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The Asignifying Affordance of Assemblage: Enactive Embodied Embedded and Extended Urban Cartography

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Abstract

This article examined the reading of an urban incident through five progressive layers of conceptualization. In this form, we introduced some fundamental thoughts and ideas for a philosophy for urban observation, from the ecological thinking to avoid assuming either the objective or subjective standpoint, to an affect-based process of sense-making, and finally propose the idea of assemblage as the unit for reading the reality.

Key words

Ecology, Affect, Affordance, Asignifying Sign, Assemblage

1 Introduction/Problem Statement: Ecology a.k.a. Logic of Relation or Logic of Intensity

Q1: How to overcome (modernist) determinism without regressing to relativism?

Q2: How to escape (postmodern) relativism without regressing to determinism which in the architectural discourse of today goes by the name of Parametricism?¹⁾

A: The AAA's answer is ecology.²⁾

The term ecology is as political as it is scientific. By contrast to the Logic of Discreteness, ecological thinking endorses a Logic of Continuity (logic of the included middle). There is discreteness, to be sure, but the finite always consists of an infinity under a certain relation. So the discrete and the continuous – digital and analogue – are not to be taken as mutually exclusive but rather as effectively codetermining, albeit asymmetrically (double bind).³⁾ This is to say that the content is too big for the form.⁴⁾

Ecology is governed by a different logic from that of Ego-Logic. The individual is no longer the universal guarantor of dominant meanings. As Guattari explains in his seminal *The Three Ecologies*, while Ego-Logic seeks to delimit its objects, Ecology concerns itself solely with the movement and intensity of evolutive processes. Process – which Guattari counterposes to the all-too-static notions of system and structure – “seeks to grasp existence in the very act of its constitution, definition, and deterritorialisation [...]”⁵⁾

The general lesson of the Logic of Relation is that the stable regularities we see in actuality – a.k.a. objects – do not have a specific cause that can be demarcated and isolated but may only be understood as a dynamic cascade of many processes operating over time.⁶⁾ If effects were reducible to their causes, novelty would be impossible. Time cannot therefore be treated as an abstraction. It is real through and through.

The ethico-political lesson of the Logic of Intensity is that every thing is contingently obligatory and not logically necessary. Therein lies the possibility of pursuing a (non-determinist) project of defatalisation (anti-teleology). Resetting ourselves in a metaphysical perspective, as Meillassoux suggests, permits us to reconstruct our existence beyond faith alone or the sole opportunism of interest.⁷⁾ To put it bluntly, everything could have been different. The time has come to unyoke the architect from Newtonian physics and Cartesian metaphysics in favour of the ecological approach.

The traditional chasm between ‘two cultures’ - the quasi-objective scientific world-in-itself and the quasi-subjective humanistic world-for-us - becomes obsolete, as do the categories of the knower and known. The AAA starts from the middle instead. Pace Kant, we must think outside of our own thought and avoid reducing the world

to our own conceptual schemes.⁸⁾ It is for this reason that “aesthetics becomes first philosophy.”⁹⁾ Hence the importance of the current Affective Turn.¹⁰⁾

It was the moment that I encountered a young woman on a little square in a suburb of Budapest. I was accompanied by two young children, one of which was mine, yet my reason for being there was business. The woman spoke to me in a language I could not determine and she was fiercely gesticulating, pointing her finger towards her lower middle. The subtle curvature of her belly left no room for doubt; she was with child. Her alternating between ‘the tummy gesture’ and rubbing her fingers just inches from my face - the international hand sign for money - suggested that I was to contribute toward some of the costs of labour and beyond. Her fiery black-brown eyes showed not a particular emotion, that is to say, they showed all emotions in a high speed sequence, with recurring favourites. Anger was dominant, but this was rapidly replaced by puzzlement (in the way a dog would look if you incidentally stepped on its tail, the “I thought we was friends?” look), dismay, affection, despair, disdain, and flirting. Weltschmerz and Sehnsucht compressed and acted out in the most violent way. Obviously I was somewhat startled by the event. I tried to comfort the children by acting like this was the sort of thing I was doing on a daily basis. For all they knew I was at work and this could well be part of it.

2 Affective Turn: Affect a.k.a. Affordance

This is how the father of the ecological approach to perception J.J. Gibson explains the shift from the metaphysical – always and for everyone – experience of space to the relational space of experience, which is dynamic (synaesthetic and kinaesthetic):

The affordances of the environment are what it offers the [human], what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill. The verb to afford is found in the dictionary, but the noun affordance is not. I have made it up. I mean by it something that refers to both the environment and the [human] in a way that no existing term does. It implies the complementarity of the [human] and the environment [...].¹¹⁾

It would be difficult to imagine a more elegant shift of focus from the extensive space of properties to the intensive spatium of capacities, or in Deleuzian parlance, from longitude to latitude. A mode of existence never pre-exists an event.

In his review of Deleuze's early works – *Difference and Repetition* (1968) and *The Logic of Sense* (1969) - Foucault gives credit to Deleuze for challenging the three conditions that make it impossible to think through the event, namely the world, the self, and god (a sphere, a circle, and a centre).¹²⁾ Perverting the

triple subjection, Deleuze introduces a metaphysics of the real yet incorporeal event (the virtual), which is consequently irreducible to a physics of the world (the actual). Rather than a phenomenology of signification based on the subject (sense-bestowing), there is a logic of neutral meaning (affect/affordance). Finally, the raising up of the conceptual future in a past essence (being) is rejected in favour of a thought of the present infinitive (becoming). Consequently, the AAA prerogative is to renounce any order of preference, any organisation in relation to goal, any signification.¹³ It is the future that perverts the past.

The square itself was not really a square; it was a circle and it was constructed to give the trams of the Budapesti Közlekedési Vállalat a wide enough radius to turn on their way back to the city. It also functioned as the terminal station for a couple of lines. You would love this place, precisely because it was not the sort of space you could easily hate and discard. Reminiscent of its socialist nature, the little concrete waiting area structure - practically untouched by graffiti - as neutral as it could be. It evoked neither feelings of attraction nor of repulsion. The sun was shining and yet it was open to haven anyone in need of shelter at any given time. It offered a place of shelter even before there was any need of shelter; the proto-shelter as an affordance of shelter. At this moment it was empty of people, but that could change as soon as the next tram arrived.

The orange-white of the tramcars was separated by a red horizontal stripe, bringing uniformity to the circular blocks surrounding the calmness of the green, bushy centerfield. Images they were, rather than objects. As Augé would have it, "Words and images in transit through non-places can take root in the - still diverse - places where people still try to construct part of their daily life."¹⁴ As we stood motionless, the trams lost their perspective entirely. And as they were stationary as well, they lost their main purpose too. Somewhere in the power station of Újpest (or in any other, for that matter), the needle of one of the many indicators would have resisted to change its position simply because the tram had stopped moving; so small would the change in amperage be.

It was a place of transformation, in fact a place of transduction, a place where pedestrians became tramway-riders, where they went from upright-walk to seated-ride, where they transduced from being self-propelled into controlled-driven, from home-closeness to transit-distance. Wherever they went, they would have to transduce yet again to be able to interact with their point of designation. They might shortly become upright-walkers again, only to convert into seated-workers or stand-up-sales-people for the rest of the day. Yet there would be no reason to classify this place with its very specific charm - despite its function - as a non-place. According to Augé:

Since non-places are the space of supermodernity, supermodernity cannot aspire to the same ambitions as modernity. When individuals come together, they engender the social and organize places. But the space of supermodernity is inhabited by this contradiction: it deals only with individuals (customers, passengers, users, listeners), but they are identified (name, occupation, place of birth, address) only on entering or leaving. Since non-places are the space of supermodernity, this paradox has to be explained: it seems that the social game is being played elsewhere than in the forward posts of contemporaneity.¹⁵

Actually, quite the opposite was happening. The encounter with the young woman had suddenly charged our being there with a very intense social energy, not necessarily in a positive way. "The Category of Subjective Intensity. The subjective aim, whereby there is origination of feeling, is at intensity of feeling

in the immediate subject, and in the relevant future".¹⁶ We had become part of a new assemblage. The event had emerged as a singularity in the midst of which was our group of four. Limitless and scaleless. The situation was too complex to explain to the children, even if we limited the description to the actual issue at hand (why this woman would be asking me for money). Probably the fact that I was accompanied by children was what started it, assuming that it was regarded as an act of responsibility rather than something dodgy. The biological component meant that I could not preclude my own involvement in the emergence of the event. Especially so since I found her rather attractive and would have tried my chance in almost any other circumstance. Last but certainly not least, there was a distinct possibility that I had behaved as an irresponsible bastard (mind the pun) in the past so that, holistically speaking, I could be held as responsible for this child as its biological father. Rather fitting for this setting actually, as it was a place of transduction.

Can one talk about a place if the place itself does not afford a place-ability, in other words, if it does not afford itself to territorialisation as a place. If it does not lend itself to an identity, adopting a name of its own, rather than being named after its function, as the end of line 41. Or to put it in the words of Neo Rauch:

I have never attempted to 'de-Germanise' my work. Besides, people mostly have only a rough idea of what socialist realism is. I'm not trying to dodge the issue, but I think that they reach this conclusion because they know that I come from East Germany. They might reach the same conclusion by looking at the work of Raymond Pettibon and Michaël Borremans."

Interviewer: This misunderstanding is surely a result of the age-old opposition between abstraction and representation, which you have satirised, for example, in *Unerträglicher Naturalismus* [Intolerable Naturalism], 1998, and *Abstraktion*, 2005. Why are people in Germany so ready to associate this conflict with you?

Rauch: I am repeatedly told that I have a problem with abstraction. This is nonsense, I only have a problem with bad pictures.¹⁷

3 Assignifying Sign: To Have Done with the Linguistic Turn

Semiotics is only one of the many regimes of signs and certainly not the most important one for architecture. After all, natural stimuli cannot be understood by analogy and with reference to socially coded stimuli, for that would be like putting the cart before the horse.¹⁸ A sign, according to Spinoza, can have several meanings, but it is always an effect. An effect is first of all the trace of one body upon another, the state of a body insofar as it suffers the action of another body. Therefore, for the AAA, singularities come before identities and participation precedes cognition.

We are thus to define a body not by its form, nor by its organs or functions, but by its capacity for affecting or being affected.¹⁹ The limit of something is the limit of its action and not the outline of its figure. Deleuze gives an example which, at first, seems counterintuitive and proves just how much we are accustomed to Aristotelian categorisation (genera and species). There are greater differences between a work-horse and a race-horse than between an ox and a work-horse. This is because neither the race-horse nor the work-horse has the same affects or the same capacity for being affected; the work-horse has more affects in common with the ox. Things are no longer defined by a qualitative essence, 'man as a reasonable animal', but a quantifiable power.

At this moment the little square had become a space of transfer, or as Abbas says about Hong Kong, it 'is not so much a place as a space of transit'.²⁰ If space is a derivative of motion and

in this situation deliberately. In that case, it was not about the money and I should marry her. Of all things, I will not be called narrow-minded when it comes to passion. Rather pretentious though, to assume she would marry me. It is not a woman; it is the woman who is there and then.

5 Conclusion: The Flow of Desire

Unconscious experience is not an oxymoron because much more is felt than known. For radical empiricism thought cannot be richer than reality.²⁵ This is how the architect Mousavi contemplates the implications of the Affective Turn in architecture:²⁶

Affect, according to Deleuze, is distinct from affection. Affection, such as feeling, emotion or mood, relates to the status of the body caused by the encounter. Since affection has to be enveloped by the human body, it is subject to personal, biographical or social mediation (we do not know what meaning is being created in each individual). An affect, on the other hand, is a matter of intensity.

While affections are endogenous, affect is impersonal or pre-individual and unmediated (exogenous) and can therefore generate different affections in different people.²⁷ For this reason, as Mousavi concludes and the AAA recommends, architects need to focus on affect (affordance), rather than meaning. This is not because meanings are irrelevant, rather because they are not produced by architects but by individuals themselves.

To give an account of the non-dialectical difference which makes a difference (energetics), Deleuze and Guattari reinvented the anti-machian molecular (revolution).²⁸ This is how Guattari explains their concept of 'desire':

[D]esire is everything that exists before the opposition between subject and object, before representation and production. It's everything whereby the world and affects constitute us outside of ourselves, in spite of ourselves. It's everything that overflows from us. That's why we define it as flow.²⁹

The virtual and the actual are constituted in the course of what Simondon called a transductive relation, which constitutes its terms in such a way that neither precedes the other because they only exist in the relation. Bluntly put, the basic idea is that we know the real through objects, but the real itself is not an object: "[...] we know intensity only as already developed within an extensity, and as covered over by qualities."³⁰ By focusing on visible properties (purely actual) we neglect the temporal process and functional integration. Instead, the emphasis should be on the process of 'unfolding' (progressive differentiation) and not on the contrast between the implicate and explicate orders. The urban architecture cartography of the AAA is attuned to this pre-articulate expressibility tending toward a determinate expression - yet to come - caught in the middle of the event.³¹ Ask not what's inside your head, rather what your head's inside of.³²

Formations communicate only immanently, at the points where they live themselves in, or at their self-embracing fringes. They only virtually relate. All relation is virtual. Earlier, when I was talking about how vision related to the other senses, I ended up having to say that vision is virtual. It is only because relation is virtual that there is any freedom or creativity in the world. If formations were in actual causal connection, how they effectively connect would be completely determined. They might interact, but they would not creatively relate. There would be no gap in the chain of connection for anything new to emerge from and pass contagiously across. There'd be no margin of creative indeterminacy. No wriggle room.³³

In one of the trams further away, there were people waiting for it to depart. The doors were open and the driver was not in his

The term agencement is a French word that has no exact English counterpart. In French its meaning is very close to "arrangement" (or "assemblage"). It conveys the idea of a combination of heterogeneous elements that have been carefully adjusted to one another. But arrangements (as well as assemblages) could imply a sort of divide between human agents (those who arrange or assemble) and things that have been arranged. This is why Deleuze and Guattari proposed the notion of agencement. Agencement has the same root as agency: agencements are arrangements endowed with the capacity of acting in different ways depending on their configuration. This means that there is nothing left outside agencements: there is no need for further explanation, because the construction of its meaning is part of an agencement. A socio-technical agencement includes the statement[s] pointing to it, and it is because the former includes the latter that the agencement acts in line with the statement, just as the operating instructions are part of the device and participate in making it work.²²

In other words, "The minimum real unit is not the word, the idea, the concept or the signifier", explains Deleuze, "but the assemblage."²³

The woman made a small step forward, which knocked me off balance slightly. Although by that point the encounter had lasted no more than a few seconds, the small gesture intensified the event even more. Teresa Brennan proposed "that inverted aggression, whether it is felt as anxiety or experienced as anger receptor model parallels the psychological process and may be identical to the hormonal-pheromonal model in certain cases."²⁴ I was definitely subjected to both mechanisms, my cheeks were starting to glow, yet I could not tell which came first, her aggression or mine, we were both entangled in a push-pull situation. Maybe it was not my fault; maybe she placed herself

The virtue of the term assemblage which emphasises the inseparability of agencies and arrangements has recently been explained by Callon as follows:

4 Assemblage Theory: Anexact Yet Rigorous

rabbit etc.).

bunny rabbit, rather than my bunny rabbit, becoming the bunny more than rational objectivity could. Mapping versus tracing (a collection of meta-conditioned affects will approximate objectivity them subjective and conditional. Turn them into affections. A can construct affects, it is humans and other animals who make autonomous. They are sovereign blocks of sensations. Media of the same subject is to approximate objectivity. Affects are Media are subjective by nature. However, to collect perceptions understood anything of Hong Kong without having seen this film. Wong Kar-wai's "Chunking Express". Yet I could never have the backstreets of Times Square that I began to understand of Mong Kok and having a meal underneath an overpass in throughput. It was only when I was moving through the streets of the actual, and vice-versa. Neither input nor output, but objectivity serves no purpose. The virtual as a precondition Perception is by nature quasi subjective. Striving for an absolute Hearing before understanding, even colours are conditional. A notion that became very tangible the first moment I entered Hong Kong, the actuality of its physical territory, not the virtuality of its image. By that time I had already been exposed to a myriad of answers to the question of what Hong Kong was. Hearing before understanding, even colours are conditional. Perception is by nature quasi subjective. Striving for an absolute of the actual, and vice-versa. Neither input nor output, but objectivity serves no purpose. The virtual as a precondition

in motion but that it is the continuity of motion that describes us movement-image; a notion that bodies are not described time cannot exist in space. Deleuze claims that cinema brings motion is a function of time, then space can exist in time, but the object, "capable of thinking the production of the new."²¹

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seat. They had already assumed the position of the seated-rider, although technically they had not actually transduced yet. They were proto-seated-riders, because the tram provided this affordance. In fact, it afforded what the small concrete tram shelter could not, although it had been designed for precisely that. Its reliable (stationary and sheltered) wait-ability had lost the affection of passengers to the affordance of temporary-wait-with-the-certainty-not-to-miss-the-tram-ability. What it signifies is that a mode of existence never pre-exists an event. The recurring dilemma in design, action on action, not action on object. -Das geht alles von Ihrer Zeit ab.³⁴⁾ We are never apart from the world inside Rauch's painting, rather it is the painting that makes us part of it. Just like Chungking Mansions. By no means are we the outsiders, we are never innocent. We are life forms.

Abbas sees Hong Kong as a place of disappearance, Déjà Disparu. In that case it is not about space, it is about time. This is what Abbas has to say on Kar -wai's 'Days of being Wild'; "The film does not give us Hong Kong in the sixties viewed from the nineties, but another more labile structure: the nineties are to the sixties as the sixties are to an earlier moment, and so on and on."³⁵⁾ It is relationality that affords disappearance. In the words of Ticineto Clough:

The imaginary does not just belong to the subject or even to the subject's body. The imaginary is part of a machinic assemblage, which may include the subject, but does not do so necessarily. As Pearson argues, Deleuze treats memory not as regressive but as creative, a shift 'from its function as a psychological faculty of recollection'. Memory is conceived as the membrane that allows for correspondence between sheets of past and layers of reality, making insides and outsides communicate, with the potential to swerve to the future. Memory intervenes and intensifies, opening up new paths.³⁶⁾

There was a sound on the other end. It was industrial, non-descript, it had nothing to do with us. Yet it had broken the tension, interrupted the flow of desire. She blinked and immediately Kairos folded in and synched with Chronos. Protect me from what I want. Before any of the children had had the chance to ask what was going on, it was already over. Déjà Disparu. Absolve yourself. I did not give her any money. It was about scalelessness; being the universal and individual singular at once, the affect, rather than affection. This square (which is not a square) is most likely a place of becoming; its narrative is a consequence, contingently obligatory. This story is genuine; its narrative is a consequence - contingently obligatory - of the affordance of telling. We can start here. ■

Endnotes

- 1) For an account of 'Parametricism' see: Patrik Schumacher, "The Parametricist Epoch: Let the Style Wars Begin" in *AJ - The Architects' Journal* (Vol. 231, No. 16, 2010).
- 2) AAA is a research project on urban architecture cartography based on the Movement-Image and its exhaustion through enabling constraints/obstructions. The project was developed by Andrej Radman and Marc Boumeester, researchers at the Delft School of Design, Faculty of Architecture at the Delft University of Technology. It is an education program consisting of research driven design practice that strives to set up collaborative networks. See: www.3xA.org
- 3) Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected essays in anthropology, psychiatry, evolution and epistemology* (London: Jason Aronson, 1972), pp. 199-204.
- 4) For a kindred approach see: Brian Eno, "Perhaps it's an attempt to answer the

huge unanswered question, the dirty secret of the art world: what is art actually for?," lecture at the Architectural Association in London, 2012. <http://www.aaschool.ac.uk/VIDEO/lecture.php?ID=1804> (accessed May 20, 2012).

5) The three ecologies are spatio-temporal haecceities - environmental, social and psychic. 'Haecceity' is Deleuze and Guattari's term for an 'individual singularity'. It is usually translated as "thisness" (as opposed to 'whatness'). The term comes originally from the medieval philosopher John Duns Scotus and denotes the qualities and properties that make a thing, object or person an individual entity or an event. This is not an essential property but an emergent one. It means that each artefact, building, bone, etc. is a haecceity. See: Félix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies* (London: Continuum, [1989] 2008), p. 44.

6) See: Sanford Kwinter, "Hydraulic Vision" in *Mood River*, ed. Jeffrey Kipnis and Annetta Massie (Columbus, Ohio: Wexner Center for the Arts, 2002), pp. 32-33.

7) Interview with Meillassoux, <http://steve-harris.blogspot.com/2010/02/interview-with-meillassoux.html> (accessed May 25, 2011). See also: Félix Guattari, "Everybody Wants To Be A Fascist" in *Chaosophy*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (Los Angeles: Autonomedia/Semiotext(e), 1995), pp. 160-161. "Subjects and object are no longer face-to-face, with a means of expression in a third position; there is no longer a tripartite division between the realm of reality, the realm of representation or representativity, and the realm of subjectivity. You have a collective set-up which is, at once, subject, object, and expression. The individual is no longer the universal guarantor of the dominant meanings. Here, everything can participate in enunciation: individuals, as well as zones of the body, semiotic trajectories, or machines that are plugged in on all horizons. The collective disposition of enunciation thus unites semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows, well short of its possible recuperation within a theoretical corpus."

8) The Kantian-Copernican revolution turned out to be a Ptolomeic counter-revolution.

9) "[N]othing is ever entirely determined by its causes. An actual entity must decide how it receives and responds to causes that feed into it." See: Steven Shaviro, "Panpsychism And/Or Eliminativism." <http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=1012> (accessed May 20, 2012).

10) For a comprehensive overview of the Affective Turn see: *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Gregg (Durham, NC: Duke University Press: 2010).

11) See: James Jerome Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, [1979] 1986), p. 127. In keeping with the Assemblage Theory, capacities do depend on components' properties but cannot be reduced to them (externality of relations). See: Manuel DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (London: Continuum, 2009).

12) See: Michel Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum" in *Critique* (No. 282, 1970), pp. 885-908. Cf. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia UP, [1968] 1994); Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia UP, [1969] 1990).

13) Gilles Deleuze, "The Exhausted" in *Essays Critical and Clinical* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, [1993] 1997), pp. 152-174.

14) See: Marc Augé, *Non-places: Introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity* (New York and London: Verso, 1995), p. 88.

15) See: Marc Augé, *Non-places: Introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity* (New York and London: Verso, 1995), p. 89.

16) See: Brian Massumi, "Semblance and Event: activist philosophy and the occult arts" (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), p. 109.

17) See: Rita Pokorny interviews Neo Rauch, "You won't find an 'Untitled' among my works", for *The Art Newspaper Issue 224*, May 2011. <http://www.theartnewspaper.com/articles/You-wont-find-an-Untitled-among-my-works/23592> (accessed May 18, 2012)

18) See: James Jerome Gibson, "The concept of the stimulus in psychology" in *American Psychologist* (Vol. 15, No. 11, November 1960), p. 702.

19) See: Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza, Practical Philosophy* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, [1970] 1988), p. 124.

perception, so (unconscious or preconscious) affect gets oriented along a series of processes of becoming (conscious) emotion." <http://www.shavito.com/Blog/?p=471> (accessed April 10, 2012).

28 The term "manichean" is widely applied (often disparagingly) as an adjective to a philosophy or attitude of moral dualism, according to which a moral course of action involves a clear (or simplistic) choice between good and evil, or as a noun to people who hold such a view.

29 See: Felix Guattari "A Liberation of Desire" in *Soft Subversions: Texts and Interviews 1977-1985* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009), p. 142

30 See: Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* (New York: Columbia UP, 1968) 1994, p. 223.

31 See: Erin Manning and Brian Massumi, "Coming Alive in a World of Texture: For Neurodiversity", keynote talk-performance at Dance, Politics & Co-Immunity Thinking - Resisting - Reading the Political (Glessen, November 12, 2010), <http://www.dance-tech.net/video/brian-massumi-erin-manning> (accessed April 10, 2012).

32 See: William M. Mace, "James J. Gibson's Strategy for Perceiving: Ask Not What's Inside Your Head, but What Your Head's Inside of" in *Perceiving, Acting and Knowing: Toward an Ecological Psychology*, ed. Robert Shaw and John Bransford, (Hillsdale, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1977), pp. 43-65.

33 See: Brian Massumi, *Semblance and Event: activist philosophy and the occurrent arts* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), p. 64.

34 See: Neo Rauch "Das geht alles von Ihrer Zeit ab", 2001 (painting owned by Frankfurt am Main: Deutsche Bank).

35 See: Ackbar Abbas, Hong Kong: culture and the politics of disappearance (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 4. Cf. Kar-Wai "Days of being wild" (Hong Kong: East Asia films, 1990).

36 See: Patricia Ticineto Clough, ed. *The Affective Turn: theorizing the social* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 14.

difference does not reside here. It is between the body's affection and idea which involves the nature of the external body, and the affect which involves an increase or decrease of the power of acting, for body and mind alike. Affectio refers to a state of the affected body and implies the presence of the affecting body, whereas the affectus refers to the passage from one state to another. It is this transitive character that is important. The greater the capacity of a body for acting and being acted upon the greater the capacity of the mind that corresponds to it for perception. The human mind is an expression of the body in the domain of thought, it mirrors the body as a complex composite of many simple ideas. In Spinoza this means parallelism, it does not consist merely in denying any real causality between the mind and the body, it disallows any primacy of the one over the other. But as long as I remain in the perception of affection, I know nothing of it, Deleuze says. We know about the effect of bodies on each other, they are either (partly) good or bad for us, but we do not understand why they are good or bad. Affection ideas are representations of effects without their causes, Spinoza calls this inadequate ideas. Ideas are images, or, images are the corporeal affections themselves, the traces of an external body on our body. In the first from of knowledge, the Imaginatio, the lowest, we know these ideas only by their effects. It is a confused idea since I do not know the why. We are completely enclosed in this world of affection-ideas and these affective variations of joy and sadness. Imagination includes more than the capacity to form mental constructs, it includes memory and sense perception as well. We already noticed the physical source in Deleuze's affect, Spinoza's influence is clearly present.

further reading: Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, (1988), *Spinoza: Philosophie pratique* (1970) (Commentator: Arle Graafland)

20 See: Ackbar Abbas, Hong Kong: culture and the politics of disappearance (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 4.

21 See: Gilles Deleuze, "Cinema I: the movement image" (London: Continuum, 2005).

22 See: Michel Callon as quoted in Karl Palmes, "Deleuze and DeLanda: A new ontology, a new political economy?" Paper presented on 29 January 2007 at the Economic Sociology Seminar Series, the Department of Sociology, London School of Economics & Political Science.

23 See: Gilles Deleuze, "On the Superiority of Anglo-American Literature" in *Dialogues* (New York: Columbia UP, [1977] 1987), p. 51. "The utterance is the product of an assemblage - which is always collective, which brings into play within us and outside us populations, multiplicities, territories, becomings, affects, events."

24 See: Teresa Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2004).

25 Paradoxically, feelings (affectus), not affects (affectio) are states produced by thought, while thoughts are produced by affects. See: Teresa Brennan, "The Education of Senses" in *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2004), p. 116.

26 See: Farshid Moussavi and Daniel Lopez, *The Function of Form* (Barcelona: Actar, 2009).

27 Steven Shavito in his "Simondon on Individuation" draws attention to Simondon's theory of becoming that influenced Deleuze: "The individual, as (continually) produced in a process of individuation, is never an isolated Self. It is always coupled or coordinated with a milieu: the individual can only be understood together with its milieu, and cannot subsist as a unity without it. The contact between individual and milieu is mediated by affect. Affectivity comes in between inside and outside, just as it comes in between sensation and action. Just as sensation gets oriented along a series of gradients in order to become

Comments : What lies behind affect

Gilles Deleuze, stresses the physical aspect of contact with other bodies. But where does this thought come from? Let's briefly look into Spinoza's philosophy. Spinoza does not believe in action at a distance, action always implies contact. Spinoza names this contact 'affectio' (his Ethics is written in Latin), a mixture of two bodies, her body or mine, it is body and soul in an ether noxious mixture or a good one. It is comparable to sunlight falling on your body, an affection of your body. This contact relates to two fundamental passions, sadness and joy. In sadness it means a diminution of my power of acting. In joy it means an increase in my power of acting. Spinoza uses two different terms, affectio in Latin which corresponds to affection, and affectus which corresponds to affect or feeling. When Deleuze uses 'affect', he is relating to Spinoza's affectus, and when affectio it relates to affection. In relation to this Deleuze asks the question 'what is an idea'. Spinoza takes it the way it has always been understood, a mode of thought which represents something. A representational mode of thought. He distinguishes idea and affect (affectus), because affect is any mode of thought which does not represent anything. Affects like pain or love as such are non-representational. Every mode of thought insofar as it is non-representational will be termed affect. Idea and affect are two kinds of modes of thought, Deleuze says, they differ in nature. We are 'spiritual automata', we get ideas which succeed one another, our power of acting is increased or diminished in a continuous manner, this is what we call 'affectus'. The image affections or ideas form a certain state of the affected body and mind, implying more or less perfection than the preceding state. The ongoing durations or variations of perfection are called affects, or feelings. More generally speaking affection is said to be directed to the body, while the affect refers to images or ideas referring to the mind. But for Deleuze the real