square is considered to be the most perfect geometric form, as endlessly replicable as it is functional. Such persistent *mise-en-scène* can be read as a representation of the modernist bureaucratic maze that entraps its inhabitants like rats, and is a recurrent theme throughout the Gilliam filmography.

Bureaucracy, the organisational force of late twentieth century modernism,<sup>9</sup> is certainly in evidence in *Brazil*. The various negative associations with systems of bureaucracy are ruthlessly exposed in the film. In Andrzej Huczynski and David Buchanan's *Organizational Behaviour* they list the negative consequences of bureaucratic structures for the individual: over-specialisation of employees' skills and knowledge prevents them from recognising or caring about problems in their domain; authority and hierarchy prevent employees contributing to decisions; career mentality is described as restricting psychological growth; rules and procedures cause delays and stifle initiation and creativity; and impersonality dehumanises those it purports to serve. They go on to list the negative consequences for the system and a handful of positives; suffice to say even in this balanced account the cons seem to prevail over the pros.<sup>10</sup> In *Brazil* we see this powerful social force has even brainwashed Sam at first, who when asked what is being done about the terrorist threat replies, 'I'm on my lunch hour ... and besides its not my department.' At this early stage of the film he is still content to acquiesce, as the system prescribes, pushing from pillar to post and never addressing the reality of his surroundings. Such a stifling and dehumanising system also produces Mr. Kurtzmann (Ian Holm), Sam's boss and the employee who cowers in the neighbouring office at Information Retrieval, Harry Lime (Charles McKeown). Kurtzmann is the archetypal slave to the system: a scared and paranoid individual who locks himself away in his office rather than face a reality outside that terrifies him. Even the intestinal sounds of the ducts running through his office send him into a frenzy of irrational fear.

The term modernism, aside from its social and aesthetic connotations, can be seen to relate to a much longer-standing philosophical tradition

that begins with René Descartes and the dawn of an era of new, non-medieval standards that were geared toward the future, and a fundamental aspect of Descartes philosophical writings is doubt.<sup>11</sup> Doubt, moreover, is a significant feature of twentieth-century thought being central to the philosophies of both Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx in which doubt (with respect to oneself and others) and truth play fundamental roles. Marx asserts that most of what we believe about ourselves is sheer illusion, or ideology. He believes that our individual thoughts are patterned after the ideas a given society develops through its particular structure and mode of functioning. These are the 'chains' he describes at the end of *The Communist Manifesto*.<sup>12</sup> Freud – after being impressed by experiments in hypnosis – discovered that most of the ideas that people have of themselves do not correspond to the reality he perceived, as if they too were in a state of hypnosis. Both are suspicious of the ideas, ideologies and rationalisations that fill people's minds and form the foundation of their realities, but each thought, through rigorous analytical exposition to the truth,<sup>13</sup> that anyone could find the deep (or more real) reality that eluded them. This introduces an element of dogmatism that seems contrary to the ideas each expressed about doubt. Fundamentalism of this sort occurs when one takes scientific reasoning to be the precursor of (or even suspects the presence of) some kind of deep, knowable reality. Marxism and Freudianism, for this reason, can never mesh – despite their similarities – as they are both totalities and therefore coherent only in and of themselves, not in combination.<sup>14</sup> Reasoning of this sort is a frequent target in Gilliam's films, such as *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* [1989], set 'Somewhere in the 18th Century ... The Age of Reason ... Wednesday ...', and involving – in something of a departure – the triumph of the imagination over rationality. Other more economically grounded arguments for the causes of modernism lay less stress on thought and rationality, focusing instead on ideology and the rise of industrial capitalism.<sup>15</sup> These too find links with *Brazil* as a sustained criticism of a society that defines itself through consumption.

**'Hi there – I want to talk to you about ducts!' – advertisement  
(*Brazil*)**

In *Brazil* consumption acts to remedy the climate of fear and replace it with selfish banality because people have the opportunity, for

example, to express their individuality through a choice of the colour and style of their household ducts. Gilliam's apparent distrust of consumerism is reminiscent of Herbert Marcuse's formulation of *false consciousness*. The fundamental thesis of *One Dimensional Man* (1964), Marcuse's critique of contemporary society and philosophy, is that technologically advanced societies are able to completely eliminate conflict through the assimilation of previously dissident voices or forces. This is achieved partly through the creation of affluence, which in turn creates freedom from material want. Such freedom, taken by both Marx and Marcuse to be the precondition of other freedoms, is therefore transformed into a mechanism for producing servitude. In addressing this apparently paradoxical situation – i.e., that in satisfying the needs of humanity the dominant classes may subjugate them – Marcuse identifies false and true needs, the former being 'those which are superimposed upon the individual by particular social interests in his repression.'<sup>16</sup> Problematically, Marcuse is again introducing an element of dogmatism in his prescriptions of true and false. But, concurrently, the predominant values of socio-economic systems like the one in which Sam finds himself steeped (among the sartorially singular Ministry workers) are rampant materialism and personal ambition. These are epitomised in Jack Lint (Michael Palin) for whom getting ahead and climbing the corporate ladder are paramount, even if it means changing his wife's name to suit his erratic boss Mr. Helpman (Peter Vaughan), torture and even murder. He is not, however, an inherently evil man. He is a product of the system and has been conditioned not to evaluate what he does or sees, and hence he even feels comfortable discussing work in front of his daughter. In the case of Buttle – the innocent tortured to death by Lint – we see him pass the buck again and again until he has, in his own mind, exonerated himself.

*Brazil* seems to exist in a state of perpetual Yuletide; the exchange of Christmas presents eventually becoming habitual, hypnotic and bereft of meaning. Jack Lint amusingly ponders his uniform collection of gifts for a second before deciding on which to give Sam. His mother Ida Lowry (Katherine Helmond) also participates in this bombardment of gifts. She and the ironically named Mrs. Terrain spend money on physical reconstruction in order to regain the appearance of youth. They are attempting to live out the *beauty myth* – a form of consciousness manipulation created for women within western patriarchal cultures as part of their subjugation. The insanity

of this situation is fully grasped in *Brazil* when the viewer sees Ida being prepped for surgery – a process that involves crayons, cling-film and finally knives – and hears of Mrs. Terrain's constant complications as the result of a doctor her friend dubs "The Acid Man." The pervasive nature of such ideologies finds children in the streets enacting mock interrogations and demanding financial bribes from their victims, and one toddler who sits on Santa's knee and asks for her own credit card. Towards the end of the film, as Sam is strapped into a chair in the Ministry of Information's torture chamber, he is warned by a guard, 'Confess, son ... quickly. If you hold out too long you'll jeopardise your credit rating.'

### **'Happiness: We're all in it together!' – Billboard Advertisement (*Brazil*)**

Reviewing *Brazil* – and quoting Gilliam – Salman Rushdie writes:

'America bombards you with dreams and deprives you of your own' ... and *Brazil* is about that too, the struggle between private, personal dreams (flying, love) and the great mass-produced fantasies (eternal youth, material wealth, power).<sup>17</sup>

Happiness is sold across a variety of forms within the media-industrial complex<sup>18</sup> and is available wholesale if the hype is to be believed. Closer inspection of *Brazil* reveals a distinct lack of joy and an abundance of awkwardness and negativity in the majority of the characters' lives. Significantly, the entrance of a state faction military police force literally explodes the warm and intensely personal scenes of the film – those between the Buttle family and Sam and Jill (Kim Griest). The only person we ever see happy and unpunished within consensus reality is the renegade plumber Archibald 'Harry' Tuttle (Robert de Niro). He represents the rebel or the devil of the system and, like Blake's devils in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, he is posited with a revolutionary power – in this case, the power to fix plumbing quickly and efficiently. In this sense Tuttle negates the system, proving that by liberating oneself from the confines of the heavy-handed bureaucratic superstructure that inundates its subjects with paperwork and stifles creativity, one can truly achieve happiness. This makes him a significant threat to a system that not only counts on the illusion of happiness (or *false consciousness*), but also on shifting

blame from one area or department to another. On a more figurative level it is also interesting to think of what these ubiquitous ducts – and Tuttle’s role – could be a reference to. Appearing frequently in Gilliam’s animations, installations and films, these ducts may well provide a metaphor for the myriad of heavily conditioned networks of interconnections within the human brain.<sup>19</sup>

This theory becomes more apposite when we consider Sam’s ducts. At first kept out of sight behind smooth walls, Sam is exposed to these “inner workings” after a visit from Tuttle and some radical plumbing. His understanding of the world (his perceptual map or reality tunnel) then shifts. Jungians recognise these images – especially in the context of Sam’s dreams – as part of an initiation that dates back to the earliest known sacred traditions. Joseph L. Henderson describes dreams of flight as symbolic representations of the transformation from the Trickster archetype (the would-be lawless hero) into the shaman or medicine man, whose power resides in the ability to leave the body. Such symbols point the need for humanity to liberate themselves from any state of being too immature, fixed or final. In other words, ‘they concern our release from, or transcendence of, any confining pattern of existence as we move towards a superior or more mature stage in our development.’<sup>20</sup> Gilliam posits just such an untapped energy source in Sam, a familiar ploy in dystopian fiction, and suggests it as an affirmation of the spiritual realities he believes are being perverted and destroyed in the modern world. This energy is vital to life instincts, hostile to stasis, and located deep in the unconscious mind. In Jung’s terms:

There are no longer any gods whom we can invoke to help us. The great religions of the world suffer an increasing anaemia, because the helpful numina have fled from the woods, rivers, mountains and animals, and the God-men have disappeared into the unconscious.<sup>21</sup>

Sam’s frequent excursions into his unconscious mind are both a form of escape and a representation of this energy source. After Tuttle visits and hard-wires him into the “We’re all in it together, kid!” philosophy, Sam is unable to reconcile the reality of his waking hours with that of his dream world. This process can therefore be seen as an attempt to bring about a change in external circumstances through changes from within.

These ideas clearly echo the social theories of Max Weber.<sup>22</sup> The extent to which the internal plains of existence that Weber discusses are absent from the experience of the modern subject is also a feature of psychotherapist R. D. Laing’s work. He asserts that:

One of the difficulties of talking in the present day of these matters is that the very existence of inner realities is called into question. By 'inner' I mean our ways of seeing the 'external', 'objective' presence – imagination, dreams, phantasies, trances, the realities that modern man, for the most part, has not the slightest awareness of.<sup>23</sup>

In *Brazil* Sam is forced to address and understand this host of inner realities that, for the most part, *he* denies exist. When Ida asks if he has 'hopes, wishes, dreams..?' all he can reply is, 'No, nothing! Not even dreams!' Developments within the faculties of the unconscious mind are central, therefore, to the narrative arc of Gilliam's protagonists as they try to understand the oceanic quantity of signals and data that consistently assails them, forming their reality. In the transcendental philosophy of F. W. J. von Schelling the faculty of imagination is viewed as an organ of truth, its function to reconcile the apparent opposites of subject and object.<sup>24</sup> That this is happening with Sam is apparent in the dream sequence where he does battle with a giant techno-samurai (SAM-YOU-ARE-I) whom he defeats only to find that his own face is revealed behind the demon's mask. Such imagery is further compounded when Sam, whilst fighting Jill (Kim Greist) – the consensus manifestation of the girl he dreams of rescuing – stumbles into a mirror that conceals her and gives onlookers the impression he is wrestling with his double. The idea of the double (or shadow) finds expression in the various psychotherapeutic approaches discussed, as well as being central to the philosophy of the Toltecs,<sup>25</sup> an ancient Mesoamerican tradition that influenced Carlos Castaneda's anthropological writings. Castaneda was taught that the double must be understood through entrance into states of what he labels *non-ordinary reality* – for our purposes, dreaming. Through this process the subject is able to unify the *tonal* with the *nagual* in the way that Sam so spectacularly fails to do in *Brazil*.<sup>26</sup> As the island of consciousness, the *tonal* is described as the sum of our various descriptions of both our selves and our world. It is more accurately the innate Apollonian tendency that creates order from chaos; that structures and organises our experiences and brings into being our character, life situation and worldview. There is a collective and a personal *tonal*, the personal distinct and particular to the individual and the collective encompassing the views that we either share, disagree or go to war about. Don Juan's description of the *tonal* existing in the sea of the *nagual* also parallels the imagery that Jung found in dreams, and frequently in creation myths and fairy-tales.<sup>27</sup>

### **'8.49PM. Somewhere in the Twentieth Century'**

From this opening caption, the film signals its intent to disrupt the paradigms of classical relativistic notions of reality, most usually rendered in four dimensions: three of space and one of time. The time of day is pointlessly specific in terms of minutiae, but the film can be seen to be every-where and every-when within a hundred year period.<sup>28</sup> This timelessness is complicated as 1950s-style billboards clash with Fascistic and postmodern architecture (in the form of the Ministry and Sam's flat respectively).<sup>29</sup> The technology on offer is comprised of Victorian artefacts re-jigged into futuristic devices. All this points to a kind of pan-temporal decoupage reminiscent of the hyper-reality described by Jean Baudrillard in which signs are completely drained of their meaning.<sup>30</sup> In the 'Odessa Steps/ Ministry of Information' sequence,<sup>31</sup> for example, the original message of Eisenstein's film is complicated as the old civilian woman is replaced with a cleaning lady and the baby carriage with a vacuum cleaner. Such symbols may be read as pure simulacrum, especially when one realises this is all occurring in Sam's head.

**'I keep trying to understand reality, but it always defeats me. I reinvent the world so I can handle it ...' – Terry Gilliam<sup>32</sup>**

In *Brazil* it appears that reality really is what you can get away with, but because of the highly controlled nature of the society in which Sam and the other characters find themselves, what you can get away with is what the system prescribes. As psychologist Christopher S. Hyatt asserts, 'Mental health is the ability to deny reality and repress feelings within the boundaries and parameters established by one's peer group(s).'<sup>33</sup> According to this definition, Sam Lowry begins *Brazil* as a healthy, sane individual, equipped with the kind of *emotional body armour* described by another heretical neo-Freudian, Wilhelm Reich, who believes that everyone has, in Ida's words, 'hopes, wishes [and] dreams' but like Sam they develop ways *not* to achieve them or deny their existence entirely – 'Nothing! Not even dreams!' In addition, this body armour is used to block out or protect the individual from the harsh realities of the outside world.<sup>34</sup> As the boundaries between Sam's internal and his external realities begin to disintegrate – starting with the appearance in consensus reality of Jill

– the veil begins to lift and a new reality is experienced. At first Sam was able to ‘deny reality’ in Hyatt’s words, as Jack Lint is able to do throughout the film. Unlike Jack, Sam begins to see the injustice around him and, more importantly, question his own role in it. Jack’s ability to carry out the horrendous tasks that are his charge may cause the viewer some consternation as to his moral and ethical sensibilities; however, it is unfair to call him evil. As the scene where he discusses the intricacies of the Buttle case (including torture and murder) with Sam in front of his daughter shows, the notion of evil or wrong-doing falls to the cutting-room floor of his mind, as the systems that govern his life – both bureaucratic and central nervous – dictate, in order that he function. Such notions reside, simply, in the existential continuum of the viewer, and in characters such as Jill, Tuttle and eventually Sam; characters who think beyond the reality tunnel – to borrow a term from Timothy Leary – that is approved and constantly reinforced by the dominant forces within their society. Tuttle has, to all extents, liberated himself not only from the bureaucratic structures that once dominated his life, but also from the mindset these structures produce in the individual – a point reinforced as he whistles the film’s title track, ‘Brazil’ itself a song of escape and liberation. Unfortunately, as in most dystopian representations, characters who attempt to free themselves in such a way generally end up dead, or in Sam’s case insane.

## Notes

1. Noam Chomsky, *World Orders, Old and New*, (London: Pluto Press, 1997), 1.
2. Orson Welles actually inserted this line, for his character, into Graham Greene’s screenplay for *The Third Man* [dir. Carol Reed, 1949].
3. Timothy Leary, *Neuropolitique*, (Tempe: Falcon Press, 1988), 5.
4. Michael Persinger & Gylsaine Lafrenière, *Space-Time Transients and Unusual Events*, (London: Nelson-Hall, 1977), 3.
5. The idea of the brain (as well as bureaucratic structures) being a system of files is reflected in the original cover of the video for *Brazil* which depicts a huge filing cabinet with the archetype of the winged-warrior flying from an opened draw. Also in *Spellbound: Art and Film*, a major exhibition held in London in spring 1996, Gilliam’s contribution entitled ‘The Road to Monkey Heaven is (a) Paved (b) Littered (c) Barricaded with Good Intentions’ consisting of a wall of filing cabinets which maybe opened to find various snippets of information regarding his 1995 film *Twelve Monkeys*. In one draw a demented telephone is ringing, in others one may find Gilliam’s notebooks from the film and in one a projection of the film itself may be glimpsed. See <http://www.smart.co.uk/dreams/tgspell.htm>.

6. Nevill Drury, *Don Juan, Mescalito and Modern Magic: The Mythology of Inner Space* (Arkana; London 1986) 3.
7. See [http://www.trond.com/brazil/brazil\\_script.htm](http://www.trond.com/brazil/brazil_script.htm).
8. David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: an enquiry into the origins of cultural change*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990) 6.
9. Robert Jackall, *Propaganda: Main Trends of the Modern World* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1994), vii-xi
10. Andrzej Huczynski & David Buchanan, *Organizational Behaviour: An Introductory Text* [Fourth Edition], (Harlow: Financial Times/ Prentice Hall, 2001), 495–500.
11. See René Descartes, *Discourse on Method & Meditations*, trans. F E Sutcliffe, (London: Penguin, 1968). For discussions on the nature of dreams and reality and Descartes' position regarding doubt as an analytical tool see 'First Meditation: About the things we may doubt', 95–101.
12. Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, (London: Penguin, 2002), 283.
13. For Marx this is the socio-economic structure of society; for Freud the libidinal organisation of the individual.
14. Friedrich Nietzsche says of such systematic totalitarianism, 'I mistrust all systemisers and avoid them. The will to a system is a lack of integrity.' *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. RJ Hollingdale, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), 25.
15. See Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* or Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991)
16. Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*, (London: Sphere Books, 1968) 70.
17. Salman Rushdie, 'The Location of Brazil' in *American Film*, (September, 1985), 53.
18. To my knowledge this term was first coined by Jonathon Rosenbaum in his book *Movie Wars: How Hollywood and the Media Limit What Films We Can See* (London: Wallflower Press, 2000), but is, I believe, equally relevant to a description of the social structures within *Brazil*.
19. This is reflected in the paranoia and fear with which Kurtzmann approaches his ducts, and in *The Fisher King* [dir. Gilliam, 1991], Parry's discussion with the chubby faeries that reside in the ducts of the boiler-room he calls home.
20. Joseph L. Henderson, 'Ancient Myths and Modern Man' in *Man and His Symbols*, ed. Jung, (London: Aldous Jupiter, 1979), pp. 149–157.
21. Jung, quoted in Donald Lee Williams, *Border Crossings: A Psychological Perspective on Carlos Castaneda's Path of Knowledge*, (Toronto: Inner City, 1981), p. 8.
22. 'Bureaucratic rationalisation... revolutionises with technical means ... 'from without' – it first changes the materials and social orders, and through them, the people, by changing the conditions of adaptation – by contrast the power of charisma rests upon the belief in revolution and heroes... charismatic belief revolutionises men 'from within' and shapes material and social conditions according to its revolutionary will.' in Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, (London: University of California Press, 1978), p. 116. Weber describes the paradoxical nature of modernity, asserting that the prevalent dynamic of rationalisation in turn creates its own irrationalities. Moreover, the triumph of the *zweckrationalitat* on the societal level (greater economic and administrative efficiency) was accompanied by the impersonality of the Iron Cage (physical depictions of such cages abound in Gilliam's films) bureaucratic machine, which curbed

individual freedom, and led to a cultural intellectualisation of and disenchantment with the world and, significantly, a loss of meaning.

23. R. D. Laing, *The Politics of Experience*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), 115.

24. See F. W. J. von Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978).

25. See Theun Marès, *Return of the Warriors: The Toltec Teachings Vol. I* (Cape Town: Lionheart, 1995), and *Cry of the Eagle: The Toltec Teachings Vol. II*, (Cape Town: Lionheart, 1997).

26. The tonal and nagual may be understood, very loosely, as representing the conscious and unconscious minds respectively. Castaneda goes on to describe the 'last battle on earth' which must be achieved within the nagual, and transferred through to a similar victory in the tonal: the first is achieved by Sam as the battle with the techno-samurai, but as he attempts to save Jill from the military police force (and flashes back to this original battle) he is outnumbered and arrested – the beginning of the end of his rebellion.

27. See Marie-Louise von Franz, *Creation Myths*, (Boston, MA: Shambhala, 1995), *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales* (Boston, MA: Shambhala, 1996), and *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, (Irving, TX: Shambhala, 1995).

28. As Gilliam himself asserts on the criterion DVD Commentary for *Brazil* 'the film takes place on the Los Angeles/Belfast border.' See also the opening of *Baron Munchausen* ('Somewhere in the 18th Century ... The Age of Reason ... Wednesday ...') and *Time Bandits* (1981) where the action shifts from a map of the universe, through mesocosms of galaxies to arrive at a specific housing estate, and eventually the house of Kevin, the film's protagonist. Together, these three films have been referred to as Gilliam's 'Three Ages of Man Trilogy'.

29. Sam's apartment block actually exists: The Spaces of Abraxas, Marne-La-Vallée region of Paris, France: 'A theatre based on Greek geometry, a palace with a C-shaped ground plan and an arch composed of pieces from the two the buildings constitute a dramatic-baroque space. 591 rent-controlled dwellings.' This building was designed and built in 1982 by noted postmodern architect Ricardo Bofill. (<http://www.bofill.com/change/website-ingles/index2.htm>)

30. See Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. SF Glaser, (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

31. A reference to Sergei Eisenstein's highly political 1925 film *Battleship Potempkin* concerning the massacre of innocent citizens at the hands of the Tsarist militia.

32. 'They said what...?' in *The Observer* (12 September 2004), p. 30.

33. Christopher S. Hyatt, "'Prescription For Rebellion' – Revisited' in *Rebels & Devils: The Psychology of Liberation*, ed. Hyatt, (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon, 1996), p. 37.

34. See Wilhelm Reich, *Character Analysis*, trans. T. P. Wolfe, (London: Vision Press, 1950).

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