

TEXT

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LOST MY MIND TO FIND THE DIFFERENCE!

As Felix Guattari says, "The task facing us in the future is not that of seeking a mind-numbing and infantilizing consensus, but of cultivating dissensus." If one would keep this statement in mind whilst looking at a newly build Vinex location in the Netherlands, the opposite seems more applicable. The Vinex is a Dutch suburban planning model that first appeared in the late 20th century. As with many (pre / post) modernist urban development strategies, the Vinex was planned "top-down". This was done with a utopian vision in mind that, if implemented correctly, should improve the quality of life of the inhabitants. Key strategy was that the Vinex needed to have a close connection with existing city centres. By making this direct connection it would automatically; strengthen the existing shopping malls (by increasing the amount of potential clients), limit the deflation of (medium sized) cities, shorten distances between living / working / leisure and protect other still open areas from urbanization. The architecture is spacious and green, whilst providing a high degree of privacy with an expression that relates strongly to that of the 1930's.¹ After 2 decades, architects as well as inhabitants

have extensively criticized the Vinex “principle”. Main arguments were that the built environment is too uniform in its expression and therefore lacks identity, plus that it suggests a non-actual history.² So although the build environment in modern day Dutch suburban area’s has been guided by a “beauty-committee” of architects, the result has become easily recognizable and (arguably) boring. It seems high time to rethink this conditional / conventional way of approaching architecture and urban planning. The new approach should actually enhance creativity and by that result in a varied and exiting urban landscape. Post-post-modern philosophy can be of help in this shift, precisely because, they have abandoned the issue of “one” perfect essential model and shifted towards a multiplicity of many different optima.

The utopian vision of the Vinex comes from the “essence” of a “perfect” suburban life. It is exactly this essentialism that makes it impossible succeed. As Manuel Delanda says, “essentialism starts with finished products, discovers through logical analysis the enduring properties that characterize those products, and then makes these sets of properties into a defining essence”.³

This is working backwards, from the actual towards the virtual and by doing so neglecting the incomprehensibly complex milieu in which the actual operates and comes into being. To avoid this “reification” it is necessary to start with the historical process that guided a product. That means to start from the “milieu” in which the product is conceived.⁴

The product should be seen as an assemblage and the assemblage’s identity is acquired from the unique “cosmological” and “evolutionary” historical process that made it. Constantly undergoing territorialization (that which stabilizes the assemblage) and de-territorialization (that which destabilizes it). De-territorialization gives the assemblage a chance to be rearranged in a different way. Just like a forest would upon the death of a big tree. When the tree falls on the forest floor, small flowers are directly exposed to sunlight. This gives the flowers a chance to grow, until one, or two, or three of them reach the “roof” of the forest thus blocking sunlight again and the potential of growth. The new assemblage will be different from the original one. By this the identity of the forest (assemblage) has changed. Identity of an assemblage comes from this

bifurcation between stable and unstable state. Then it becomes interesting to balance the assemblage in a state that lies in-between (fluid-equilibrium). This means that the assemblage is neither subject off over-coding, (which slows the process of change) nor is it too free to produce (the process of change is too fast to conceive).⁵ Thus by over-coding Vinex areas, it exists in a state of solid equilibrium, therefore the accumulation of a unique identity will take a long time. In comparison, the forest exists in a state of fluid (almost gaseous)-equilibrium, which makes it adaptable to change instantaneously. Whilst the Vinex and forest are seemingly opposite, in the view of assemblage theory they actually carry the same ontological status. Thus, it can become a useful comparison. As Felix Guatarri says, "Nature has become inseparable from culture".⁶

Changing the state of equilibria is possible; but it is still not clear what shape it will take. What guides the genesis of form before, during and after de/re-territorialization? "Chreods", might be the answer. In Sanford Kwinters words, "A chreod refers to an invisible but not imaginary feature in an invisible but

not imaginary landscape on which a developing form gathers the information and the influence necessary for it to make itself what it is. Forms develop on such virtual landscapes not simply because they need a way to determine what they should look like and how they should behave, but because all forms are products of forces in the world that require resolution.”⁷ The chreod is part of an “epigenetic landscape” that constrains and directs potential in which form becomes. However, form does not resemble nor reflect the chreod or epigenetic landscape that produced it. Flows of matter will tend towards one or multiple basins in the landscape while still having the possibility of being redirected toward another basin of attraction.⁸ A good example is the relation between the growth of cities and the means of transport. Before invention of the automobile, cities were relatively small. The footprint of the city was primarily based on the distance one could travel to get to work, acquire food, visit friends etc. This distance, of course, changed dramatically after the invention. Now people could travel much further in a shorter time span. Therefore the footprint of the city could be larger.⁹ The

chreod in this case is not the invention of the car; it is potential for people to travel further. Suburbanization like that of the Vinex is made possible by the extended relationality between city centre and suburb, but it does not represent it. It is the virtual foundation of a new genesis of form.¹⁰

The actualization from the virtual landscape is an immediate seamless process guided by conditions and constrains. Differentiating conditions from constrains is enriching like Isabelle Strengers says, "Unlike conditions, which are always relative to a given existent that needs to be explained, established, or legitimized, constraints provides no explanation, no foundation, no legitimacy. A constraint must be satisfied, but the way it is satisfied remains, by definition, an open question." It is the openness that leaves room for interpretation and creativity.¹¹ In this light it becomes arguable that the role played by the "beauty-committee" is mainly conditional due to the fact that explanation and legitimization are core elements of it. A different approach is found in Manhattan New York where architects are given aesthetic freedom as long as they respect the zoning constraints.

The constraints allowed repetition while personal aesthetic styles provide variation.¹² This is celebrating our differences while at the same time creating new “contracts of citizenship” where exceptions and rarity coexist under the least oppressive condition.¹³ But, this process is not without risk, as Brian Massumi explains, “Codifying capture cuts both ways. Negatively, it stops and contains variation. Positively, it preserves the game for repetition. If the game were not repeated, variation would never have a chance to restart.”¹⁴

Thus constraints afford interpretation, and the interpretation is an opening, a possibility an “affordance” that is relational and consists in-between the subject and object. As J. Gibson says, “the affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, 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 mean by it something that refers to both the environment and the animal in a way that no existing term does. It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment”.¹⁵ It is the potentiality in-between subject and object where creativity can flourish, which

can only happen upon engagement. Brian Massumi goes on, "Perception is focused on the coming and going of the openings [...] each opening is a field effect [...] The opening is not simple a hole, a lack of something occupying. It is a positive expression of how everything in the field moving and still integrally relates at that instant. It is the appearance of the field relationality from a particular angle. The particular angle is that of your body getting ahead, the opening is how the field appears as an affordance for it getting ahead. The movement has to be present to the opening as it happens [...] You've preformed an integral dance of attention seemingly without thinking. But you were thinking, with your movement. Your every movement was a preformed analysis, of the field's composition from the angle of its affordance for getting ahead [...] You enter the mode of environmental awareness in which to perceive is to enact thought and thought is directly relational."¹⁶ In this case the movement (initiated by desire) can be seen as the ball that is pushed to roll on the epigenetic landscape. The attractors / basins of attractions are openings in-between the (also moving) bodies and still objects that are in this

case, repellors. This is seeing an environment by its “relations of exteriority” as, “perception is not an event enclosed within the perceiver’s mind, but rather, it is the detection of structures that emerge within the reciprocal movement that plays back and forth across the perceiver and the environment.”¹⁷ If one becomes aware of this way of structuring it is also possible to propose for another implementation. For example, if I were to ask you to think of a staircase, you would probably think of a typified stair that most likely resembles mine. However, if I were to ask you to think of a system or structure to get from point a to b in a vertical way, the image would probably differ dramatically. The reason for this is that it has now become possible to think in the relationality between a - b. This allows for a multiplicity of interpretations, and thus, affords a different outcome.

It implies to stop looking at what something is, and instead, look at what something does or can do. “We can distinguish, for example, the properties defining a given entity from its capacities to interact with other entities. While its properties are given and may be denumerable as a closed list, its capacities are not given

[...] and form a potentially open list".¹⁸ It is the potential interaction between what an object is and what a subject can do. To find the relationality one has study the empirical questions of how the assemblage came to be what it is. This to find, not only "logically necessary" properties, but also the contingently obligatory relations.¹⁹ The difference is like studying a chair by analyzing properties like the nails and wooden elements but forgetting that it is made to sit on, whilst, (and this is important), it is also possible to stand on. The probability to sit whilst having the possibility to stand is, as Gilles Deleuze says, "a logic of intensities, the logic of self-referential existential assemblages, engaging non-reversible duration; it is the logic, not of the totalized bodies of human subjects, but of part objects in the psychoanalytical sense [...] whilst the logic of discursive sets seeks to delimit its objects, the logic of intensities – or eco-logic – concerns itself solely with the movement and intensity of evolutive processes."²⁰ It is not discursive in the way that it does not precede to a conclusion through reason rather than intuition. This is important because it would be impossible to map all the potentiality a subject might see

in the object through logical reasoning. What is clear, is that there is a tendency in the way that a subject sees the potential affordances of an object, however, this is not exclusive to other interpretations.

Is it possible to transfer this notion to design praxes? As Gilles Deleuze says, “Ecological praxes might, [...] be defined as a search to identify in each partial locus of existence the potential vectors of subjectification and singularization.”²¹ This breaks with traditional discursive methods because it allows for previously unseen deterritorialized elements that define the particularity of place to be the foundation for design. As previously said, each assemblage is unique because of the genealogical process that made it. But, whilst subjective deterritorialization is exciting, it is not without risk. Gilles Deleuze explains, “They are certainly risky; there is the risk of an overly violent deterritorialization, of the destruction of existing assemblages of subjectification [...] More gradual forms of deterritorialization may, on the other hand, produce a more constructive processual evolution of subjective assemblages. At the heart of all ecological praxes is an

a-signifying rupture, in a context in which the catalysts of existential change are present, but lack expressive support from the enunciative assemblage which frames them. In the absence of ecological praxis, those catalysts remain inactive and tend towards inconsistency [...] At this point, the existential event which gives rise to these new assemblages becomes invisible; they confront us as having been 'always already' in existence."²²

Unfortunately (or happily) the identification of singular catalyst is no easy task. We need not to search for universal solutions for differentiated problems as proposed by modernist nor does it require a forcefully different solutions to any problem as proposed by post-modernist. It is about fluently interacting between both, whilst giving the singularities that make a place particular, a chance to flourish. A fine example of the different approaches is found in IJburg Amsterdam. In one street two different methods are used to guide a genesis of form. One gave complete aesthetic freedom as long as architects respected the restriction of a 5m wide footprint and a maximum height of 4 levels.²³ It resulted in a heterogeneous outcome due to singular tastes and

styles of inhabitants. Heterogeneity in this case was not without codification. Codification allowed for repetition that intensified variation. Across the street one project developer faked the singular taste of inhabitants top-down. There was no singular (deterritorialized) element that gave rise to a differentiated outcome, thus the result became recognizable and boring as it was only planned top-down. The lesson learned by this is that if one truly wants to be surprised by themselves. One has to engage the sometimes-unseen de-territorialized singularity that drives genesis of form and gives a unique identity to an assemblage.

Bruno Latour provides further explanation; “Drawing and modelling do not constitute an immediate means of translation of the internal energies and fantasies of the architect’s mind’s eye, or a process of transferring ideas from a designer’s mind into a physical form, from a powerful “subjective” imagination into various “material” expressions. Rather, the hundreds of models and drawings produced in design form an artistically created primal matter that stimulates the haptic imagination, astonishes its creators instead of subserviently obeying

them, and helps architects fix unfamiliar ideas, gain new knowledge about the building-to-come, and formulate new alternatives and “options,” new unforeseen scenarios of realization.”²⁴ It is about getting rid of the preconceived mind to find the difference. Just like the notion of “walking as controlled falling”, we are set in motion by a particular desire. To reach this desire we constantly have to switch stages of equilibrium. “Walking as controlled falling” is surrendering to constraints like gravity and those of your body, whilst having a degree of freedom. As Brian Massumi explains, “you move forward by playing with the constraints, not avoiding them. There’s an openness of movement, even though there’s no escaping constraint.”²⁵ But as we all know, it becomes difficult to move freely when there is someone watching you, thus, making you conscious of your every movement.

It is exactly for this reason we should get rid of our limiting beauty-committee. This does not mean chasing heterogeneity for the sake of heterogeneity. It is about letting it run the course and in running applying or removing enabling constraints where necessary. It is

about the reciprocal determination between freedom and constraint that can only be found upon experimentation. Inevitably there will be mistakes, as risk always implies both success and failure. But without risk, there will neither success nor failure and the Vinex will definitely remain in the current state of aesthetic purgatory!

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ECOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Before making the choice which 'episteme' suits me best. It seems relevant to ask what the term 'episteme' entails. According to Gregory Bateson epistemology is:

"1. A branch of philosophy that is concerned with how it is possible to know anything? And, what is truth? And, questions like that. [...] 2a. It is a study of how people think they know things. 2b. It is a study of how people know things, which is not necessarily the same thing. It has to do with the, what how, and the business of knowing. Everybody obviously has an epistemology or they could not know anything, and those who say they do not have an epistemology, have a lousy one."¹ If this paper is about the business of knowing, the logical approach would be to choose what I want to know, study, and then know it. This methodology probably works fine in discursive praxes where intuition and accidents are preferably excluded. But how does it relate to design praxes where this is not the case. Where it is not only about the numerable properties of a created entity, but also about the "poetic values" or innumerable qualities.

Felix Guattari offers a different (ecological) approach: "Whilst the logic of discursive sets seeks to

delimit its objects, the logic of intensities – or eco-logic-concerns itself solely with the movement and intensity of evolutive processes. [...] This might be described as a logic of the 'included middle'² It implies to leave the hierarchical mode of concept driven essentialist architecture to shift towards the ontologically flat field (context) of potential, from where the product can become. But, if there is no hierarchical value system, what do we choose? Guattari answers: "Ecological praxes might, in this light, be defined as a search to identify in each partial locus of existence the potential vectors of subjectification and singularization. What is generally sought is some quality that runs counter to the 'normal' order of things: a discordant repetition, information of particular intensity, which sums up other intensities to form new existential configurations."³ This is not a "traditional" methodology. This is about finding the repressed singularities, which are never found twice exactly in the same way, because if they could be, they would not be singularities. It is about constituting or disrupting the equilibrium.

If this different approach is about singularities

that are the triggers to energize ecologies, the question becomes, what are they and how can I find them? To answer this question it is important to understand how the very ecology itself is constructed. What is this virtual plane from which things become? Simondon answers: "in each situation encountered in experience, it is to invent and to construct a plane which increases its dimensions and puts into perspective the manner in which it is constituted and relates to other elements of experience. [...] Simondon builds a plane (a surface) which he poses prior to their differentiations and which allows him to start with what relates them before differentiating them."⁴ Pre-individual singularities are the things that break the equilibrium in this plane and can cause a cascade of events. Like, "the stone which initiates the dune, the gravel which is the germ of an island in a river carrying alluvium."⁵ This entails that singularities and ecology cannot be detached as: "structure (ecology) emerges within a web of movement that spins between the perceiver and the environment. This multiplicity of movements forms a moving structure that is the ongoing result of the very movements that are so structured."⁶

It is this reciprocal determination between what is structured and what structures that provides interesting opportunities for intervention in the field of architecture. But first, it is important to note what a body (of architecture) is. Gilles Deleuze explains: "A body[...] is defined by Spinoza in two simultaneous ways[...] a body, however small it may be, is composed of an infinite number of particles; it is the relations of motion and rest, of speeds and slownesses between particles, that define a body, the individuality of a body. Secondly, a body affects other bodies, or is affected by other bodies; it is this capacity for affecting and being affected that also defines a body in its individuality."⁷ It is not only about what a piece of architecture is, but also what it does, and what others do to it. The seeing of a possibility to do something comes before the intellectual recognition of something. As Gibson says, "Affordances are the possibilities for action of a particular animal- environment setting; they are what an arrangement of surfaces means to an animal. Affordances are usually described as "-ables"."⁸

In this light it seems quite stupid to rigidly

determine a certain function to an object. Instead, by shaping conditions, a certain use will become probable thus it will have functionality. The shaping of conditions becomes a political issue because one has to decide what kind of use one wants to advocate. As Lewinton says,“ the political issue is to decide what kind of world you want to live in. Then do your best to direct the inevitable changing environment, which living and metabolizing creates, in some direction, which will be as suitable as possible for human- and perhaps for animal- and plant life. [...] But it must be done on the basis of knowledge of how environments are changing in an attempt to tunnel those changes; [...] So the issue is to direct, the direction and the rates of change, not to prevent change.”⁹ This is not without risk, as Didier Debaise explains: “the characteristic of a singularity is that we cannot define its effects before they are established, that we cannot a priori delimit the space in which these effects will operate.”¹⁰

We can only shape conditions, which provide certain equilibrium where things can happen. “The concept of equilibrium refers here to what Simondon

calls a 'metastable' equilibrium, which is to say a tense balance, beyond stability, held by a high energy potential. Without this metastable equilibrium, a singularity would never be able to 'break the balance'. It is the fragile, unstable character of a heterogeneous relation, which gives a singularity the possibility of transforming the equilibrium."¹¹

In this (my) view, architecture is about providing a certain (non-?) friction in (non-?) equilibrium wherefrom a mode of being is enabled. To create friction, there needs to be movement, cause, without movement there is no friction. This mode of being is not absolute. It differs from situation to situation, as time evolves, thus a factor of flexibility should be accounted for. But, what are the degrees of freedom (flexibility), which a piece of architecture should have? Here, the notion of "walking as controlled falling" becomes interesting because it deals with constraint AND freedom. As Isabelle Strengers explains, "A constraint must be satisfied, but the way it is satisfied remains, by definition, an open question."¹² It is the openness in movement that leaves room for interpretation and creativity. Architecture is then about

providing enabling constraints from which a degree of freedom arises. Thus, the question becomes: how many constraints? Or how many degrees of freedom? And, what kind of values do we want to pursue?

Design praxes play an interesting roll because it has the possibility to actualize and thereby answer the questions above. These answers should, in my opinion, differ from situation to situation because the context wherein the actualization takes place also differs from situation to situation. This is not to say universals are of no use. It is to say that universals and particulars should enhance each other reciprocally. The problem is that there is no clear-cut methodology to achieve this synergy. It is about constantly searching for the repressed singularities that can reenergize the ecology. These missing singularities are sometimes universals and other times particularities. The key question is: How do I find them? Bruno Latour answers: "Drawing and modelling do not constitute an immediate means of translation of the internal energies and fantasies of the architect's mind's eye, or a process of transferring ideas from a designer's mind into a physical form, from a powerful "subjective"

imagination into various “material” expressions. Rather, the hundreds of models and drawings produced in design form an artistically created primal matter that stimulates the haptic imagination, astonishes its creators instead of subserviently obeying them, and helps architects fix unfamiliar ideas, gain new knowledge about the building-to-come, and formulate new alternatives and “options,” new unforeseen scenarios of realization.”¹³ This is how I want to position myself in the development of the studio. I want to search. Discover. Rediscover. Doubt. Decide. Doubt. And Make! It means to integrate and embrace all possible constraints early in the project. It means, for example, no fundamental hierarchical difference between the installations or urban environment. It is truly about being in the middle. About the (Deleuzian)milieu. About everything at once at the same time!

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ACCIDENTAL BEAUTY

Do we, think before experience? Or, does experience come before thought? The difference seems minor, but fundamentally influences the way we act and could intervene. Although typological research has had a long tradition in architecture and design praxes, it has failed to endeavour novel typologies because of its retroactive nature. Post-structural philosophy might be of help in breaking with this essentialist tradition in order to set up mechanisms from which novel entities can actually emerge.

First, it seems appropriate to ask why certain things come into being at specific points in time. To answer, one needs to understand the spatio-temporal phase space in which things become. This phase space consists of a manifold of axes as Brian Eno explains: "An axis is a name for a continuum of possibilities between two extreme positions: so the axis between black and white is a scale of greys [...] What strikes you as interesting when you begin thinking about stylistic decisions as being locatable in a multi-axial space of this kind is the recognition that some axes don't yet exist."¹ Take for example the emergence of the skyscraper. It was

enabled due to specific conditions in Chicago (1884). For example: The invention of the elevator, lightweight steel structures, a fire that eradicated the city centre thereby providing space to build and finally pressure on real estate because of a growing population.² All of these conditions meshed together made it feasible to build a vertical instead of horizontal structure. So in this case the phase space consisted of the axes: light weight – heavy weight, elevator – stair, cheap – expensive and a new axes: horizontal building – vertical building. If one wants to understand the emergence of a novel “type” it is critical to understand these intensive and extensive “virtual” conditions from which it actually emerged.³ Made all the more difficult because of the possibility that, ten years later, these axes/conditions/vectors may have changed thus enabling a different outcome.

Phase spaces exist in constant flux, as they evolve in time, so the consequence is that eternal “truths” are devalued because of its relativity to a specific spatio-temporal scale.⁴ If one takes this seriously, it becomes irrelevant to find everlasting consistent actual values throughout time. Gilles Deleuze therefore, offers a different

solution by saying that we have to look for, “implicit forms that are topological rather than geometric”.⁵ This is a study of how things become instead of looking at what they are. Manuel Delanda explains further, “What matters at this point is that singularities, by determining long-term tendencies, structure the possibilities which make up state space, and by extension, structure the possibilities open to the physical process modelled by a state space [...] mechanism-independence is what makes singularities (or rather the multiplicities they define) perfect candidates to replace essences.”⁶ Lets take an example of how singularities can lead to diverse structures: igloo vs. man made cave, in appearance two completely dissimilar structures. However, both are about meeting energetic requirements, they just exist on different parts of the globe. For the igloo it is about providing a habitual situation with minimal effort while its outcome is constrained/enabled by an abundance of local resources (snow). Different but similar, the man made cave is about providing a habitual situation with minimal effort while constrained/enabled by a lack of constructive material. By looking at the mechanism

that drove the process, we can better understand the outcome and also use it in another situation if needed. However, if we had looked at the properties of the igloo and man made cave we would have concluded that they were imperfect to their transcendent model, thus wouldn't have had any productive mechanisms for the future.

To find these mechanism-independent singularities, which can be used to design one has to move up the "hierarchy" of the flat ontology. There is of course, a very strong contradict in this statement, so it is important to note that this hierarchy ("topological-differential-projective-affine-Euclidean"⁷) only exists from the perspective of "the birth of real space." As Manuel Delanda explains, "The idea would be to view this genesis not as an abstract mathematical process but as a concrete physical process in which an undifferentiated intensive space (that is, a space defined by continuous intensive properties) progressively differentiates, eventually giving rise to extensive structures (discontinuous structures with definite metric properties)."⁸ The mechanism-independent singularity

is the difference that causes a cascade of events that eventually end up (similar or different) in metric space. Deleuze states that, "difference is primary": "there is no first term which is repeated"⁹ Design research should start focusing on finding and identifying these progressive differences so that genuinely beautiful, rich, complex and unexpected structures can emerge seemingly spontaneous.

Architecture (in my view) is underdeveloped in this area. For an interesting example I would like to divert to Steve Reich's "processual" music. In the early stages of his career he worked with a technique he called "phasing": "A process for composing canons at the unison where the subject is short and the rhythmic interval between the subject and its answers is variable."¹⁰ "The distinctive thing about musical processes is that they determine all the note-to-note (sound-to-sound) details and the overall form simultaneously."¹¹ He sets up two simple identical rhythmic patterns with a very gradual difference in-between them wherefrom extremely rich and complex structures emerge. The approach is heuristic; it relies on trial and error to find the right graduation for the process

to evolve at just the right speed. It is in the relationality between the patterns that the listener's creative brain composes the piece of music instead of a traditional pre-determined sensation of a composer.¹²

The problem/excitement is that there is no rule/methodology in finding progressive differences, we have to surprise ourselves and find them time and time again. As Bruno Latour explains, "Drawing and modelling do not constitute an immediate means of translation of the internal energies and fantasies of the architect's mind's eye, or a process of transferring ideas from a designer's mind into a physical form, from a powerful "subjective" imagination into various "material" expressions. Rather, the hundreds of models and drawings produced in design form an artistically created primal matter that stimulates the haptic imagination, astonishes its creators instead of subserviently obeying them, and helps architects fix unfamiliar ideas, gain new knowledge about the building-to-come, and formulate new alternatives and "options," new unforeseen scenarios of realization."¹³

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3. Steve Reich, Writings on Music 1965 – 2000, 2002, Oxford University Press

PRODESS

A goal (from a manifold) of my graduation project is to fluidify the traditionally rigid boundary between process and product. This implies to leave the hierarchical mode of concept driven essentialist architecture. Instead, I want to make a shift towards the non-hierarchical ecological(ontologically flat) field of potential(context), from where the objectile becomes. This ecological praxes might, as Gilles Deleuze explains, “be defined as a search to identify in each partial locus of existence the potential vectors of subjectification and singularization.”¹ It is about getting rid of the preconceived mind to find the difference that makes the difference. The process is best describe like the notion of “walking as controlled falling”. I am set in motion by a particular desire. To fulfill this desire I will have to move. To move is to go through a “phase transition” which enables new discoveries. “Walking as controlled falling” is surrendering to constraints like gravity and those of your body, whilst having a certain degree of freedom. As Brian Massumi explains, “you move forward by playing with the constraints, not avoiding them. There’s an openness of movement, even though there’s no escaping

constraint.”² It is about the reciprocal determination between freedom and constraint that can only be found upon experimentation. Inevitably there will be mistakes, as risk implies both success and failure. But without risk, there will neither success nor failure and the project will end up in a state of aesthetic purgatory! How can I to avoid this? Bruno Latour would give me the following answer: “Drawing and modelling do not constitute an immediate means of translation of the internal energies and fantasies of the architect’s mind’s eye, or a process of transferring ideas from a designer’s mind into a physical form, from a powerful “subjective” imagination into various “material” expressions. Rather, the hundreds of models and drawings produced in design form an artistically created primal matter that stimulates the haptic imagination, astonishes its creators instead of subserviently obeying them, and helps architects fix unfamiliar ideas, gain new knowledge about the building-to-come, and formulate new alternatives and “options,” new unforeseen scenarios of realization.”³ It is about problem finding instead of problem solving. It is not about judging content at face value. It is about finding

the intent which makes content.⁴ It is about thinking in the relationality between objects which allows for a manifold of interpretations, thus, affords a different (or similar) outcome. It is about searching. To search in the field of potential is to discover. Rediscover. Doubt. Decide. Doubt. And Make! It means to integrate and embrace all possible constraints early in the project. It means, for example, no fundamental hierarchical difference between the installations or urban environment. It is truly about being in the middle. About the milieu. About everything at once at the same time!⁵

NOTES

1. Felix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies*, 1989 Continuum, P. 4
2. Brian Massumi, Mary Zournazi, Zournazi Massumi Interview
3. Bruno Latour, Albená Yaneva, "GIVE ME A GUN AND I WILL MAKE ALL BUILDINGS MOVE", 2008, Birkhäuser, P. 84
4. Richard Sennet, *Quant*
www.richardsennet.com
5. From this "phase space" research question can come to light. These questions would not necessarily need to be resolved, however (and more importantly), they need a thorough quasi-objective investigation. My most recent question, for example, investigates the possibilities to translate the positive spatial conditions of a field condition into a vertical diagram. It could be that there is no "ultimate" resolution or model to do this. However, the investigation can trigger new questions, thus, cascade into an entirely new vision. This vision could not have been envisioned if the original question had not been asked.