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"PAPERS, PLEASE!": A MEDIA ARCHAEOLOGY OF IDENTITY DOCUMENTS

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ABSTRACT. This paper argues identity documents (ID) prefigure wearables as artefacts connected with archives. As participants with human practices, they constitute an apparatus that engenders sensibilities about the proper way to participate in society, through the use of socio-technical systems. The use of these artefacts is necessary to make individuals legible to the state. Refusing them renders us insensible. Through a media archaeology of the history and use of IDs through modern Europe, an understanding emerges of the agential properties of artefacts and their essential role in establishing a social imaginary of the state.

Keywords: *media archaeology, wearables, security, border control, identity documents, dispositifs*

"Papers, Please!" A Media Archaeology of Identity Documents

"Please, I beg you… They would not give me permit. I have no choice. I will be killed if I return to Antegria." The fictional plea of a character in the video game "*Papers, Please*"[1] simulates the real power of identity documents (ID). The player takes the role of an immigration officer and must verify the documents of people crossing an international border. Everyone must submit to inspection, everyone must have valid documents on their person. Occasionally, characters try to present forgeries, or make please for the importance of crossing despite their lack of proper forms or errors in the paperwork. The player is solely responsible for following the ever changing rules. When the player becomes aware of characters who are being trafficked, trying to rejoin their families, or criminals being pursued by vigilantes, the impartiality of the rules do not accommodate for the emotional and personal pleas the game presents. To be a "user" of a technological system means that we accept the order of a system that its artefacts instantiate. These systems emerge from

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[1] Pope, L, *Papers, Please* [Computer Software], 2013, 3909 LLC, http://dukope.com.

and solidify a sensibility about how we participate in technical society. Nomads and migrants challenge the sensibility established by the state and its artefacts. Although no one can remove the immaterial sense of our identity, the sense of belonging somewhere, our participation is cemented in those imagined communities[2] through material artefacts and their corollary record. These exist to make us sensible to the state. The state is not just made up of people who may recognize us, but long entangled chains of humans and non-humans. The subversion and rejection of these systems illustrates our anxiety with the state's need to be the "allegorical author of its citizenry".[3]

At the same time, the use of "wearable" technologies like self-tracking devices are criticized for their security and surveillance implications.[4] The newness of these devices and our typically voluntary engagement with them means we can comfortably reflect on how they write a record of our activity, collecting and sharing data that lives between the artefact on our bodies and the archive in some distant database. But their role is prefigured by already ubiquitous and otherwise mundane identity documents. The ID is a key participant one of the largest network of human and non-human actors, the practices and structures of which constitute a social imaginary. Just as the apparatus of a wearable might constitute a company and a userbase or a demographic of consumers, the apparatus of the ID constitutes a state and its subjects. The forgotten origins of the ID in the Medieval Ages[5] obscures its role in constituting what we find sensible.

What I want to emphasize is the agential aspects of the non-humans, like the ID, and their prescriptive nature. Latour describes prescription as the "moral and ethical dimension" of non-humans.[6] These do not just reflect social intentions, but they transcribe and displace "the contradictory interests of people and things".[7] Latour's work acknowledges the political materiality of the apparatuses's artefacts without critically interrogating them. Likewise, Winner's critiques of the "black box of technology" makes the argument that artefacts do have politics, but Winner also resorts to instrumentality at the last minute,[8] asserting that objects ultimately only

[2] Anderson, B, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso Books, 2006.

[3] Rosen, D., & Santesso, A., *The Watchman in Pieces: Surveillance, Literature, and Liberal Personhood*, Yale University Press, 2013.

[4] Neff, G., & Nafus, D., *Self-Tracking*, The MIT Press, 2016.

[5] Groebner, V., *Who Are You? Identification, Deception, and Surveillance in Early Modern Europe*, Zone Books, 2007.

[6] Latour, B., "What are the Missing Masses? The Sociology of a Few Mundane Artifacts." In W. E. Bijker (Ed.), *Shaping Technology Building Society*, Cambridge, MA. 1992, pp. 225–257.

[7] Ibid., 153.

[8] Smits, M., "Langdon Winner: Technology as a Shadow Constitution." In Achterhuis, H. (Ed.) *American Philosophy of Technology: The Empirical Turn*. Indiana University Press, 1997.

serve human actors. What is missing is a non-dystopian means of acknowledging of the importance of materiality and its political character. This leads me to the central problems for this analysis. First, how can we understand embedded prescriptions within artefacts like the ID? Secondly, when one rejects their use, what are the costs of refusal?

These are questions related to both media theory and the philosophy of technology. Scholarship on the identity document originates in history and political science. This paper draws from interdisciplinary work to address how the identity document prefigures wearable devices, as participants in large networks of human and non-human actors, practices and structures that in turn constitute imaginaries (such as the state and its citizens). Although we have accounts of how mechanical rationalization creates subjectification from the state, and the specific material means of doing so, what is missing is a record of resistances to and practices of subverting those materials that links back to the artefacts as politically intentional actants.

Literature Review

Distrust or disagreement with the apparatus managing society leads people to go "off-the-grid" and try and become non-users or rejectors of the technology used to manage citizens. I use the word apparatus in the spirit of Agamben, who expands Foucault's concept of the *dispositif*.[9] An apparatus is fundamentally necessary for maintaining political institutions and appears "at the intersection of power relations and relations of knowledge".[10] This sort of management relies on the possession and maintenance of accurate information. People are authenticated as citizens through their participation in systems like national identity databases, and by the existence of records that validate their lived experiences. Apparatuses have proliferated along with processes of subjectification, which makes sense as the political management grows more complex and tries to be more efficient. None of this is possible without identity management. This is not dissimilar to Anderson's study of how modern nations were born.[11] Premodern western society shared a conception of the world, governed ultimately by the papacy and managed by the literati, who maintained a "cosmological hierarchy" mediating between heaven and earth.

[9] Agamben, G., *"What is an apparatus?" and other essays*. Stanford University Press, 2009.
[10] Ibid, 3.
[11] Anderson, *Imagined Communities.*

Excommunication was then to be literally shut out from the socially meaningful world.[12] In the modern nation, nationality emerges as a sort of "cultural artefact",[13] which Anderson says is preserved in the hearts and minds of every patriot. It is a sense of commonality, ascribed to something like shared language or a mythical history. These cultural artefacts are also idealized in the symbols of the state, which range from flags, iconic buildings, and badges, to *accoutrements* which signal and signify the rank and identity of their bearers, like passports, documents and identification cards.

Kluitenberg comments that Anderson's communities have their identities sustained through media. "An imaginary communion is shared via mediating machineeries that are believed to be able to transfer more than 'mere' information; feelings rather than signals… identity rather than the codification of social life".[14] Kluitenberg argues that "imaginary" media facilitates political mythologies. These are embedded and intertwined with the material qualities of an apparatus, creating layers of thought and hardware that can be excavated by scholars.

Media archaeology is a theoretical framework and an approach that excavates "the secret paths in history"[15] buried in the mundane. As the apparatus grows ubiquitous, it also becomes mundane and seemingly boring. Something as innocuous as a driver's license may lose its personal significance as we wear it on our person each day. But it still retains its political authority to signal official identity to others. Media here are not just shared ideas or discourse that creates community, but physical media and technology which make political administration possible. Media archaeology directs our focus to the materiality of the non-human itself. I use Latour's description of non-humans, which is intended to "extend the list and modify the shapes and figures of those assembled as participants and design a way for them to act as a durable whole".[16]

Essentially this is referring to things which have a role in social processes, from mechanical actants to speed bumps and sometimes the natural world. With the introduction of wearables, we are more likely to think of things like the "smart" watch or "smart" glasses as being augmented and connecting disparate domains of

[12] Ibid, 15.

[13] Ibid, 4.

[14] Kluitenberg, E., Zielinski, S., Sterling, B., Huhtamo, E., Carels, E., Beloff, Z., … & Akomfrah, J.. *The Book of Imaginary Media: Excavating the Dream of the Ultimate Communication Medium*. NAi Uitgevers/Publishers. 2007, p. 11.

[15] Ibid, 13.

[16] Latour, B., *Reassembling the Social: An introduction to Actor Network Theory*. Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 72.

experience. My argument is that this connection between the lived experience of our physical bodies and archival information is historical, via the function of the ID. Hansen[17] draws from the tradition of Simondon[18] and Stiegler[19] to argue for human techno genesis, the idea that concrete media aid in human development through the exteriorization of evolution ("epiphylogenesis") and thus participate in "technogenesis," the co-evolution between humans and technics. This suggestion of significant roles for objects (involving any agency or autonomy for non-humans) tends to upset theorists, who then decry technological determinism and argue instead for the social construction of technology (SCOT).[20] But Stiegler's epiphylogenesis "supports a conceptualization of the medium as an environment for life",[21] evoking the lifeworld of phenomenology. I will return to this point later.

If the non-human were an inert, neutral artefact, then we could reduce discourse on technology to questions of "misuse." As Agamben argued, "If a certain process of subjectification (or, in this case, desubjectification) corresponds to every apparatus, then it is impossible for the subject of an apparatus to use it 'in the right way'".[22] Instrumentalism (things as a means to ends) ignores how difficult it is to divorce objects from their prescribed roles. It is hard to imagine how one might "hack" objects like guns, eyeglasses, or Latour's door-stopper[23] to subvert their intentions. This is why it is worth considering the role of such artefacts as "sensible" (described below).

Feenberg's concept of substantivism argues that technology is value-laden and not instrumental.[24] It has a measure of its own agency expressed through its design and purpose, or a "political logic." Here we deliberately emphasize the politically contentious nature of the artefact, versus other frameworks like "media logics".[25] Technology as "materialized ideology"[26] allows us to also think of the public's use practices as "tactics",[27] as a way of interacting with non-humans on new terms. Like

[17] Hansen, M. B. N., "Media Theory." In *Theory, Culture and Society,* 12/2-3, pp. 297–306.

[18] Simondon, G., *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*. Translated by Cécile Malaspina, Univocal. 2007; Simondon, G., *Du mode d'existance des objets techniques*, Aubier, 1958.

[19] Stiegler, B., *Technics and time: The fault of Epimetheus* (Vol. 1), Stanford University Press, 1998.

[20] Pinch, T., "On making infrastructure visible: putting the non-humans to rights." In *Cambridge Journal of Economics,* 34/1, 2010. p. 77–89.

[21] Hansen, "Media Theory," p. 299.

[22] Agamben, "*What is an apparatus?*" p. 21.

[23] Johnson, J., "Mixing Humans and Nonhumans Together: The Sociology of a Door-Closer." In *Social Problems,* 35/3, 1988, pp. 298–310.

[24] Feenberg, A., *Questioning Technology*. Routledge, 1999.

[25] Klinger, U., & Svensson, J., "The Emergence of Network Media Logic in Political Communication: A Theoretical Approach." In *New Media & Society,* 1/17, 2014.

[26] Feenberg, *Questioning Technology*. p. 7.

[27] de Certeau, M, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, University of California Press. 1984, p. 113.

contemporary literature on non-use argues,[28] the binary between adherence and refusal to technology ignores our lived experience and all its nuance. I propose an alternative mode of thinking about the role of technology, not through obsequious adherence or petulant rejection, but as a type of conflict and acclimation with "sensibility." Non-use is not a sensible position when it comes to an involuntary, formalized technic like political infrastructure, and few of us are truly ideal participants. The apparatus and its *dispositifs* carry expectations for use, sensibilities as described below. Although our engagement is not always exactly on the terms of the apparatus, we run the risk of insensibility when we break with social prescriptions for use. This is what I will explore below.

Method

Theoretical Framework: Sensibility in a Technical Lifeworld

What defines sensibility in our lived experience? It is the ability for us to appreciate and approach one another as intelligible others. It is related to the "common sense" and "spontaneous philosophy" of cultural hegemony.[29] But while critical approaches are focused on power, sensibility prefigures power by defining intelligibility through our engagement with certain technologies. Those with "good sense" adhere to this form of propriety. It is an ever-mutable state of acceptability based on how we engage with artefacts.

The simplest way of understanding sensibility is by considering naturally to a society, or what people take for granted. Technologies help constitute what we consider the everyday (particularly in developed nations, with our roads, schooling, televisions, etc.). As those technologies become more mundane, they rarely come under the same scrutiny we give new technologies, since they now strike us as utterly conscionable and necessary. In this way, it is only "sensible" to be a user of a technology.

[28] For a brief overview on this literature, see the following: Baumer, E. P. S., Ames, M. G., Burrell, J., Brubaker, J. R., & Dourish, P., "Why study technology non-use?" In *First Monday,* 20/11, 2015, p. 1487; Portwood-Stacer, L., "Media refusal and conspicuous non-consumption: The performative and political dimensions of Facebook abstention." In *New Media & Society,* 15/7, 2012. Woodstock, L., "Media Resistance: Opportunities for Practice Theory and New Media Research." In *International Journal of Communication*, 8, pp. 1983–2001, 2014. Wyatt, S., "Bringing users and non-users into being across methods and disciplines." *Presented at the ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Toronto, CA.* 2014.

[29] Lears, T. J. J., "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities." In *American Historical Review.* 90/3. 1985, pp. 567-593.

When we are far beyond the "adoption" phase of a new technology, refusal of these things strikes people as insensible, unnatural. The sensibility around the use of things unites people in their correct use, affirming norms and values. It implies cooperation and carries expectations about what others will do, for the purpose of maintaining order and stability. People who resist technology then threaten that order and stability. Sensibility is then a form of techno-normativity that describes personal propriety on engaging with technology.

Noble,[30] Nye,[31] and Kasson[32] all reflect on the concept of a "technological sublime," technologies and machines that fulfil the present ethos of society in a way it seems to bring them together and closer to something awe-inspiring and dreadful. Mumford's understanding of "cultural preparation"[33] goes a long way to understanding how technologies embody, enforce and fulfil sensibility. Scholars have accused enlightenment rationality as being the motivating sensibility in a technological society.[34] By changing social consciousness from trusting in a naturalistic or spiritual authority to empirical, mechanical and procedural logics, sensibilities shifted to serve both utilitarian goals but also economic and social elites. Sensibility is then not original to the technology in question, but serves as part of the "concretization" of technics[35] as they become self-sustaining in society.

As an example, take the vision requirements common to many driver's license in the United States. This document is one of the most common government-issued forms of domestic identification. In many cases, the license has restrictions on the use of corrective lenses for those with low visual acuity. This is a sensible arrangement, as corrective eyeglasses render the rest of the world visible to those with poor eyesight. But aside from the totally blind, one can still "see" without glasses - refractive errors and low vision aside. Our need to navigate the world (both in cars and out of them) creates a dependence on high visual acuity. This then acclimates us to the practice of optometry, which introduces objects like glasses and contact lenses we have normalized and accepted, leading the sensibility of "proper eyesight." The push towards high resolution, high detail displays, our concern for restoring the sight of the blind and the general cultural primacy of the visual over other senses of media is part of this sensibility.

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[30] Noble, D. F., *The Religion of Technology: The Divinity of Man and the Spirit of Invention,* Knopf, 2013.

[31] Nye, D. E., *American Technological Sublime*, MIT Press. 1996.

[32] Kasson, J. F., *Civilizing the Machine: Technology and Republican Values in America, 1776-1900.* Macmillan, 1976.

[33] Mumford, L., *Technics and Civilization,* Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1934.

[34] Shapin, S., *The Scientific Revolution,* University of Chicago Press, 1996; Midgley, M., *Science as Salvation: A Modern Myth and its Meaning*, Routledge. 1999.

[35] Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects.*

Yet vision correction was not always sensible or accepted. Historically, these objects were difficult to produce and only required by the few literate. As eyeglasses became more common, they were associated with infirmity and stigmas against intellectualism. Today they are widely accepted as part of the sensible phenomenological lifeworld,[36] ubiquitous, mundane and often necessary, an invisible technical prosthesis. The assistive technology of corrective lenses is so sensible that we hardly think of poor vision as a disability, in contrast to other physical limitations requiring medical equipment.

Technical apparatuses involve the widespread acclimation of individuals to the artefacts and practices of certain technologies, to the point where they define sensibility. People with bad eyesight who refuse the use of eyeglasses threaten the order and stability of a safe roadway. Sensibility creates sensible others, like those who now "legible" to a state.[37] As an extreme example, the *Sentinelesse* live on an island in the Indian Ocean and refuse all visitors with hostile attacks. Their language is unknown and they are considered isolated and "uncontacted".[38] For them to be made sensible to us, our society would have to dispatch anthropologists and linguists which could describe them to us in intelligible terms. Sensibility for humans often involves adherence to certain forms of technology and communication.

In the case of uncontacted or undocumented peoples, extinction is often the ultimate result of failing to acclimate to the changes of the lifeworld. In rare cases, if an introduced technology is too radical, it may be rejected and changes will be averted. On the other hand, improvised relationships can involve arrangements like grey labor markets, trafficking and living as an undocumented immigrant. This analysis focuses on the improvisation that people take in dealing with the sensibility of identity cards. Though the rest of this analysis focuses on how identity documents prefigure wearables as the security *accoutrements* of a political apparatus, we should note the fact that these technics prefigure power by defining sensibility. These objects and systems have a sensible and "taken-for-granted" quality in our lifeworld that frames the discourse.

[36] Dorfman, E., "History of the Lifeworld: From Husserl to Merleau-Ponty." In *Philosophy Today,* 53/3, 2009, pp. 294–303.

[37] Scott, J. C., *Seeing Like a State*, Yale University Press. 1998.

[38] Venkateswar, S., "The Andaman Islanders." In *Scientific American*, 280/5, 1999, pp. 82-88.

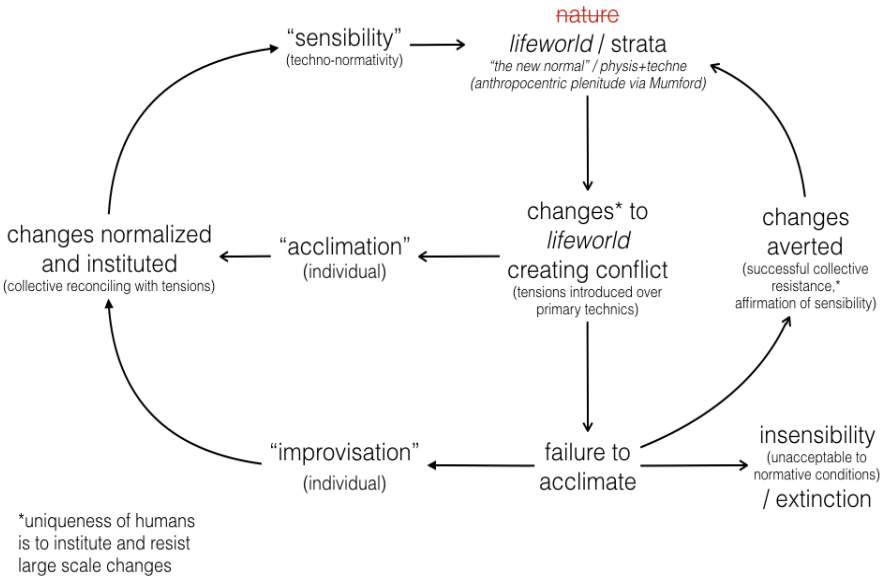

Fig. 1. The process of defining sensibility and changing technical life worlds

Media Archaeology as Research Design

This study uses media archaeology to understand the use (and non-use) of identity documents, focusing on practices in the United States and Western Europe between 1500 and 1910. This method uses the archive and materiality of artefacts to understand their social and political significance.

While there is already a rich vocabulary provided by Latour, Kittler and Foucault, there is little beyond de Certau's[39] "tactics" and "strategies" to talk about the individual choices people make when faced with ubiquitous systems. These technical systems help constitute what I call "sensibility" in the technological lifeworld, a process of individual acclimation and failure to accept the sensibilities of new techno-normativities. This enables us to make a critique of technology and its social impact without resorting to utopian/dystopian tropes. Literature on non-use and refusal does not always historicize its questions.[40] Likewise, philosophy of technology

[39] de Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*.

[40] For a sample of this literature, see: Casemajor, N., Couture, S., Delfin, M., Goerzen, M., & Delfanti, A., "Non-participation in digital media: toward a framework of mediated political action." In *Media, Culture & Society*, 37/6, 2015. p. 1-17; Light, B., *Disconnecting with Social Networking Sites*, Palgrave

concerns itself with large abstractions but is often less concerned with the specific practices of individuals or the materiality behind the apparatus in question (except as convenient examples).[41] This is why media archaeology[42] has the potential to answer specific questions about the embedded prescriptions or the political materiality of artefacts. It also emphasizes the non-humans of Latour's actor-network-theory and hybridity,[43] as we are "entangled"[44] with one another.

As Young describes it, this "media materialist" approach emphasizes historical and material dimensions which allow scholars to create effective genealogies of media. It is inspired by the work of Kittler and Foucault's archaeologies. It opens the "black box" of typical media studies investigations to "illuminate the forms, formats, techniques, protocols, programs, etc. that play crucial roles in the establishment and functioning of media networks, but which are too often typically conflated under broad concepts like 'media' and 'network'".[45]

Analysis

The main argument of this paper is to demonstrate how identity documents prefigure wearables. They act as participants in constituting social imaginaries and historic technologies, artefacts linked with an archive. Specifically, the ID is a security *accoutrements* of a state apparatus. The ID instantiates the social imaginary of the state, in conjuncture with its use by the identified. The use of IDs can be

Macmillan. 2014; Klein, J., "Technology Laggards: Deviants or Victims?" *Presented at the Fourth International Critical Management Studies Conference*. 2005; Portwood-Stacer, "Media Refusal"; Ribak, R., & Rosenthal, M., "Rethinking Marginality: Media Ambivalence and Resistance in an Age of Convergence and Ubiquity." *Presented at the International Communication Association, Boston, MA: International Communication Association.* 2011.; Wyatt, S., Thomas, G., & Terranova, T., They Came, They Surfed, They Went Back to the Beach. In S. Woolgar (Ed.), *Virtual Society Technology, Cyberbole, Reality*. Oxford. 2002. pp. 23-40; Wagenknecht, S., "Beyond non-/use: The affected bystander and her escalation." In *New Media & Society,* 2017; Reisendorf, B. C., & Groselj, D. "Internet (non-)use types and motivational access: Implications for digital inequalities research." In *New Media & Society*, 19/8, 2017, pp. 1157–1176; Woodstock, L., "Media Resistance: Opportunities for Practice Theory and New Media Research." In *International Journal of Communication*, 8, 2014, pp. 1983–2001.

[41] Misa, T., "How Machines Make History and How Historians Help Them to Do So." In *Science, Technology and Human Values* 13. 1988, pp. 308-331.

[42] Huhtamo, E., & Parikka, J., *Media archaeology: Approaches, applications, and implications*. University of California Press. 2011; Parikka, J., *What is Media Archaeology*?, John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

[43] Latour, *Reassembling the Social.*

[44] Hodder, I., "The Entanglements of Humans and Things: A Long-Term View." In *New Literary History,* 45/1, 2014, pp. 19–36.

[45] Young, L.C., *What's In a List? Cultural Techniques, Logistics and Poesis* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Western Ontario, 2014, p. 40.

traced in one of two ways. First, we can understand IDs as artefacts of bio power, controlling the physical movement of persons[46] leading to the interiorization of the ideas they represent. We can also analyze the ID as a means of implementing strategic rationalization.[47]

Enlightenment-styled thinking orders and structures the world via categories and indices. A system justifies its own being through such practices, and this is how "legible people" emerge to states in the scope of time,[48] people who can be read and written by the state.[49] These are also sensible people, those who have acclimated to and accept the new lifeworld created by ubiquitous and mundane technologies. I will address both bio power alongside the way these historic wearables work as *dispotiffs* in apparatuses that in turn constitute imaginaries in three parts; through the ID's function as an artefact subjectifying the individual, the role of the archive verifying the ID, and the insensible who subvert the use of IDs and corrupt the archive.

The Artefact

Before the modern state, identification materials were mostly limited to specially authorized individuals, including elites, professionals, as well as those in motion and crossing borders. Travelers went abroad with the authority or blessing of a political entity guaranteeing others the bearer was who they said they were. The evidence that they were known by others allowed them to be known by those who have never met them before. Furthermore, the artefacts that ascribed and assigned status to individuals were technologically complex and difficult to reproduce. Symbols and signs, such as the use of Aboriginal message sticks, wax seals, signet rings, and so on, were complex in their environmental context.[50] Travel has always presented an opportunity for people to pretend to be someone else. This was problematic in early modern European states.[51]

In 16th-century Germany, paupers were issued safe-conduct passes in the form of stamped pieces of tin. These badges licensed people to buy bread for

[46] Foucault, M., *Security, Territory, Population,* Palgrave Macmillan. 2007, p. 16.

[47] Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution;* Midgley, M, *Science as Salvation;* de Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*.

[48] Caplan, J., Torpey, J., *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, Princeton University Press. 2001, pp. 1-4.

[49] Scott, *Seeing Like a State.*

[50] Farman, J., "Waiting for the Word: On the Time Spent Waiting for a Response to a Message." *University of Illinois at Chicago, Communication Colloquia, Chicago, Il.* 2016.

[51] Groebner, V., "*Who Are You?"*

discounted prices and to beg. Their use was also compulsory and those found begging without them were subject to strict punishment.[52] Tin is a soft metal that is relatively easy to work with. Inventive paupers were able to be copied and duplicated the passes, leading to authorities in Cologne and Freiburg to re-administer new serial numbers and dates once per year to control the proliferation of fakes. Beggars who used technical skills to alter their identity, created forged certificates and false seals were depicted in popular morality literature of the time in "almost superhuman terms". They improvised with the materials offered them in a way that effected their political and social capital. This lack of certainty is also illustrated in how Groebner discusses an account of a Swiss courier on the road in June 1515. Wearing an official badge, he brings a call for troops to head to Italy. The next day another courier (also bearing an official badge) tells them to go home.[53] Face-to-face communication rests on impossible trust ("I am who I say I am") that insignia promised to guarantee but couldn't fulfil.

This is why the mark of an effective modern state the ability to quickly define "who is who." An apparatus must have internal consistency to create technical sensibility. The French First Republic serves as a spectacular example of total failure to administrate its citizen's identities. In the late 18th century, wording in a decree to issue documents created mass confusion, about whether or not internal or international passports were to be issued, and revised who held authority in issuing them. These documents were then widely forged, along with supplementary documentation such as hospital receipts and certificates of residence. Torpey makes the case that fraud and forgery are "automatic responses" when states impose documentary requirements like this.[54]

Likewise, Siegert's analysis of Spanish procedures in the 16th century for documenting and identifying *pasajeros a Indies* (people traveling to the new world)[55] reveals a convoluted system which inherently produced and accepted forgeries.[56] Expecting someone to follow an apparatus without consistent

[52] Ibid. 50; Hindle, S, "Dependency, shame and belonging: Badging the deserving poor, c. 1550–1750." In *Cultural and Social History,* 1/1, 2004, pp. 6-35.

[53] Groebner, V., "Describing the Person, Reading the Signs in Late Medieval and Renaissance Europe: Identity Papers, Vested Figures, and the Limits of Identification, 1400-1600." In Caplan, J., Torpey, J. (Eds.) *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, Princeton University Press. 2001.

[54] Torpey, J., *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2000.

[55] Siegert, B, *Passagiere und Papiere: Schreibakte auf der Schwelle zwischen Spanien und Amerika*. Fink, 2006.

[56] Groebner, "*Who Are You?"* p. 193.

sensibility results in improvisations so that people can cope with disorder. German barriers to movement in 1810 were in similar disarray. Torpey notes that people still travelled without passports fearing no consequence.[57] Passport controls were relaxed for emigrants later in the 1850s, but improvisation is a response to effective as well as ineffective apparatuses.

Standardized and uniformly imposed system of identification for individuals emerged more clearly in the internal and international passports issued prior to early 20th-century registration acts, where all citizens would need to obtain and possess some form of ID.[58] Torpey makes the case that states work to monopolize legitimate means of travel for a variety of reasons which all relate to sustaining their own power. The development of cards and codes to identify people "unambiguously and distinguished among them for administrative purposes"[59] would eventually become mandatory and ubiquitous for all citizens. The ID had to be reliable to serve as a certificate of identity. Security features were initially scare, particularly when their use was limited to a privileged few. Fahrmeir describes the use of these early modern documents in Germany as "semi-formalized letters of recommendation."[60] They did not always contain descriptions of the bearer or record numbers, but an honorable guarantee of the authority of the issuer of the passport. These were authorized by officials who never met the bearer.

We might think of a physical description or a representation of that person as useful information to identify citizens. But their absence from early IDs is not solely the fault of the object. In the mid-19th century it was impractical to create a daguerreotype for every person issued a passport. The main role of these documents was to certify authority, rather than identifying individuals. Upper-class passport bearers in the mid-19th century found the idea of personal identification an offense against their character.[61] Should they be measured and known by a piece of paper like a common deviant? If they are traveling legitimately, then why are they treated with suspicion? This attitude reflects the continuing way that elites are treated differently in practice,[62] although on paper they comply with the standards of the apparatus.

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[57] Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport.*

[58] Groubner, *"Who Are You?"*, pp. 235-235.

[59] Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport.* p. 7.

[60] Fahrmeir, A, "Governments and Forgers: Passports in Nineteenth-Century Europe" In Caplan, J., Torpey, J. (Eds.) *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, Princeton University Press, 2001.

[61] Robertson, C, *The Passport in America: The History of a Document*, Oxford University Press. 2010.

[62] Groebner, *"Who Are You?",* pp. 227, 235.

While the late 1850s saw European states drop visa requirements and passport controls, but documents reflecting work histories such as the *livret d'ouvrier* and the *arbeitsbuchs* were used to provide an employment record and regulate the movement of specialized laborers. These would be replaced by identity cards issued with national registration acts coinciding with the First World War and the modern passport system.[63]

To summarize, the effectiveness of ID to subjectify and identify the individual is dependent on the environmental context, the material affordances, and the consistency of the system in place. One could argue that the ID sans archive functioned by referencing a social lexicon, rather than physical records, but it could not become mundane, ubiquitous, or irresistible without.

The Archive

The obligation to carry ID arrived with the utopian ethos of registration and archiving.[64] The physical insignia described previously had no formal record. Their authority was self-contained - it did not have to be verified with something else. However, the existence of these *accoutrements* did signify a position in a social record. In the Roman Empire, soldiers were provided with *signaculum,* effectively a metal dog tag, and were called *signatus* or "marked." Their new and unique station in society gave them the status of *in numeros referri, "*listed in the registers".[65] While registration of births was not compulsory, to have a birth certificate on record ensured Roman citizens the freedom to travel throughout the empire and served as a type of passport, signifying their recognition by the state.[66]

The *signaculum* was not linked to the *referri* but the relationship between the two is similar to what emerged during the growth of registers and archives in the 16th and 17th centuries. The availability of paper and role of various religious and municipal officials as the creators of public record led to a mentality of registering and recording everything: births, deaths, marriages, baptisms, parish members, housing, and so on. While people would give false names and registers were undoubtedly not complete or wholly accurate, the principle behind recording and

[63] Torpey, J., "The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Passport System." In Caplan, J., Torpey, J. (Eds.) *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World*. Princeton University Press, 2001.

[64] Groebner, *"Who Are You?"*, pp. 200-202.

[65] le Bohec, Y, *The Imperial Roman Army*, Routledge. 2013, p. 74.

[66] Schulz, F, "Roman Registers of Births and Birth Certificates." In *Journal of Roman Studies,* 33/1-2. 1943, pp. 55-64.

verifying information came from the belief that personal data had been recorded somewhere, and officially registered information could be compared with an individual's details to be verified.[67] In this way, authenticity emerged as a quality of consistency when personal ID corresponded to official registers internal to a state.

The individually identified political actor has their genesis with the emergence of statehood, and as Groebner notes, "the history of the identity document and the official production certainty is necessarily a history of identification as fiction, of deception, pretense, and ambivalence".[68] Spatial regimes were emerging, which depended on a clarity of the individual, a marking or permanent distinction. Categorization in documents speak to the flexibility of how identity artefacts would grow from the early modern apparatus that loosely linked faces with names. Uncertainty means identity could not be presented spontaneously, but it had to emerge with the aid of various norms and limits. The artefacts assigned and ascribed to an individual could not be trusted any more than the individual - they had to correspond with something else external.

Today, this sensibility is obvious. What good is it to issue documents without records to verify them? The ID is not just an artefact to carry and confirm we are who we are who we say we are, but something that references our place in an official (and protected) register. When I surrender my papers, I am not the only one being authenticated. The artefact is authenticated against a database. A police officer checks my driver's license in-hand against an archive which will tell them if I am wanted by the police, if that license has expired, and so on. The power of these documents is in this referencing, of people to objects, and of objects to archive. Archives generate sensibility, maintaining order and stability through the correct and proper use of their resources. The difficulty of linking one identity across fragmented and de-centralized records leads to a push for centralization. Perhaps the best example of the ominous power of a comprehensive, pre-digital archive is the record system of the East German Stasi, "a monument to what could be achieved by the hand- or type-written file, given sufficient will and manpower".[69] Such detail and consistency was necessary to effectively subjugate citizens of the German Democratic Republic and maintain the seeming omnipresence of their operative psychologists.[70] s

The threat of archival corruption is what drove the adoption of security measures in IDs. A forgery or counterfeit ID presents itself as something on record with all the aspects of a legitimate *accoutrement.* In the 19th century, physical

[67] Groebner, "*Who Are You?*" pp. 200-212.
[68] Ibid. 21.
[69] Vincent, D. *Privacy: A Short History,* Polity, 2016. p. 118.
[70] Koehler, J. O, *STASI: The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police.* Basic Books, 1999.

characteristics were listed on the passport. Passports were given expirations. Designs grew increasingly complicated to confound the efforts of forgers. In the 1850s, security paper was introduced to prevent reprinting. This and special inks (which changed color if they were erased) were the primary security method until the introduction of holograms. The technological arms race of inks and paper was necessary as people found ways to usurp the state government's guardianship of individual personal and social identity.[71]

The technological sophistication of the wearable is prefigured by this relationship between ID and archive. The inner workings of most wearable technology is beyond the understanding of the consumer - one is not supposed to be able to build their own self-tracker and use all the features of a commercial platform like Fitbit. The archive is supposed to be only referenced by an official, legitimate artefact, or else it is corrupted. As an example outside of wearables, the use of cable television descramblers allowed people to access content without being subscribers, by falsely communicating with the signal from the archive as though it were an official artefact.

These subversive artefacts still operate within the rules of the apparatus. Agambaen would argue forgery is not proof of instrumentalism, but a refutation, since it accepts the process of subjectification within the apparatus. But these improvisations do speak to Feenberg's ideal of a subversive rationalization. "Technology is a scene of social struggle, a 'parliament of things', on which civilizational alternatives contend"[72] but not only within the wholeness of the apparatus but its individual artefacts as well. Falsifying a document so that one can cross a border is a form of civil disobedience, or direct democratic participation in the composition of things. Simply put, one must "use" the object via some unique means in order to accomplish their goals as a "non-user".[73] When the register and the archive are the official standard by which the state makes sense of its citizens, we cannot reject its use. We would become insensible, or invisible to the state.

The Insensible

The role of the insensible introduces a theoretical tension between the role of the artefact and the archive. These are the undocumented, the indescribable, the invisible to the state. Imagine a non-gender conforming individual who must

[71] Fahrmeir, "Governments and Forgers".

[72] Feenberg, A, "Subversive Rationalization: Technology, Power, and Democracy." In *Inquiry,* 35/3-4, 1992, p. 307.

[73] Wagenknecht, "Beyond Non-/Use".

register with the state, presented with two checkboxes: "Male" or "Female." The archive both imposes its order on others and ignores that which it finds insensible. Individuals are forced to confront the apparatus on its own (totalizing) terms, or risk insensibility (in the form of social extinction). Despite how we might chafe at the options and look for change in the apparatus, misrepresentation that suits our aims becomes a practical choice.

Improvising on one's identity is most evident in cases of theft or forgery. In the 16th century, Arnaud du Tilh impersonated a French peasant of some means for three years, living with the absent Guerre's wife Bertrande de Rols, and their son. In the absence of verification, du Tilh was able to assume Guerre's identity based the knowledge he possessed about the man's life (possibly with the cooperation of de Rols). He was accused of his fraud once by his village and again by Guerre's father-in-law. During his trial the "real" Martin Guerre appeared and du Tilh was found guilty and hanged four days later.[74] Subverting the question of "who is who" is a type of deviance that creates insensibility. Identity theft is stepping into the shoes of someone else, which led to execution for du Tilh. After all, there could be only one Martin Guerre. Forgeries either attempt to challenge the archive or create entirely new people with only the improvised *accoutrements*.

It should be clear why resisting the prescriptive use of IDs would be a judged as a criminal and insensible act. Subverting these artefacts retains a central logic of the apparatus (identifying persons) but through a means that corrupts the archive. Counterfeit documents are very similar to art forgeries then, in that they confuse the real with something inauthentic. But there are several features to this sort of improvised document to consider. Radnóti writes that indistinguishable copies, or "perfect fakes" introduce a unique hermeneutic dialogue with their originals.[75]

Radnóti defines the forgery as objects "falsely purporting to have both the history of production, as well as the entire subsequent general historical fate for the… original work".[76] Using Goodman's distinction between allographic arts (literature, music, etc. which are transmitted via signs rather than a physical materiality), and autographic arts (literally touched by the artist)[77] we could consider the way in which passports and official ID have autographic elements – "even the most perfect copy by any other hand cannot be authentic or original".[78]

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[74] Davis, N. Z., *The Return of Martin Guerre*, Harvard University Press. 1983.
[75] Radnóti, S, *The Fake: Forgery and Its Place in Art*. Dunai, E. (Trans.) Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 1999.
[76] Ibid. 116.
[77] Goodman, N., *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*, Hackett Publishing Company, 1976.
[78] Radnóti, "The Fake", p. 117.

Margolis notes that these distinctions over the authentic are not uniform over autographic and allographic arts. Instead, authentic is "an entirely intentional distinction and is bound to reflect our shifting interest and the shifting history of our artistic, technological economic, political, and moral experience".[79] Forgery is possible in allographic art because of its autographic features. The criteria for authenticity is deliberative, and concerned with practices, cohesion across institutions and the "ease of application".[80] This is why although fingerprint scanners can be fooled and retinas cannot be replicated, biometric authentication is more likely to be implemented through fingerprint scanning,[81] since retinal systems are much more expensive.

Forgeries then threaten sensibility by complicating authenticity. The sanctity of any and all *dispositiffs* are threatened when alternatives arise. As described previously, the use of the artefact must be consistent (ubiquitous) and the status of the archive must be absolute (mundane, obvious and accurate). We can then consider the undocumented, the indescribable and the invisible as inherently insensible (or deviant). As non-users or resisters, how are they then treated?

In the context of the United States, a system of passive control existed among the states prior to the 20th century creation of Federal passport restrictions on immigration.[82] The mythical "open border" rhetoric evokes insecurity on behalf of people who feel threatened by free movement. Neuman describes a record of pre-1875 regulation that satisfied historic anxieties over immigration. State legislation regulating the movement of criminals and the poor as well as public health and slavery regulation determined the motion of bodies and kept borders from being legally "open".[83]

While travel could be liberating for the improvisational poor in pre-modern Europe, US courts in the 19th century drew from the Articles of Confederation's Article 4, exempting "paupers, vagabonds and fugitives from justice" from the legal privileges of citizenry. Those identified as such were largely treated as deviants and did not benefit from geographic mobility, despite Article 4's exclusion in the 1787 Constitution. The fear that Europe was not sending its best, but its "lazy and intemperate subjects,

[79] Margolis, J., "Art, Forgery, and Authenticity." In Dutton, D. (Ed.). *The Forgers Art: Forgery and the Philosophy of Art*, University of California Press, 1983, p. 167.

[80] Ibid, p. 171.

[81] Liu, S., & Silverman, M., "A Practical Guide to Biometric Security Technology." In *IT Professional,* 3/1, p. 2001, pp. 27-32.

[82] Neuman, G. L., *Strangers to the Constitution: Immigrants, Borders and Fundamental Law*, Princeton University Press, 1996.

[83] Neuman, G. L., *Strangers to the Constitution: Immigrants, Borders and Fundamental Law*, Princeton University Press. 1996, pp. 19-20.

as well as the mentally ill and physically disabled, to burden America"[84] was a concern to prejudiced nativists, as much then as it is now. Confirming or ascribing deviancy as a condition of identity is a function of documentation. In short, a social subjectivity assigned by the state and administered by documentary principles eliminates a need for physical walls. Neuman's arguments that pre-1875 legislation regulated the movement of bodies shows that the United States has never had an "open border." Those outside the constitution or lacking documentation remain subject to the jurisdiction of the state.[85]

The treatment of Romani also shows how practices could define people as insensible even if they tried to conform to the apparatus. In the 16th century letters of conduct and ID produced by Gypsies were ordered to be destroyed because of the belief that any documents they carried must have been forged. "Authorities refused to recognize papers bearing their own signs and marks",[86] an exclusionary practice also in place for other non-identified groups like women, poor, and non-Europeans, who each had to cope with the refusal of the apparatus and its official participants to legitimize them as sensible persons.[87] The state also works to define itself by what it is not, through rejecting undesirable persons from its apparatus. Forgery and misrepresentation is then a coping strategy with an otherwise totalizing imposition of order.

Discussion

"Identification establishes administrative order".[88] Identification is also only effective when the artefact is worn on the person. It must have a corresponding record in a register, and it must serve as an alternative to others - the insensible or invisible. In this way, administrative order, through the artefact, its archive and the apparatus of these materials and human practices puts sensibility into effect. Answering "who is who" depends on our faith in objects and their record, not the human carrying ID. As documentation moved from reflecting status to ascribing individual identity, they went from being voluntary and somewhat expressive, to becoming highly formal, uniform objects with involuntary prescriptions for usage.

[84] Ibid. 23-24.

[85] Ibid. 189.

[86] Groebner, "*Who Are You?*" p. 194.

[87] Ibid. 249-259.

[88] Ibid. p. 229.

While current research around the use of IDs highlight their surveillance aspect,[89] reconsidering their ubiquitous or mundane status reveals how they participate with people in constituting a social imaginary. It is easy to consider their refusal as deviant. We interiorize what they represent - they are ubiquitous, carried by nearly everyone. As persons subjectified by the apparatus and conditioned to the formal practices of obtaining and presenting IDs interiorize that "discipline"[90] we feel the legitimization from our participation.

In the United States, popular discourse suggests we see others who do not participate or who subvert the process of legitimization and subjectification as deviants, as "illegal" and literally embodying embodying criminality in their mere being. In this way, the political logic of the ID serves its purpose, and its political materiality helps to constitute the state. In the absence of identification documents, we are not sensible to the state. Without documentation, the citizen (and the entity granting citizenship) is only a verbal agreement. With media and material evidence, they become the imaginaries described by Anderson,[91] nation-states and peoples who never see one another but retain a sense their wholeness and unity.

Society positively conditioned by the apparatus falls into a formal practice of citizenship. Those who are negatively conditioned find themselves on the other side of a binary, in the "informal practice".[92] "Grey" labor markets involve movement across formal practices and informal society where persons routinely transgress the apparatus of control through falsified migrant documents[93] or through undocumented labor migration.[94]

This is how we can understand the ID as an early wearable. In contemporary society, there is a growing expectation to carry it on our physical persons, especially as we cross borders. It corresponds to a distant archive, and it identifies us within a specific community. The current concern over wearables mostly has to do with their tracking capabilities,[95] but if we consider how they give our bodies new forms of agency and link us with others, then the parallel is clear. The imaginaries constituted by commercial wearables

[89] Lyon, *Identifying Citizens: ID Cards as Surveillance*. Polity 2009.

[90] Foucault, M., *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, Pantheon Books. 1977.

[91] Anderson, *Imagined Communities.*

[92] McFarlane, C., "Rethinking informality: Politics, crisis, and the city." In *Planning Theory & Practice,* 13/1, 2012, pp. 89-108.

[93] Reeves, M., "Clean Fake: Authenticating documents and persons in migrant Moscow." In *American Ethnologist,* 40/3, 2013, pp. 508-524.

[94] Jones, T., Ram, M., & Edwards, P., "Shades of Grey in the Informal Economy," In *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy,* 26/9-10, 2006, pp. 357-373.

[95] Neff, G., & Nafus, D, *Self-Tracking,* MIT Press, 2016; Mann, S., & Ferenbok, J, "New Media and the Power Politics of Surveillance in a Surveillance-Dominated World." In *Surveillance & Society* 11, 2013, pp. 18–34.

are very small, and so their sensibilities are not dominant - but if they were ubiquitous and less novel, then their social function and the resulting sensibility would be much more difficult to resist. In the meantime, no one forces us to possess them.

However, the digital archive enables an ease of centralization, linking, consistency and instant verifiability that physical records could never hope to accomplish. If we consider the smartphone as a wearable, and the geo-location collected and recorded by apps like Facebook,[96] as well as the creation of profiles to track non-users,[97] then the commercial sensibilities instantiated by the apparatus becomes obvious. In effect, "our targeted advertising says go spend money here because we sense you are the kind of person who should appreciate it." Users of wearables are subjectified as specific sorts of consumers, members of a commercial imaginary, in the same way that bearers of ID are subjectified as specific sorts of citizens and members of their nation.

What I have done is attempt to illustrate the persistent and historical importance of artefacts as security *accoutrement,* as they pair with archives to establish an apparatus. A measure of agency is revealed in the way that the ID acts as a participant in the establishment of the imaginary of the state, when linked with an archive and established as ubiquitous, mundane and involuntary. Wearables have a continuity as objects corresponding to an archive and greater apparatuses that instantiate sensibility. Scholarship on contemporary identity documents and their apparatuses evidences the workings of sensibility in the present, and also can be viewed through the framework provided here.[98] Political media goes beyond content and messages to the very form of non-humans, prefiguring power by defining the "sensible" means of participation.

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[96] Mura, R, "Geolocation and Targeted Advertising: Making the Case for Heightened Protections to Address Growing Privacy Concerns." In *Buffalo Intellectual Property Law Journal*, 9/77, 2013.

[97] Acar, Güneş, et al. "Facebook tracking through social plug-ins." *Technical report prepared for the Belgian Privacy Commission*, Ver 1. 2015.

[98] A brief review of this literature can be found in the following: Eyre, W., *The Real ID Act: Privacy and Government Surveillance*, LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC, 2011; Salter, M., *Rites of Passage: The Passport in International Relations*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003; Lyon, D., *Identifying citizens: ID cards as surveillance*, Polity, 2009; Lyon, D., "Everyday Surveillance: Personal data and social classifications." In *Information, Communication & Society,* 5/2, 2002, pp 242–257; Lyon, D., "Under My Skin: From Identification Papers to Body Surveillance." In Caplan, J., Torpey, J. (Eds.) *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, Princeton University Press, 2001; Lyon, D., *The Electronic Eye*, University of Minnesota Press, 1994.