

The Book of Reflection

WHAT DRIVES US?

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Book I - What Drives Us?

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On the Singularity of Value

Book I
The Book of Reflection

What Drives Us?

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ABSTRACT

The reason for this choice of topic is a life-long bewilderment towards the self-destructive potential of humankind. Supposed continuous accumulation of value is nurturing some of the most destructive and unvaluable events that this globe has ever seen. In many cases, the driver for what we do - our idea of what is valuable - seems to be leading us to do things which are *anything but* valuable in the long term. A rationalizing approach has led to the establishment of one-dimensional evaluations: Quantity is attempting to express quality. The resulting introduction of a level of abstraction is distorting the evaluation of what makes a decision valuable. This attempt of capturing value is very much not capable of expressing it to a satisfying degree – necessary information is lost in the process of reduction. One establishes a distanced perspective on how a decision becomes valuable in its qualitative and specific sense.

Especially the profession of the architect - as taking decisions from a very distanced perspective towards the real-life engagement with the architectural product and its construction - is at risk to rely on general typologies and predeveloped solutions as proposals for their designs. In this graduation, it is therefore the goal to challenge this plane of abstraction while decision taking by introducing a conscious engagement with the real-life interactions and material processes of the architectural object which allows to focus on the affective specificities of place and time.

INTRODUCTION

In the following paper I would like to emphasise the importance of an elaborated discussion on the way value is understood today. A reflection on what role architecture could potentially play in order to express value will propose methods to tackle the problem of the misconception of value in this field.

This paper is not focusing on value-systems in the ethical or moral understanding, nor is it discussing the value of a micronutrient in our blood. What it aims to address is how anything that we produce becomes valuable and how this is measured, *evaluated* and *expressed* in neoliberal societies. When trying to define what's at the core of valuableness, one cannot help but notice its far-reaching essence. Whatever any living being does, whatever it spends time doing or whatever it produces serves a certain purpose and is thus valuable to it in a specific way. Value is the motivator and attractor to do what one does. It seems to be very much driving force for any life. Therefore, it is of great importance to consciously reflect on how value is measured and understood.

The evaluation of value is a necessary step for the preservation of the economic infrastructure which sustains us. The crucial point is that it is to be understood only as an attempted estimation, since value as such cannot be determined nor described sufficiently in a one-dimensional number. However, the neoliberal ethos became of such overpowering and dominant nature, that its evaluation of value seems to be misunderstood as being value itself. Instead of striving for value, we are led to strive for the one-dimensional *evaluation* of it.

The many well-known and in the long run very non-valuable challenges of the Anthropocene - from the destruction of our habitat to social exploitation - are a result of that misconception of value. It seems to be a core reason for the self-destructive path that humanity is following. The development of an attitude towards value which is much more based on quality instead of evaluated quantity is thus imperative to sustain human life on Earth. To achieve this, a more distinguished engagement with the very notion of value itself is urgently needed.

The neoliberal manière to evaluate value is in fact not an expression, since it is based on a too reductive process of which the result is too one-dimensional. It is not sufficiently representing or conveying the value that it evaluates and it therefore is not regarded as an expression in this paper. Instead, this problematization strives for the introduction of more conscious modes of *expressing* value, in order to disseminate a more qualitative understanding of it.

THE MISCONCEPTION OF VALUE

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE EVALUATION

In order to understand the root of the misconception of value, a closer examination of our economic framework is inevitable. Daniel Smith writes in his book 'Essays on Deleuze' about the genesis of the human-made infrastructure. He claims that desire and drive are preconditions for our interests and therefore indeed creators of such infrastructure.¹ Desire is at the core of human beings. However, human desire is to be understood as a controversial multiplicity of drives that are in constant flux and conflict – pure ambiguity, so to say.

There is thus an interconnection of social and desiring production: Social production represents what desiring production produces. Conversely, what we produce is a representation of our desire.² We can therefore understand the neoliberal systems of today as an infrastructure that we created in order to meet our ongoing drives and desires as accurately as possible.

Smith introduces the hypothesis that everything in society is based on flows and the control of these. He understands capitalism as being based on decoded flows and the introduction of money as an abstraction of value as the first step of such decoding. Capitalism emerges, when money is only an abstraction of objects that are produced independently and when money starts to generate itself. Such decoding can become a catastrophe for our economic infrastructure, as the example of the 2009 recession clearly demonstrates: the financial market as a supranational power beyond the reach of law practices a demonetization of money in investments and returns on investments which can cause a destructive obscurity of value.³ Real Estate and architecture are at the core of such speculation.

Nonetheless, the threats of abstracted value go much further. Claire Colebrook speaks in her article 'Sex and the (Anthropocene) City' about destructive desires. She understands sexual forces as something very similar to Smith's notion of desire, yet they include forces that result in something seemingly undesirable. Such forces and desires exceed their need to sustain life, exceed the fulfilment of their original purpose and by doing so destroy the stability that has emerged from them. This is an inseparable ingredient of the desires that are inherent to humankind and the emerging infrastructure will consequently lead to human self-destruction.⁴

It is therefore unavoidable for humankind to become aware of this destructive potential, in order to find the right strategy to cope or, preferably, prevent its consequences. The Club of Rome is clearly stressing the scope of destruction in the era of current capitalism and the urgency for change in their report 'Come On!'. They argue that there is the necessity for a new enlightenment in order to leave the destructive path of this philosophical crisis of our own existence. Short-term thinking and the unavoidable goal of economic growth and profit maximization is not an appropriate philosophy in the 'full world', as they call the era of the Anthropocene. The 'new enlightenment' strives for a paradigm shift which needs to take place across all geographic borders, and embraces the environmental and social wellbeing - currently almost entirely neglected in all economic operations - as the precondition to all life.⁵

¹ Daniel W. Smith, *Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 175-188.

² Ibid., 162-164.

³ Ibid., 165-166.

⁴ Colebrook, Claire. „Sex and the (Anthropocene) City.“ *Theory, Culture & Society* 34, no. 2-3 (January 2017): 39-60.

⁵ Club of Rome, *Come On: Capitalism, Short-termism, Population and the Destruction of the Planet*. (New York: Springer, 2018)

“We have a system that accumulates oversupply of money in areas that produce high financial and low environmental and social returns, while at the same time an undersupply of money in areas that serve important societal investment needs.”⁶

This statement demonstrates the omnipresent paradoxical understanding of value that we are facing today: An accumulation of money-value can in the long term be anything but valuable to the life on this planet. The unsustainable paradigm of economic growth is based on short-term thinking and the misconception of value lies very much at the core of its destructivism. The vain idea of being capable to reduce value into and convey value as a one-dimensional number negates looking at the benefits and consequences of an operation such as an investment from all sides, embedded in a singular context. It seems like there is a misinterpretation of the economic thrive into being the goal, whereas the economic infrastructure is meant to sustain us and should thus be the means for the thrive of humanity.

⁶ Ibid., 9.

THE MISCONCEPTION OF VALUE

HOW QUALITY BECOMES QUANTITY

The Canadian philosopher Brian Massumi theorised extensively on how value is being economised by the capitalist infrastructure in his book '99 Thesis on the Revaluation of Value'. He describes the capitalist evaluation process of value that has been mentioned before as a conversion of quality into quantity. Additionally, he claims that our understanding of value is wedged by capitalist oppression, yet he is optimistic that we can free ourselves from the philosophical crisis of the misconception of value by approaching it differently.

Massumi describes the operation by which our economic infrastructure processes value as a quantification process: life-value is being quantified into money-value in a “process by which the qualitative field of life is economically appropriated and subsumed under the principle of perpetual quantitative growth”.⁷ The desire to grow profit and to accumulate ever more wealth is met through increased productivity and the transformation of human and natural capital into monetary value. This is a reductive process by nature, since there is an absence of vital factors in the economic evaluating system while they are the condition for the functioning of the system as such.⁸ The fact that our economic system is based on these qualitative externalities while at the same time negating their existence by cutting them out of the math of the evaluation process demonstrates that value cannot in fact be quantified in any manner.

Massumi furthermore supports this point by arguing that a quantification of something on a numeric scale does not represent qualitative differences, but merely opens the possibility to exchange different values and makes them translatable to different fields. The quantitative order disseminates general ideas, as opposed to the qualitative order which concerns singularities; the process of quantification thus translates the singular into the general.⁹

It is therefore imperative to always understand value as qualitative. The value of a product cannot be rationalised nor generalised; it is constituted by the very subjective desires of each consumer.¹⁰ At the same time the value of something is always unexchangeable and has its own singular qualitative character.¹¹ Such qualities are self-sufficient and expressed through the intensity of their own quality.¹² Money, therefore, can always be merely a poor copy of value by default, since it is not able to express these singularities. Grasping and capturing value to a satisfying degree is challenging, if not impossible in such a reductionist manner, due to the singularity of each event. The quantification of value thus needs to be understood as *nothing more* than an attempted evaluation of qualitative value as such. Quantified value does not directly reflect the quality of life.

Conversely, the money-value of something is not capable of conveying the qualities that have been quantified for its production. A quantified value does not give an appropriate impression about the quality that it attempts to evaluate.

It is not transparent but rather very obscure in that sense.

⁷ Brian Massumi, *99 Thesis on the Revaluation of Value* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), 39.

⁸ Ibid., 8-11.

⁹ Ibid., 42-48.

¹⁰ Ibid., 6-8.

¹¹ Ibid., 25.

¹² Ibid., 90-95.

The practice of measuring value through money and evaluating quality through quantity is highly criticised by Massumi. He claims that an uncoupling from such quantification is necessary.¹³

The obscurity of quantified value leads to an *abstraction* of value. Especially in the financial market, which is the leading sector of the neoliberal economy, we experience a loss of direct relation between the productive economy and speculative investments.¹⁴

Having understood the abstracted essence of money-value, one must come to the conclusion that it cannot be an appropriate way to *express* quality. The manner of how value is expressed lies at the core of this problematization. In neoliberal societies we are facing the problem of value being mostly understood from its abstracted and insufficient evaluation. Based on this misconception we find the wrong things to be valuable. By understanding value merely from the one-dimensional and quantitative perspective of its evaluation, humankind is following a path of short-term thinking and profit accumulation which is leading into its own destruction. It is therefore essential to establish a common paradigm which tries to grasp the qualitative aspect of value in a much more holistic manner. We have to start to critically reflect how whatever we do is valuable in the qualitative sense.

¹³ Ibid., 4-5.

¹⁴ Ibid., 30-37.

THE MISCONCEPTION OF VALUE

RATIONALISATION AND THE LOST POTENTIAL

In his text ‘Affective Aesthetics beneath Art and Architecture’, Gökhan Kodalak theorises on the dynamic field of relational forces on which all life is based. He is quoting Spinoza by saying that modalities have the capacity to affect and be affected and are “diverse compositions of life channelling its infinite capacities”.¹⁵ This citation demonstrates that everything is based on affective relations. There is a finite number of things in this world, while the number of possible combinations of those is unlimited. The potential diversity through which life can unfold is infinite, in an endless variety of compositions. This means that there is a continuous left-over potential for new possibilities to emerge, each combination bearing the capability to make a fundamental difference. One can further conclude that the valuableness of each new formation is therefore not really graspable or measurable, since it is so ambiguous and absolutely unique in each case that we in fact cannot define it with mathematical precision.

However, there seems to be a certain urge to rationalise the multiplicity of life. Daniel Smith is again referring to Spinoza in his critical analysis of the libidinal economy: “Why do we invest in a social system that constantly represses us [...] and introduces lack into our lives?”¹⁶ Smith refers here to control mechanisms such as marketing, developed by the capitalist infrastructure in order to manipulate drives and desires.

Concerning this notion of control, Gilles Deleuze describes in his essay ‘Postscript on the Societies of Control’ how disciplinary societies successively get replaced by societies of control. With the decoding of flows, the emergence of capitalism and the abstraction of value into money, a certain system of control and access is imposed at the same time. The task of the market is no longer disciplinary training, but controlling.¹⁷ This statement is complementary to Smith’s overall hypothesis of the main principle of society as being based on *flows* and the *control* of these, which is a pattern that is applicable to both mental and physical flows.¹⁸ We can detect a certain urge to control: the urge to be in control of the ambiguous desires and drives at the core of human beings, the urge to be in control of exchanges and flows by installing an abstracted notion of value. Referring back to Smith’s understanding of our infrastructure to be created by our desires, the *desire to control* potentially created an infrastructure which enables such control.

Smith additionally analyses an evaluation which is in a way regarding a different field of life, but which seems to be based on the same pattern. Concerning the assessment of human actions, he criticises moral codes which are creating a certain ‘illusion of transcendence’ as self-made restrictions, isolated from situation and context.¹⁹ The idea of a moral compass, applicable to anything, eases the responsibility to find an appropriate engagement with difficult and unclear situations and makes our actions justifiable. It therefore indeed seems like this evaluation system is an artificial, pre-fabricated rationalization, created with the intention to be able to distance ourselves from the intricate process of finding solution and position towards each new situation in life.

¹⁵ Kodalak, Gökhan. „Affective Aesthetics beneath Art and Architecture.“ *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 12, no.3 (August 2018): 404.

¹⁶ Smith, *Essays on Deleuze*, 186.

¹⁷ Deleuze, Gilles. „Postscript on the Societies of Control.“ *October* 59, (1992): 3-7.

¹⁸ Smith, *Essays on Deleuze*, 160-172.

¹⁹ Ibid., 175-177.

Smith furthermore classifies reasoning as the act of rationalizing chaos and un-understandableness by saying that “there is no “pure” Reason [...] but only a plurality of heterogeneous processes of rationalization”.²⁰ Events are simplified and reduced into rationalised structures in order to make sense of the chaos which is the world. He continues by stating that “life is “judged” by transcendent values superior to life”.²¹ Even though he is again referring to the notion of moral codes, one can draw parallels to the topic of this thesis. The misunderstanding of value as its one-dimensional evaluation becomes so omnipresent in our world that it seems to have become transcendental over all other, much more differentiated and ambiguous conceptions of value. The quantitative evaluation of money-value as an overarching and universal indication liberates us from the responsibility to determine valuableness based on context and situation.

It seems like the urge to rationalise, categorise and evaluate each and everything into a sharp clarity comes from a constant fear of the *Unübersichtlichkeit* of the world. The German term can be understood as the loss of control by missing the overview of a situation, which creates an uncomfortable inability to predict the events to come. Thomas Bauer theorised in his book ‘Die Vereindeutigung der Welt’ [The Standardization of the World] about the successive loss of tolerance towards ambiguity. He draws parallels between this trend, the capitalist system and the notion of value:

“Not only is the avoidance of ambiguity and hesitancy helpful for a career in capitalism, it is downright a prerequisite for the success of capitalism in general. For all the costs it demands for everyone to see, it does promise one thing: unambiguity. Every commodity and every human being (who for this must also take on the character of a commodity) can be assigned an exact value via mechanisms of the market, which can be expressed in an exact number, thus ending any reflection on value and values.”²²

According to Bauer, capitalism is the doctrine of clarity and is enabled through the clear rationalization of all value. This might be at the core of the misconception of value: The market liberates us from the uncomfortable feeling of having to detect value in each situation once again, by means of installing a system which evaluates value into a simple number. The problem is therefore not the number itself, but our craving for its clarity.

At this point one ought to query the human pattern to obey self-created restrictions by rationalizing each event into understandableness. Massumi claims that neoliberalism is regulative and multiplies norms into a resulting categorization that hinders the diversifying and dissemination of value.²³ Imposed pre-given structures and evaluation systems format life into norms. This omnipresence of rationalizing approaches towards life in capitalism bears many consequences:

²⁰ Ibid., 180.

²¹ Ibid., 182.

²² Thomas Bauer, *Die Vereindeutigung der Welt* (Dietzgen: Reclam, 2018), 22. (Translated by author)

²³ Massumi, 99 *Thesis on the Revaluation of Value*, 64-65.

„What remains when the tolerance for ambiguity dwindles? The first thing to be devalued is everything that seems ambiguous, everything saturated with ambiguity, everything whose boundaries are difficult to delineate, everything that cannot be translated into numbers. Ambiguity seems to be less important. On the other hand, everything that produces or seems to produce clear, unambiguous truths or at least exact numbers experiences an increase in prestige. But since this is less effective in creating social cohesion, another entity takes over, namely the market, which has the magical ability to assign an exact value to everything and everyone, down to many decimal places. Perhaps this magical ability to de-ambiguate, combined with the fear of having to adjust to more ambiguous life models, makes radical market capitalism, despite all its impositions, seem unavoidable to many.“²⁴

The result of this intolerance towards ambiguity is a loss of potential. Pre-fab solutions, structuralised approaches and ongoing perfectionated rationalization *hinder* the genesis of the before-mentioned infinity of possibilities in the world. According to Bauer, the capitalist antipathy towards interpretation delineates anything unpredictable and newly emerging to become a problem.²⁵ The potential for value to emerge in a multiplicity of modes and in less obvious variations is inhibited almost prophylactically. Because of the reductive nature of the neoliberal evaluation, approaching the future with the focus on its isolated one-dimensionality reduces the potential for qualitative valuableness to emerge. This causes the loss of opportunities for value and therefore a loss of value itself. Due to the fact that the reductive evaluation of value became the driving force for life in neoliberal societies, there is a fatal loss of richness, diversity and ambiguity in the world.

Yuk Hui criticises in his article ‘One Hundred Years of Crisis’ the trend towards a mono-technological culture. According to him, there is an urge for a pluralism in technology, which would cause for a diversification of life to happen on many levels. Without a systemic shift towards a proliferation of diversity, global collaboration especially concerning the many challenges that we are facing today is going to be troublesome.²⁶

Ultimately, there is an evident urge to treat a quantitative evaluation from the perspective of a mere necessity which is not expressive of value in its isolated one-dimensionality. This requires a certain change of attitude which allows oneself to distance from its clarity and leaves room to investigate and emphasise the many ways that what we do becomes valuable in the qualitative sense. Instead of following the illusion of being able to easily detect value through a transcendental system of rationalization, we ought to engage with the unpredictable multitude of life. It is thus imperative to accept and even embrace the process through which life unfolds as the potential for ever-new possibilities to emerge.

²⁴ Bauer, *Die Vereindentlichung der Welt*, 38. (Translated by author)

²⁵ Ibid., 29.

²⁶ Hui, Yuk. „One Hundred Years of Crisis.“ *E-Flux* 108, (April 2020), <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/108/326411/one-hundred-years-of-crisis/>.

THE MISCONCEPTION OF VALUE

TECHNICITY AND THE POWER OF RELATION

When discussing the future of the human species, it is advisable to look at its emergence. One must understand that it is – like all processes – in a continuous and constant development. The relational process through which individuals transform has been extensively theorised on by French philosopher Gilbert Simondon under the term of ‘Individuation’. He claims that becoming is an ongoing operation which is a fundamental dimension of being. The becoming of being is therefore a permanent state of living organisms. Individuation is stimulated by a drive which is of problem-solving nature and operates by changing internal structures.²⁷ At this point it is again important to emphasise the gravity of the widespread disbelief of what is the motivator for becoming; it fundamentally impacts how humankind evolves.

Throughout the evolution of the human species, technology has played an elementary role. In their piece ‘Memory’ Bernard Stiegler and Mark Hansen theorise on the importance of technology for humankind. Hansen describes it as essential to being human by explaining that “the human evolves by exteriorizing itself in tools, artifacts, language and technical memory banks”.²⁸ It is therefore important to understand technology as much more than the conventional definition. Rather, it is the act through which we manipulate our environment and at the same time provide collective memory which has been exteriorised. The knowledge of humankind evolved through exteriorised memory. Stiegler gives this fact fundamental importance by describing “technicity as constitutive of life as ex-sistence, that is, as desire and as knowledge.”²⁹ The use of technology can thus be seen as fundamentally human; it is a species-defining essential, so to say. The term of ‘human nature’ therefore has to be critically rethought. The coevolution of human and technology demonstrates that humankind is an artificial and self-produced species which is very much not to be described as *natural*.

In their book ‘Are we Human?’ Beatriz Colomina and Mark Wigley draw conclusions of the plasticity of humans, the act of thinking and the techniques of designing artifacts:

“[...] simply to think is already to change the brain. Each thought adjusts the geometry of the internal forest of interconnections. The instability of the human begins with the redesign of its own brain through the very act of thinking. The idea that the human has extended its nervous system to enclose the whole planet, that artifacts are thoughts that provoke new thoughts, folds design back onto the brain itself.”³⁰

The crucial factor of the human becoming by means of exteriorizing technology is therefore the *relation* of those. Didier Debaise stresses the necessity for thinking relations in his correspondent essay ‘What is Relational Thinking?’ by saying that “relation is an immanent event to individuation”.³¹ It is important to understand the singular aspect of relations and how they are influencing further development: “We could establish in all domains the singularities of a field from which a situation becomes unstable, transforms itself, follows a new trajectory which spreads [...] to the entire field.”³²

27 Gilbert Simondon, *L'individuation psychique et collective* (Paris: Aubier, 2007), 9-69.

28 Bernard Stiegler, Mark Hansen. „Memory.“ in *Critical terms for media studies*, ed. Mark Hansen and W.J.T. Mitchell (Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 65.

29 Ibid., 72.

30 Beatriz Colomina and Mark Wigley, *Are We Human? Notes on an Archaeology of Design* (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2017), 233.

31 Debaise, Didier. „What is Relational Thinking?“ *Inflexions* 5 (March 2021): 7.

32 Ibid., 5.

One must therefore understand the power of the relation as the capacity to affect and be affected. Massumi describes the phenomenon of affect in his essay ‘The Autonomy of Affect’ as an immediate bodily reaction which is happening in an unperceivable timespan and is hence autonomous.³³ The fact that this reaction is so immediate and not monitorable by the intellect stresses again the pre-programmed failure of rationalizable systems discussed in the previous chapter. The attempt to process and quantify each and everything fails with the mere occurrence of affect. On the one hand, this underlines further how value as being embedded in a relational field of forces is by no means expressed sufficiently by an isolated one-dimensional number. On the other hand, one must see the potential and the power of the phenomenon of relation. The fact that humankind is the product of a relational coevolution with technics which is self-created to a certain extent implies that its further development can be manipulated by the conscious use of technicity. Hansen supports this point in his article ‘Bernard Stiegler, Philosopher of Desire?’ by describing the potential to obstruct the way capitalism claims the libido and the need to “grasp the full potential of contemporary technics for transforming human becoming”.³⁴ Technics is here understood in the sense of *how any manipulation of the environment is done*. It is in fact the manner that matters.

Stiegler proposes in his book ‘The Neganthropocene’ to approach the *how* by doing things *with care*, in order to leave the destructive path of capitalism. According to him, the Anthropocene has to be overcome in order for humanity to enter the ‘Neganthropocene’, which is a ‘care-ful’ epoch.³⁵

“The Anthropocene is unsustainable: it is a massive and high-speed process of destruction operating on a planetary scale, and its current direction must be reversed. The question and the challenge of the Anthropocene is therefore the ‘Neganthropocene’, that is, to find a pathway that will enable us to escape from this impasse of cosmic dimensions [...]”³⁶

The ‘Neganthropocene’ as an epoch full of care is improbable and never reachable, but it is a direction of becoming. Its purpose is fulfilled by the attempt and effort of its becoming. This ‘being towards’ is already negentropic by default.³⁷ Entropy as the second law of thermodynamics is the tendency of energy to disappear, of systems collapsing. He is referring to negative entropy (‘negentropy’) as the attempt to install barriers to keep energy from escaping, which includes a certain care for the future of a system. This requires an attitude of acceptance towards our environment as being in constant flux which is not entirely capturable or foreseeable. An alternative and care-ful approach can express, highlight or even introduce value into what we do in a much more amplifying manner than its evaluation. The thought to do with care must always drive us, since “on the economic plane, value accumulation should be undertaken exclusively with a view to neganthropic investments.”³⁸

However, the economy does not merely concern the production of goods anymore but has reached a different magnitude concerning its digital aspects. After one has

33 Massumi, Brian. „The Autonomy of Affect.“ *Cultural Critique*, no.31 (1995): 83-109.

34 Hansen, Mark. „Bernard Stiegler, Philosopher of Desire?“ *Boundary 2* 44, (February 2017): 187.

35 Bernard Stiegler, *The Neganthropocene* (London: Open Humanities Press, 2018)

36 Ibid., 52.

37 Ibid., 63.

38 Ibid., 45.

realised the importance of care-ful intention for leaving the Anthropocene epoch, one cannot avoid to engage in the way digital economy is wielding influence over intention as such. Stiegler is stressing on the difficulty of overcoming the intention-controlling digital capitalism. The way we experience is by means of a retentional selection, which is highly produced and prefabricated in the case of data economy.³⁹ Through these controlled surroundings, the emergence of new developments and the diversification of life styles is maximally hindered. The neoliberal understanding of all things as investments implies the belief of everything being computable, rationalizable and therefore quantifiable. The accordingly employed techniques lead to a certain standardization and homogenization of all forms of life. This is posing the question of who is controlling the datafication and therefore of the intentions of the world. Reflection on thought as an intention is therefore the challenge of the Anthropocene.⁴⁰

One can conclude that it is a matter of finding new techniques, of exploring new ways of doing in order to tackle the problem of the misconception of value. This is an issue of questioning firm and established standards. Without a doubt there is always a variety of doing things in a care-ful and negentropic way; no universal recipe can be developed. By embracing the processual nature of becoming one can much better empower the potential of the future to come. For this paradigm to disseminate, there is an urge to emphasise the non-quantified valuableness of things. Finding techniques to express value much more holistically, considering the relational field in which it emerges has the capacity to impact a shift towards a more qualitative understanding of value as such. We have to therefore ask ourselves consciously how we can alter the way that value expresses in whatever we produce, how this affects anyone who encounters it and how these affects are significant.

³⁹ Ibid., 46-50.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 35-48.

TOWARDS A PRODUCTIVELY EXPRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE

ARCHITECTURE AS AN EXPRESSIVE TERRITORY

The precedent chapters established the importance of value as a motivation for our actions. In order to oppose the wide-spread misconception of value we have to therefore always consider qualitative value as a driver for our work. By doing so, not only this attitude is crucial, but also the manner of how the valuableness of what we produce is expressed beyond its one-dimensional evaluation. Such expression can essentially support a dissemination of a qualitative conception of value in a productive manner. Expression as such is here understood as by default intensive and qualitative.

This paper thus proposes a certain double effort. It consists of establishing an approach to the work we do that is much more driven by its qualitative valuableness and includes a simultaneous conscious mode of expressing how this becomes valuable in the product itself. Products are thereby never to be seen as a finished end-result, but as ongoing processes which by means of their expression can affect and be affected continuously. This proposal is not bound to any discipline in particular, for they are not to be understood as isolated from each other in any case. However, the upcoming chapter is going to focus on the conception of value and valuableness as a driver for the process of architectural production and the interaction with architecture as such.

This specification on the architectural discipline is motivated by many reasons. There occurs an outstanding tendency for architecture to be instrumentalised by neoliberal investments and speculation. The successively increasing understanding of the architectural object as real estate demonstrates very well how the process of architectural production is more and more captured by the quantitative aspect of its valuableness. The fact that the discipline is becoming instrument of quantification bears many consequences, which don't start or end with the speculation bubble that caused the financial crisis of the past decades. As an industry, the building sector takes an immense part of the human footprint on our habitat, which urges for qualitative approaches. The negentropic essence of architecture mustn't be reversed by short-term thinking. Furthermore, as our primary territory, the architecture that we are surrounded by takes an important part in the life of every human being. For the generation of architects to come it is therefore imperative to be taught tools and manners of how to approach designing from a qualitative angle. It is the goal of this paper to find specific architectural techniques which influence our daily work and help to better express how space is becoming valuable in a qualitative manner. These could be of most inconspicuous scale and yet have the biggest impact.

One ought to look at the creation of architecture as an archaic and territorial discipline which is of high value for any living being. It is therefore expressing valuableness by default. However, it is again important to consider the *how* and the effect of such expression. Architecture has derived from solely being negentropic – that is, a barrier to keep energy from disappearing - into becoming much more. It is thus necessary to find an approach that allows for its value to be expressed in a productive manner, operating towards the Neganthropocene.⁴¹

Elisabeth Grosz described in her book 'Chaos, Territory, Art' how one experiences the world through territories. Such territorialization in architecture happens through the creation of a frame, which acts as a membrane that filters forces from the chaos which is the world.

⁴¹ See chapter 1.4

It thereby functions as a link in order to make experienceable the chaotic forces of the universe in a dosed and regulated manner. One can understand territory as protection and connection at the same time. By doing so, architecture separates space and thereby creates a 'plane of compositions' that orders chaos in a way which is affecting and can be affected.⁴² In a similar way, Kodalak describes any aesthetic production as "an appropriation of the forces of life", which are given back enhanced and thereby can create an architectural construct as an intensified sensation of forces.⁴³ It is here important to recognise the disconnection of a territory from scale, its size does not determine its territorial essence. They have to be plainly understood as being able to emerge everywhere.

Ronald Bogue describes the act of territorialization and the transformation of milieus into territories in his book 'Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts'. His theorization can in fact be read from many perspectives, one of them is the discipline of music, yet it includes valuable additions for the topic of this paper. By explaining territorialization as "a complex process of decoding and recoding (deterritorialization and reterritorialization), which transforms milieus and rhythms by creating expressive qualities and autonomous rhythms [...] that induce a reorganization of functions and a regrouping of forces", he states that it is an interfering act which is expressive.⁴⁴ Claiming and territorializing a space is an action of intervention into its composition of forces in order for it to serve a certain purpose. It is an adjustment and an appropriation to someone's needs. This appropriating act is at the same time a declaration of possession, since that very space is expressively becoming servant of the needs that belong to a certain someone. The action of territorialization is therefore indeed an indication of ownership:

"It is at the same moment that a quality is abstracted from a milieu component, a possession is declared, and a dimensional space is established. Territory "is in fact an act", although such an act obviously is not necessarily intentional or conscious".⁴⁵

The alteration of space as a result of territorialization is into a state which is more corresponding to that individual's body and through by expressive negativity simultaneously speaks of belonging. This phenomenon has the capacity to occur on any scale and be as simple as relocating a piece of furniture into a more comfortable position before sitting down. Again, this discussion folds back to the very topic of this paper, which demonstrates anew its omnipresent essence: The creation of territory, the appropriation of a space to one's needs, is an adjustment for it to become more *valuable* to that someone. This driver of value is expressed in the needs that a territory is capable of serving. The expressive act of appropriation is thus simultaneously an act of creating quality and thereby valuableness. It is this qualitative essence through which architecture is capable of expressing and disseminating value which is territorial and thereby producer of territories.

⁴² Elisabeth Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 1-24.

⁴³ Kodalak, *Affective Aesthetics beneath Art and Architecture*, 407.

⁴⁴ Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 23.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 19.

Nonetheless, we ought to delve more precisely into the manner of how such valuableness emerges in a territory and how this indeed is expressed. Grosz describes this as “the movement of joining the body to the chaos of the universe itself according to the body’s needs and interests”.⁴⁶ This ‘movement’ or the way that we are capable to engage with the architecture is what truly makes it valuable to us. Deleuze describes this by saying that “Any-space-whatever already belongs to the category of possibility, because its potentialities render possible the realization of an event that is itself possible.”⁴⁷ It is the *potentiality* of a space affecting us or us affecting it which has the capacity to serve a certain need and determines valuableness. This phenomenon is by default relational.

At the same time, it is the concrete moment of affect which is capable of expressing such quality: The exact manner of how we are affected by a composition of forces in a specific situation, regulated through the territorial frame, simultaneously is an expression of how that territory becomes valuable. Certainly, not all affect is valuable; yet all affect is qualitative. It is important to recognise the capacity of affect as creator of the valuableness of concrete situations. Whether they might be affecting in a good or bad sense is not of great importance in this discourse. It is on the other hand of great importance to start recognizing the affect as a capable expression of value. Thinking in terms of affect allows to approach architectural valuableness in the qualitative sense.

Bogue furthermore complexifies this discussion on affect by saying that “what is crucial in the establishment of a territory is the autonomy of qualities and rhythms. In Deleuze and Guattari’s terms, a certain level of decoding or deterritorialization must take place if a territory is to be formed.”⁴⁸ One cannot help but notice that territorialization does not end with the last phase of an architectural design; it is happening at any moment that a living being is engaging with a spatial situation. The creation of architecture has to be therefore thought much further than its formal realization. We can understand the latter as an institutionalised pre-territorialization which has to embrace its own role with a certain degree of humbleness. The fact that designers are in most cases not the ones an architectural intervention is being designed for creates a certain distance which one should tolerate only with a constant effort of reducing this distance to a minimum. Otherwise, one can witness a certain dictating ‘from above’ mentality during the design process which does not serve the initial cause of the effort. In order to ‘design’ a territory, one must hence be capable of reflecting and schematizing for the sake of it to emerge as “defined and fashioned by the body that inhabits it”.⁴⁹ As a matter of course, it is the duty of the architect to find manners of expressing the affective power that a territory is able to provide. However, this power does not start or end with the institutionalised profession of architecture as such. Only for a short period of time the designer is channelling life forces, preparing them to become valuable affects in the future to come. Each design has to be thought of as an invitation to further territorialise the given space, to reiterate its internal forces by the mere interaction with someone’s body, to appropriate it to one’s needs. By the means of this attitude one can empower the leftover potential of infinite forces which allow for life to change.

46 Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art*, 18.

47 Deleuze, Gilles and Uhlmann, Anthony. „The Exhausted.“ *SubStance* 24, no. 3 (1995): 18.

48 Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, 20.

49 Ibid., 64.

TOWARDS A PRODUCTIVELY EXPRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE

EMPOWERING THE AFFECTIVE POWER

It is the duty of our profession to develop a conscious mode of engaging with the affective power of architecture - this is precondition in order to create architecture which is valuable in the most amplifying sense. The before-mentioned scalarised and sterile perspective of architects causes them to lose track of what value in their designs truly stands for. This paper has extensively discussed causes and consequences of quantitative approaches to value and they do not stop at the well-designed doorsteps of the architectural profession. By the means of architectural tools, one might not be able to liberate architecture from its role as instrument for financial speculation, but possibly counter the negative consequences this trend bears and regenerate the great potential which is lost on the way of quantification. The evident urge for a different architectural approach opens the possibility for extensive experiments with the engagement with affect, as it by default is qualitative. In the following chapter we will therefore discuss ways of how the affective power of architecture can be engaged with and can be empowered by the tools at the architect's hand. These are not to be understood as universal recipes, as no patent solutions can be developed in such complex matters. Much more are they meant as a mere demonstration of one possible active engagement with affect as a source for valuableness.

The previous chapter concluded that each architecture is by default expressive. However, one must recognise that what is important is the effect that such expression causes and whether the expressive mode transforms what it has aimed for. It is not supposed intentions of architects, but the resulting effect of their work that create an experience. We will therefore investigate this intermingling of intention and effect, searching for solutions of how affect-to-come can inform intention.

Massumi claims that the affective intensity of each event is linked to potential.⁵⁰ Potential is in the nature of affect. One can thus understand the effort to design for affect much more as the effort to design *for potential* for affect. Moreover, one can understand the potential for affect as the effect of architectural production which truly makes it valuable. Architects ought to therefore not only design in consideration of affect, but much more mobilise it as starting point and precondition for architectural production in order to create an amplifying environment.

Designing environment means to create new bodies that to a certain extent empower the bodies that inhabit them. Kodalak claims that bodily capacities reveal in affective interactions with other bodies and new capabilities therefore emerge and show in affective encounters.⁵¹ Embracing the world as being based on affective relations is thus a necessary attitude for architects to develop in order to be able to channel and empower the affective power of architecture. Deleuze has theorised on the power of affect in his text 'Spinoza and Ethics':

“For affects contrary to our nature above all prevent us from forming common notions, since they depend upon bodies that do not agree with our own; on the contrary, whenever a body agrees with our own and increases our power (joy), a common notion of the two bodies can be formed, from which an order and an active linking of the affections will ensue.”⁵²

⁵⁰ Massumi, *99 Thesis on the Revaluation of Value*, 96-99.

⁵¹ Kodalak, *Affective Aesthetics beneath Art and Architecture*, 405f.

⁵² Gilles Deleuze, *Essays on the Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel Smith and Michael Greco (London: Verso, 1998), 150.

One really has to recognise the fact that the encounter of a living and an architectural body can result in an increase of their power. The thought of how the body of whoever encounters an architectural object will be affected in an amplifying sense needs to always drive the designer of such a situation. An architecture which is amplifying and expressive of its affordances has the capacity to unlock the potentials that it bears for us. In order to grasp the space of possibilities of how territories can be of value for whoever encounters them, the operation of design must be accompanied by the omnipresent question of the affect and result in a design which strives for the greatest potential for affect.

Affordances as the potential for affect and potential for affect as the value of a territory should be recognised in the context of this paper as motivation and direction into forms of action. Architects thus need to separate from the goal of designing an object. We rather ought to design the potential for an action of which a valuable object will merely be the result. Designing objects with an affective power means to not consider their representation, but rather their operation and affect on their environment. For that reason, architectural design should be approached from a different direction: Instead of creating architecture with a result in mind, we ought to design a process by which this object becomes valuable.

By designing for affordances as direction into actions, one cannot fall for the naivety to look at such actions as being isolated from a complex context. The value of a potential action clears out a problem or a tension and is thereby guiding and attracting towards a situation of resolution. Each action is happening as a result of a succession of actions beforehand and is concluding into a succession of actions to come. We must recognise them as being part of a transition of time and space, as part of the unfolding experience of life. During the creation of new territories, an architect has to be aware of the fact of this spatio-temporal interconnectedness of actions. Bogue describes this facet of a territorialization by saying that “Deleuze and Guattari, like von Uexküll, speak of milieu components as “melodies,” thereby emphasizing the organization of pragmatic and developmental patterns as temporal unfoldings that possess a thematic coherence.”⁵³ Instead of designing for isolated activities, we ought to design a cascade of actions, a succession of unfolding value in space. In such compilations, relation and transition are a crucial factor. They need to be given special attention by the designer, who needs to fulfil the role of an examiner of the heterogeneous diversity in the relation of actions. Accompanying the effort to empower the affective power of a territory in creation, one urgently needs to focus on the in-between of affordances.

While designing for the relationality of affordances, one cannot help but notice their possible diversity. Simondon stresses the fact that every atom is in relationships to others and that those relationships are possible infinitely.⁵⁴ No situation has ever occurred exactly the same before or is going to repeat in the exact same way ever again. In the same sense one should understand the emergence of form as a singular event and embrace the infinite variety of possible compositions.

⁵³ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, 62.

⁵⁴ Simondon, *L'individuation psychique et collective*, 10-11.

Concerning the notion of form, Simondon has extensively criticised the concept of Hylomorphism as the relationship of passive matter which is actively given form. According to him, form is not a proper representation of an individuation process; it just gives an impoverished impression of the results. The relationship of form and matter is one of exchanging information progressively, which is a process of emergence. Therefore, the notion of form should be much more replaced with the notion of information.⁵⁵ There is no sensation that inevitably leads to a form, but forms which are primary resolution of tensions: “It seems to be very difficult to say that a form is a good form [*la bonne forme*] because it is the most probable [...]”.⁵⁶ We must understand a form always in relation to its internal system and the potentials of it. If it is becoming, permanently metastable and pregnant with potentials it is significant and thus *une bonne forme*.⁵⁷ Architects have to never understand a form as the starting point of the process of the architectural production, but have to recognise it as a mere result. It ought to never be seen as pre-given, or else there will be no genesis and according to Simondon no uncertainty in the future of a system.⁵⁸ By designing only with a compilation of actions in mind, an architect therefore can and must free their mind from any reference or image. It is the great risk of architectural production to approach a design from the idea of a form which already exists. This dependency and repetition of established typologies approaches designing by starting from the end result. Admittedly, this path is certainly the more comfortable way to go: making use of established and well-functioning typologies enables the often quite chaotic process of designing to be foreseen and controlled to a certain extent. The resulting feeling of security might be a reason for its frequent employment. Such replication of a pre-existing form as given expression however denies the potential for unique solutions which are much more correspondent to a singular context and situation. There is great potential lost to achieve something new, a form which is bespoke and specific to the spatio-temporal situation. Kodalak claims that “aesthetic experience cannot be reduced to ready-made recipes”.⁵⁹ By imposing norms such as already established expressions of affordances and actions, we risk to be drawn back by clichés and weaken life forces. Architects therefore urgently need to employ techniques of designing that do not control an expected outcome; but a much more holistic approach which evaluates valuableness based on the singularity of the situation.

In her book ‘Artermachines’, Anne Sauvagnargues explains the concept of modulation by the example of a brick. This relational common and causal operation of creating a form can be understood as the anti-concept of hylomorphism. Mould and form engage in an energetic relational system by having a continuous affect on each other. Such exchanging of information realises an individuation of something new: “Modulation allows us to avoid resemblance and to instead think a heterogeneous relation that is temporalised between the material of art and the sensation that it forms.”⁶⁰ An architectural path in the sense of modulation would therefore much more follow and embrace the potential for the emergence of ever new configurations of form. By proliferating and practicing this idea, one supports the emergence of singular form with a singular effect. This paper thus proposes an approach which

⁵⁵ Ibid., 16-30.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 48. (Translated by author)

⁵⁷ Ibid., 28-33.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 73-77.

⁵⁹ Kodalak, *Affective Aesthetics beneath Art and Architecture*, 406.

⁶⁰ Anne Sauvagnargues, *Artermachines - Deleuze, Guattari, Simondon*, trans. Suzanne Verderber (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 72.

turns the commonly used practice of employing typologies around, so to say. Only *after* having defined actions including their relations and experiences one should engage with their expression. By the means of this order of starting from the quite abstract thought of what actions a spatial situation shall offer, one can find a conscious mode of expressing that aims for an effect which is reacting to the singularity of the situation. This process might be more complex, but result in a new combination of elements that have never been combined before.

Indeed, the opposition of hylomorphism and modulation demonstrates that the separation of form and matter constructs barriers towards technical understanding. The absence of knowledge of how things are produced is taking part in the misunderstanding of their value. It prohibits the effort to understand how value is generated and where it comes from, and rather establishes an attitude of apathy towards affective valuableness as such.

Erich Hörl investigates this phenomenon in his article ‘The Technological Condition’ by describing the *Sinnverschiebung* - the displacement of our culture of significance - due to technological developments. According to him, we have entered new grounds on experiencing the world due to a certain ‘transcendental technicity’:

“The main point of Simondon’s work on the history of sense is that a hylomorphism that obscures technics in this way has shaped the entire occidental practice of describing concrete physical, psychical, and social processes, and as a result these processes are primarily modelled as anti-technical.”⁶¹

The original legibility of technology as exteriorization and ‘negativity’ of human capability nearly vanished - just to be replaced by an obscurity of technology which is disseminating the idea of hylomorphism.⁶² This paradigm denies the technicity of the architectural work process and thereby also hinders technological understanding towards architecture as such. In order to not become an enigmatic black box and thereby support the notion of hylomorphism, an architectural object must thus be expressive of its processes and potential affects. Moreover, processes must be embraced and empowered as something that cannot simply be abstracted and quantified.

The importance of technical knowledge and its implications is further contemplated by Sauvagnargues by saying that a “technical composition concerns the working of the material in which a certain knowledge, a certain capacity, a practical competence, and an assemblage of social modes of production and of fabrication are all in play.”⁶³ Architects as ‘creative technologists’ urgently ought to engage with more than only instructive and mediative processes. Their scalarised perspective on architectural valuableness certainly derives from a distance provoked by institutionalised establishments - a distancing of maker from user and of mind from hand. Such distinction of architectural production into planning and practical realization, into designing and building, surely impacts the individuation of the ‘designer figure’. In this context one thus must again recognise the need for a different work approach in architecture, which will in the best case lead to a psychic and collective individuation of the makers of architecture that operates more towards the Neganthropocene.

⁶¹ Hörl, Erich. „The Technological Condition.“, trans. Anthony Enns, *Parrhesia* 22 (2015): 5.

⁶² Ibid., 1-15.

⁶³ Sauvagnargues, *Artmachines*, 74.

It is the duty of the architectural profession to make a conscious effort that is aiming for a more intense reflection on the negentropic quality of architecture. The challenges and demands of our time cannot merely be represented and visualised in order to have an effect. Instead, abstract concepts and thoughts must always be accompanied with actual lived experiences. Conceiving valuableness as qualitative has to therefore be made *feelable* through architectural production.

The effects a feelable expression can have on the further development with whoever encounters them can be described in this context by quoting Stiegler: “[...] for Simondon, to know individuation is to individuate, that is, it is to already no longer know because it is to undergo a phase shift, to become out-of-phase.”⁶⁴ It is crucial for the conscious engagement with the affective power of architecture to consider the individuation of affected individuals. The power of architecture – as our more or less direct environment – and its capability to be affective cannot be underestimated. Quentin Meillassoux explains in his essay ‘Subtraction and Contraction’ how perceiving the world is an act of subtracting. According to him, there are two ways of perceiving and therefore two kinds of vital becoming. As opposed to a reactive becoming, an active becoming is characterised by opening up to the world. It is essentially passive, as “a way for it to register an increased affectivity to a number of external fluxes.”⁶⁵ Ultimately there are individuals that in their way of individuating are more affected by their environment than others.

Nonetheless, environments can of course not be reduced only to architecture. It always has to be understood as a vibrant constellation of bodies of different nature which all feed into someone’s perception of the world. According to Simondon, collective and psychic individuation are reciprocal. Information is a tension between those realities and causes the individuation of subjects.⁶⁶ Again, one can read Bogue’s theorization on the discipline of music as a valuable addition to this discussion:

“The chorus Debussy envisions is not a homogeneous mass, nor is it an aggregation of autonomous individuals. Rather, it is a collective phenomenon within which multiple entities come into being and acquire a certain degree of cohesion and group identity, yet do so without dissolving and merging with one another. Such a collectivity is “*Dividual*”, neither a composition of the One out of the Many nor a manifestation of the One in the Many.”⁶⁷

Throughout the process of designing, it is imperative to always consider the complex aspects of collectivity; how collectiveness is empowered and affected through the effects of architecture and vice versa. Via architecture as a territorial process of finding unique ways of expressing and channelling life forces, there is the capacity to initiate the production of a collective subjectivity that is affected in their becoming by productively and qualitatively expressed value.

⁶⁴ Stiegler, *The Neganthropocene*, 41.

⁶⁵ Quentin Meillassoux. „Subtraction and Contraction: Deleuze, Immanence, and Matter and Memory.“ in *Collapse Volume III*, ed. Robin Mackay, (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2007), 101.

⁶⁶ Simondon, *L’individuation psychique et collective*, 19.

⁶⁷ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, 42f.

This paper is aiming for the establishment of a critical attitude towards the reductive and one-dimensional evaluation of valuableness and is intending to point out the urge for a care-ful engagement with its consequences. Whereas it does not deny evaluation as twin phenomenon of value. Essentially, one could even understand the expressive essence of affect as an appropriate method to evaluate architecture qualitatively today. Being aware of such reflection-to-come might manifest even more the consideration of the potential for affect as productive qualitative value throughout the process of design. For architecture to truly become sustainable and capable to endure for a long time – and this cannot be stressed enough – it has to become valuable in the most qualitative, extensive and amplifying sense. This has to become the new architectural paradigm.

TOWARDS A PRODUCTIVELY EXPRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE

DRIVING DESIGN DECISIONS BY THEIR POTENTIAL FOR ACTION

The goal of this graduation is not to investigate established typologies or anything of such sort. It is much more aiming at the opposite by the means of reflecting on the approach and attitude of the practice of designing architecture. It wants to raise the question for what it is that drives our decisions, as well as propose a mode of thinking that may allow one to strive for singular and qualitative value in their design creations. It is an issue that is so obvious, subtle and taken for granted that it can easily be overseen.

The architect as designer figure is mostly neither maker nor user of their creations, essentially, they are coordinating and taking decisions beforehand while they are rarely involved with the effects of those afterwards. From this distanced perspective, one is tempted to consider design from the angle of its formal result, the object itself. To decide based on simple quantities or pre-developed solutions is a comfortable and safe path to go down.

However, as primary decision takers, architects bear the responsibility to approach this creation of value consciously driven by its qualitative valuableness, without preconceived ideas of how this ought to be expressed in form. In this process, breaking the mould of distanced decision taking is crucial. This implies an engagement with the valuableness of our design decisions as something which is unique and complex, embedded in the singularity of situation and context. This engagement requires an active attitude of exploration – a constant effort for the best possible understanding of the unique potential for valuableness needs to be precondition for each design decision. It is about establishing a mode of thinking which strives for the best possible understanding of singular qualitative value. This is a state which is never to be reached, but its purpose is fulfilled by the ambition and pursuit itself. Instead of being passive dictators, architects have to become active participants and care-ful examiners of the becoming-qualitatively-valuable of their architectural designs.

The consideration of affect must here be recognised as powerful technique to integrate spatio-temporal specificities.

Each context consists of a specific constellation of bodies with different features. This constellation is more than the sum of its parts: Different bodies relate to each other and provide each other with certain possibilities. What determines the value of a to be constructed body or an architectural object is what actions it can provide to whom in this specific assemblage of bodies. The architectural construct, as well as a human individual are only few of many actors at play. If one starts to think and design in terms of the action that a constructed body or a material body can provide for another body, one is really able to consciously channel the singular valuableness of architectural form and its material process. The definition of these actions becomes specific by considering their unique context and situation. In this process, the technical condition of the emergence of architecture cannot be neglected and must be cared for in a similar manner. Affect can again be a powerful tool in understanding affordances of materiality in the construction process.

Realizing the relational power of affect as a starting point for design considerations may be more complex and thought-intense, but it allows for the ever-new emergence of configuration of form which is bespoke, unique and specific. As stated earlier in this paper, a form is not necessarily a good form, just because it is the most probable one. Other than employing universal recipes and prefabricated ideas as driver for

design decisions, one can empower the great potential of infinite possibilities through which form can emerge. This attitude allows for our physical environments to be designed in a more specific, relational and qualitative manner. Tailored formal solutions may allow for our physical environments to disseminate a mode of interacting with them that focuses on quality rather than quantity and the recognition of one's own body in relation to spatio-temporal forces.

To summarize the conclusion of this exploration: Architects can channel singular valuableness by the means of considering *the to be provided actions* of a constructed or material body in relation to the *unique constellation of bodies* in the specific context and situation. Consequently, it is imperative to understand the succession of consideration as the intention of this paper: Architectural techniques must employ the uniqueness of affective relations as a starting point and priority. This systemic approach includes to first understand the specific conditions of a context and the diversity of bodies coming together in their temporal relation. When investigating the bodies' relations, one has to focus on their capacities and affordances for each other. Only then one can contemplate which actions an additional constructed body ought to provide in relation to other bodies. Subsequently, the emergence of form is merely the result of this process of consideration. That is to say, that the focus of this paper is much more regarding the design process than the resulting object. This discussion does not concern to define what is valuable and what isn't, but is concerns to establish a mode of thinking which strives for a conscious consideration of the becoming-qualitatively-valuable as a starting point for form.

In more simple words: One can design a form or a thing. *Or* one can ask what a thing ought to be able to do in this situation for someone, which then consequentially is channeled by the designer into a formal expression.

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