

Phillip H. Gochenour*

Masks and Dances: Cybernetics and Systems Theory in Relation to Flusser's Concepts of the Subject and Society

This paper undertakes a close reading of Flusser's tropes of "the mask" and "dances" to compare similarities between Flusser's formulation of the self and society and corresponding concepts in contemporary systems theory. Major concepts from cybernetics and systems theory such as feedback mechanisms, system and environment, and reciprocal development are illustrated through passages from Laszlo, Maturana and Varela, and Luhmann and compared with Flusser, with the aim of demonstrating what is "cybernetic" in Flusser's thought. Consideration is also given to the relationship between Flusser's work and that of other contemporary social theorists who adopt systems theoretical approaches, such as Foucault, Deleuze, and Guattari.

Key Words: cybernetics, system theory, Luhmann

* phil_gochenour@earthlink.net