

Time, recorded memory and associations

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In 1925 Abel Gance stated that “the time of the image has come”.¹ This sentence may also be understood as the technique of grasping time as an image has come together with the consideration of the question of time as the main barrier of modernity.

The image as art is the determined historical activity, the rest of the images seen elsewhere in the culture industry are a chaotic circulation of different forms associated with things. Both are the ‘recorded memory’. I claim that the cinematic image is a condensed fragment of the time-space. There is nuclear proliferation, image proliferation, the proliferation of ideas, means, gadgets etc. In other words the trace that memory left is transformed into the image and stretched in the frame of the screen. In this sense a certain ‘time-space’ became the temporal entity which can only be grasped by images and in images. Cinematic images are images of alterity; because they are images of the present recapitulated from the past therefore they are images of the other. It makes it possible to speak of cinematic images as traces. Otherwise to speak of images as traces is impossible, if they don’t contain memory. Memory is always in the accusative case, it is always memory of someone or something therefore memory of the other, which in itself is the trace of the lived past. Cinematic images may be moving as well as static, or photographic. In both cases they are records of memory and traces of time. As such the image is an evidence of what happened in time.

Time and space cannot be categorized and instead understood as a scheme. This schema is developed into a technique and this technique is a model based on the copy ‘there are only copies and no original’. In his argument with Newton in relation to the world of objects which exists in time and space Leibniz asked: would objects disappear if to take away the substance: time and space? He also answered that time and space will continue to exist in

objects and in this way 'time and space' may disappear yet leaving objects behind. I would like to add to this: what continues to exist is not simply objects but the image of traces of memory left behind by 'time –space'!

To repeat again, the image in its turn is inseparable from the question of time. Images are traces of time or as Agamben calls images are remnants of time.² Where my thinking ends, the other person's thinking continues my thought and takes over the remainder of my time, which is the time of the image. In this constant dynamic move one needs to develop a form of thinking to a certain degree of the abstraction in order to be able to grasp the complex world with the little application of the thought. As such it is difficult to define the time as a category, yet with the proliferation of images there is such a possibility, like watching the film can be defined as the time of the film. In the same way sending an SMS is the time of the messaging etc. As such they are temporal objects. In other words these temporal objects are the recorded memory that stores the time in images. When I speak of the time as 'the time of watching the TV', 'the time of the internet', or 'the time of messaging' I claim that the time of watching the film, or checking an e-mail, provides the possibility of the materialization of time in these fragmentary and temporal activities. Therefore it is possible to speak of the time as the time of the image! Time as such is not present, but may only be perceived in its traces, in the recorded memory as an image. The image then is the remembered past and when we encounter images we retain the possibility of reconstructing this past. This is why the image as the recorded memory is a technique and it is the technique of remembering and reconstructing. Time is stored in images and therefore there is nothing outside of the image. Schematically there is a flow consisting of memory, flashbacks, remembering forgetting which is called the reality and subjects are cut into this reality. If the image is the trace of memory and therefore of time, then subjects are what are immersed into this flux of images. It is also how temporal objects play the role of formation of consciousness. Robert de Niro in a certain film was acting as a crab, and when journalists are asking 'how you walk like a crab?'. He says: "I don't walk like a crab. It is an image of the crab entering into my walk and then entering into the composition of the image. In this case I speak of the time in the accusative case, because the time exists in images and images are images of something other.

We can speak of the time of the image as it is stored in images, like in 'Tarkovsky's apples' or "Kieorastami's motorbikes". "Tarkovsky's apples "are very different from the apples we see in the garden because in Tarkovsky's film apples are approached as images that stores the traces of the time recorded in his films.

Cinema and Metaphysics

Copy is a projection. Projection is an image or image as a copy is projected. Projection occurs in a coupled manner and it is always a pure difference. In this manner projection is an exterior image, which is exteriorized thought. Projection then is a mechanism as it is the combination of thought and associations.

Image as a copy becomes a projection after being re-used and translated in this way. Projection is a technique which is the combination of thought and associations. Images as projections and making images are projecting the technique to the exterior world. Technique-image or projection is exteriorization of the thought. So the image is not simply a copy of the real any longer, it is a technique. This technique is the combination of thought and associations. Imitating means the ability of possessing this technique. In the triad of imitation-memory-meaning I see the inevitability of the technique of imitation as the only possibility for a survival of the art of memory, since most of the population will be absorbed by the memory industry operated by 'memeplex' and the imitation game.

The combination of the imitation (making images out of the existing images) and 'the imitation game' (memory restored in machines) may define a new direction of working with images. It is also a possibility to escape the increasing anthropocentrism of the work. The emergence of the visual or the explosion of the visual in culture is characteristic to this period. In order to have a better understanding of the development of thought in its relation to a technics. I created a scheme that shows the growth of culture alongside philosophy or the thought and mathematics or the technique.

From the formation of thinking to its visualization

The first stage is the formation of mathematics as the technique of thought, which is the formation of thought or philosophy. Pythagoras announcing 'all is number' is an example. This formation continues from the early ages to the emergence of Kantian philosophy as the critique of the pure reason, where pure reason is mathematics alongside astronomy and music. At this stage mathematics is understood as the phenomena and it is the age of

appearance of the thought in mathematics and the condensation of the thought. Post Kantian philosophy is marked by the turn to aesthetics. For example the Jena school preferred to study poetics instead of metaphysics. Modernism in art is also the prominence of aesthetics that is a development of the Kantian notion that the ‘thing-in-itself’ may not be grasped by reason; nevertheless it may be grasped by senses. The problem is in the further separation between the rational and sensual, intellectual and emotional, started with the mathematization of everyday life by Galilee .The 20th century starting from phenomenology versus Bourbaki is an emergence of mathematics as language. And philosophy is the language of thinking. The latest development where philosophy is the formation of concepts as it has been pointed by Deleuze in his classifying concepts and affects as two polarities of the thought. In the current situation mathematics developed into the content in the form of programming. The technique of the visual and the emergence of the visual culture are characteristic for this period.

The visual is outplaying the meaning or it is the third meaning.

Associations and machinality

The third meaning is memory, it is the missing dimension of time and when it is discovered it returns as an image, the image of memory.

The world is separated from its initial meaning and any attempt to reconstruct the abyss between the world and the meaning is failed. Because in this gap anything reconstructed is simulating which is natural, therefore altering and changing. The world is the world of the other and the meaning is accordingly linked to the alterity- therefore there is no perception that can identify, but associations which are able to build up panoramic vision.

There is no perception any longer and whatever is ‘perceived’ is an association with the very well forgotten past. Associations occur in a way how one watches film. While watching film the viewer temporarily falls into oblivion and looks at the world while images move on the screen.

It is possible to say that the future of art is cinema or one may also say in a refusal that cinema is already the present. It is true, but at the same time this presence of the cinema is the

end of art (fine art) as we know it and cinematic images (or moving images) have a central place as the most ultimate form that brings together multiplicities.

It is also true that ideology is elsewhere, but until subjects don't realize what kind of ideology is there, there is a doubt of its effects. Today it is understood that contemporary art is delivering messages of neoliberalism as classical art was delivering the message of bourgeoisie. Cinema is still much "wilder" in this sense and enigmatically it works for every single subject by adopting images from art history and new media. A long period of adoption is concealing a new ideology.

Art is shifted from the position of demiurge to the position of *semiurge*. In other words from the position of hegemony to the position of multiplied signs and particles that simulate art. The demiurge is the creator whereas the *semiurge* is the producer. Both have positive and negative meanings, for example Rodchenko used the role of producing positively, in the same way "the creative" was understood negatively in the situation of late capitalism when every aspect of visual production was labelled as a 'creative' in trying to make their business and capital circulation more attractive.

As I mentioned above I understand art as a study, rather than a finished project and it is the study of processes, situations and discourses. In this sense there is a strict relationship between the technique and the thought. This study is looking at 'images as technique' in order to study the role associations play in the formation and constitution of the subject. Cinema is also the ultimate art which is based on the principle of associations. But it also provides the possibility of the restoration of the broken link between the object and the artist. This link is the thought, which needs to be restored by the reproductive means of cinema. It will provide the condition of making as the condition of genesis.

Cinema is able to regain a more powerful form, once social media is developed into a device like a thermometer or barometer. Before the thermometer was invented the question of the temperature was as widely debated as gossip is circulating in the social media. The invention of something like 'twittermeter' will replace the obsession with gossiping. Like the thermometer informs the temperature, or the clock informs the time, the twittermeter will inform gossip endlessly. Speaking of the 'temporalization of the consciousness as a result of the industrial developments, one may see that the industrial temporalization may have different effects too. For instance, listening to music or to records famously provides a pleasant mood and associations. But what being swamped into the world of gossip provides

and what kind of feelings are associated with it? I think it may be one of the reasons that art, especially cinema, will become more powerful after subjects will manage to emancipate from their obsessions with the socializing in the social media and to use them for 'correct' reasons. The 'explosion of the social in the media' may in fact shift to new forms of individuation ending up in the refusal of the social as an empty signifier of the ideology.

What is needed to demonstrate is to show not the subject matter in visual terms only, but to expand the field of making by the mechanism which deconstructs, that is to say, explains, to make it clearer or more confusing, more visible or less visible. It may be the text, voice over, sound etc. It may consist of the list made in the alphabetical order, or the combination of the sound, image and text as it is a legitimate basis of the aesthetics of moving images. This basis is very convincing. But what is not convincing is how on this basis to create an overall methodology of mapping and genesis which may expand and to make a room and to let spacing to happen. In fact making art is spacing, installing and extending the thought into its visible space. In this process to show the single object as the image is not sufficient any longer. Since objects are proliferated and they are proliferated as different connotations of the object expressed in images, there is a necessity to demonstrate from which angle the object is shown and to question the level, the depth, the surface in framing and the speed or distancing in temporality. These elements are already a normal state of affairs in cinema; therefore cinema may enrich the further expansion of the field of art that is often used in the art world. As an assemblage of machine and human and as three folded activities of the camera, the printer and the projector, and involving the history of the invention of all these techniques cinema has a lot more to develop. After the termination of fine art as an ideological signifier, the cinema may regain its power and this time having adopted from the experience of contemporary art. Because the historical shift made from the image, imagination and imagery to pure associations made by cinematic means made associations a very basic element of the experience of being-in touch with the world. Being-in-touch in the world is similar to watching films, when neither thinking nor seeing matters and instead there is an act of watching an associative strip of images and falling into the realm of associations.

The realm of associations stands differently to the power of perception. If any perception is the language and then associations form an assemblage. The role of the study of associations is an urgent question. It may be a new philosophy of associations that shows the shift from demiurgy to semiurgy. Retentions and reproductions need to be studied in the light of what is described above. The study of retentions versus reproductions shares a common experience

of the “recorded memory”. Husserl in his famous example of listening to the gramophone that provides retentions and Walter Benjamin’s study of the mechanical reproduction are earliest explanations of how in the age of recording industry memory will be what is recorded. By going back to Plato who insisted that writing destroyed the oral word I would say that after the writing destroyed orality the speech itself became the imitation of writing. At the very limits of graphically imaging words i. e. speech expressed in letters, the imitation is the act of knowing what is destroyed. Imitation is in this sense the instrument of reconstruction of the lost image. This lost image is also the lost materiality of the thought, in other words thought is always articulated in images, but a certain separation of the thought from the image by the pragmatism of the theory/ practice divide ended up in the loss. My own understanding is close to the structuralist account of the difference. The construction of the image as it is a symbolic return of the lost materiality can be called a new materialism.

Two important points should be made here:

1. The crisis of art which is taking place now is often understood through the impact of technologies. I claim that this crisis is taking place because the other art object that is a technical object is not understood/ thought of. The study of temporal objects and their role as the ‘internal time consciousness’ may be a beginning (the intention).
2. Art in the age of the programming industry should be understood by the methodology of ‘grammatisation’, to use Stiegler’s phrase.³ The starting point is that a limit of the grammar which excludes subjects from the language at the same time provides an overabundance of the senses. At the limits of the grammar and the exclusion of the subject from the territory of language that provides an overabundance of the sense of a “consecutive visual movement” which may take to the territory of chronotopology as a new form of grammatisation. At the centre of this movement two orders; alphabetic and visual orders and their distinction in different contexts opens up the perspective for a chronotopology, understanding of images at the point of time-space compression.

A new topologist: the condition of temporal-enclosed objects

A new activity of classification of sciences and different forms of knowledge and technologies is a question again. The main idea of this program is a montage derived from the experience of cinema, because joining together disjoined parts of knowledge will help to create the whole picture. In fact the main idea is not to put things back together but to get this

whole picture after its parts have been disjoined and re-joined with something else and now may be joined together again. These points of joining together are what a new classification should be based upon. The framing of the picture is a topological activity of bringing together missing parts that are not simply missing but found in another area. For instance, today the particular idea crucial to the development of physics may easily be found in let's say a science fiction film, or even in Dostoevsky's work. Once Einstein said that, "Dostoevsky gave me more than Gauss". Sometimes ago I made sketches towards a new science called *Isotopologics*. My aim was specifically directed towards the project of finding out 'the ways for non-fascistic existence', which would consist of a constant re-classification of subjects. AS I already mentioned, the paradigm of the cinema is one of the answers. In the 19th century, when the industrial revolution was in its way, Marx understood this necessity. Marx liked spooky and spectral images.⁴ He was very fond of the phantasmagorical nature of capitalism and spectres of communism and liked to repeat after Shakespeare - Time is out of joint! The accumulation of the capital was speeding up time and Marx was witnessing this. With the industrial development the speed of the change disjoined different periods, which was more linear up to this time. Apart from the breaking up in time it also brought the confusion into the enjoyment. The speed intensified potency and non-linear breaking up of time that made the contingency, throwing of the dice the game of chance the reality.

Disjoinment or the nonlinear development also constitutes such subjective entities as phantasm, memory that is central to everyday existence. It is alienating. This non-linear breaking up takes away the enjoyment and creates a constant crave for playing and gaming. Playing is the condition of a constant reconstruction of the joy and what is disjoint and search for the lost time. Desire, seduction, game and play are defining the late capitalism more precisely than the labour and work relationship. Images of the entertainment are used in order to involve the public in the mass production in both technological and ideological ways. Technologically it is sharing-"available brain time" as it is called in the social media, which encompasses cognitive levels. On the ideological level an example is elections which end in the carnival and hysteria. It is also true of watching TV. Deleuze said that people should be paid for watching TV, because they consume the message of ideology. The users of Facebook don't consume this ideology. They are part and parcel of this ideology. Facebook proletariat!

'Time is out of joint'! It is also the time of disjoinment in history: if history was developing more or less 'straightforwardly', with the industrial revolutions, with the emergence of new ideas, with a new classification of disciplines which included the emergence of new social

sciences, with the prominence of aesthetics as a hegemonic discipline after the thousands of years of hegemony of mathematics, time has received its more fragmented and disseminated condition. The condition of time is trying to find the ways to cope with this dissemination. If Mendeleev's table has emerged in the conjecture of the joining of the end of the 19th century with the 20th and if the science of topology has emerged at this conjecture alongside with many inventions of time that includes, Husserl's phenomenology, Freud's psychoanalysis, Bergson's creative evolution and Cezanne's paintings, which has demonstrated slowing motion in the stillness of his objects it was because points, lines became the main topic of knowledge. With the development of digital cultures the question remains similar however the topic has changed: the topic is now dots and dashes that symbolises a break between the letters of the alphabet and numbers of arithmetic and then becomes lined up again. The new logic of our time is expressed in indices that are using lists in the alphabetic ordering and bits or binary digits: stock market indexes, the information sent and made available in the search engines like Google, hundreds of names from the four corners of the planet that are shown as 'samples' of the 'cool behaviour' in the social media, art projects that serve one-off needs of ideology, are all *temporal-enclosed objects*.

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¹ Abel Gance quoted in Peter Wollen, *Signs and Meaning in Cinema*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1974, p. 56

² Giorgio Agamben, *The time that remains*, Stanford University Press, 2005

³ Bernard Stiegler, *Individuation, hypomnemata and grammatisation*,

http://2nd.moscowbiennale.ru/en/stiegler_report_en/

⁴ This section is based on my talk in the *Playtime* conference at Central St.Martins College of Art and Design, October, 2016