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Understanding objects: A temporal object of culture and zones of meaning

Keywords: essence/non essence, quasi-objects, fuzzy objects, the return inquiry, zones of meaning, direct engagement with objects, inventory, *derushage*

Abstract

In this text I pose the question: what constitutes the object and what kind of *understanding* is possible in the situation when objects are proliferated? I argue that the question of the object is inseparable from the question of understanding. Stereotypically there is a view that science provides an objective point for understanding whereas arts play this role for a subjective point of view. With the proliferation of objects and their multiple understanding neither objectivity nor subjectivity can be an answer any longer. Instead there is understanding of objects as they are fuzzy. This constitutes objects as *quasi-objects* that are in the state of *fuzziness*. This fuzziness of the situation provides the 'return to objects themselves', however this return doesn't provide a direct access to them, as it is stated in some recent work. The proliferation opens up a non-linear trajectory of the 'return', which makes the direct access more problematic and instead it provides the possibility of the *direct engagement* with objects. This trajectory creates an access to *zones of meaning*, which exists as the playground for the formation of meaning/meaningless. I demonstrate that

while understanding takes place in these ‘zones of meaning’, where *quasi-objects* may or may not become meaningful/ /meaninglessness is not the question of subjectivity or objectivity, but constituted by the endless mutation of inventories.

Two questions

First: I accept an argument of recently emerging theories based on the insistence of the immediacy and the direct access to the world. However I argue that any access is an access to objects of the world, but not to the world as an object. There is *the engagement* which directly connects subjects to the world of objects. I also don’t deny the role of meaning in this, because as *quasi-objects* each of them has their role in ‘space-time’.¹ To have an access to each of them or to a group of objects means to have a partial access to the world through these objects, which are at the same time traces of the world. Since meaning is contingent, this contingency provides access to individual objects. The discovery of a meaning also creates the possibility of the *direct engagement* with these objects. If there is an access it is an access to these traces, which I also call images. Images are traces of time and containers of memory as they are recorded in techniques from the alphabetic writing to the ‘twitter’. They are also ‘recorded memory’ or ‘memory – objects’. Second question: objects are fuzzy and in their temporality they open-up a temporary zone where meaning becomes formed. In this zone they exist as ‘things-in themselves’. The existence of objects in the temporary zone of meaning is dependent on the

¹Although language is only one of the possibilities to understand the world, it is also the most productive one, because it is studied much better than any other spheres of expression and for me objects are understood within the realm of language, but not strictly restricted to it.

Accepting images as the realm of language alongside ideas is already transgressing correlationism, which reduces any understanding to the thesis only. Images in their turn are traces.

duration, which signifies the thingness of the object. This duration is also the time of the formation of a temporary meaning.

Two paradigms: the paradigm of ‘identity thinking’ and the paradigm of ‘absolutist thinking’

My theory is based on the understanding of objects as ‘fuzzy’ is connected to the fact that our perception of any object provides associations through words coming to our mind.² Words are always fuzzy, because they are not defined as one thing, but understood in their plural meanings provided by them. However, ‘naming’ the object or giving the name to the object makes an object interesting for us as a meaningful one. It is because the confrontation with the object becomes presentable with the language, but language is formed or developed in time, the endurance of naming is the trajectory of thought. Thought gives the name to the object in its longevity and appearance. Because of this, objects are always temporal. Objects, in fact, may exist independently of our mind, but they become meaningful as soon the mind encounters the object. This encounter is the beginning of the study of the object in the “world-wide historico-philosophical situation” in the teleological sense.³

²I adopted the term ‘fuzzy objects’ from the work of Azeri-American mathematician and computer scientist Lotfi A Zadeh’s concept of fuzzy logic for the object oriented programming. He also contributed to set theory by creating ‘fuzzy sets’. Zadeh, A. Lotfi, *Computing With Word: Principal Concepts and Ideas*,

³ For Derrida, for example, naming and spacing, making a place are connected. Giving the name opens-up a new place like in Plato’s khora. Even as it places and makes possible nothing less than the whole world, khora opens and dislocates, displaces all the categories that govern the production of that world, from naming to gender. "The name: What does one call thus? What does one understand under the name of name? And what occurs when one gives a name? What does one give then? One does not offer a thing, one delivers nothing, and still something comes to be, which comes down to giving that which one does not have, as Plotinus said of the Good. What happens, above all, when it is necessary to sur-name,

Language, consciousness and the self is a triad which works as a device to form and to reform subjects and these are the first assembly, like in the montage, the ‘rough assembly’ in the film, which is waiting for the decision by the director to build up the narrative sequence further. Another name of this technique is *derushage*.⁴ Language, on the one hand, provides questions of freedom or even anarchy: language is a very basic form of freedom and freedom is structured like language. On the other hand language creates rules which restrict this freedom. Freedom itself is based on the principle, so from the start it is about following rules of the principle. Its limits are also its frontiers. It is like in Wittgenstein’s notion of the language, which is about the limits of our languages based on the rules of grammar and its limits excludes subjects. The limits of the rule of principles of freedom is the limit and always in the danger of excluding subjects. However the ‘language game’ persists. This game gives birth to two paradigms. Two paradigms tend to open-up a space; these are the question of identity and the question of the Absolute. They both provide new instances of becoming, since the precise answer is impossible and instead they produce fuzzy objects paradigmatically classified through the question of identity and the Absolute as its goal. These objects or rather relationship of subjects to these objects makes the functioning of the identity and the absolute in subject’s activity possible. Both the question of identity and the question of the Absolute are notions which cannot be fixed since they have no fixed definition, but instead they produce temporal, fuzzy objects that provide possibilities to dwell in them, often, if not usually, without realizing it. It works in this manner until the next paradigm shift. The paradigm shift may include the

renaming where, precisely, the name comes to be found lacking? What makes the proper name into a sort of sur-name, pseudonym, or cryptonym at once singular and singularly untranslatable?" See Derrida, *On the Name*, p.185

⁴*Derushage* is the cinematic term, which in English means ‘rough assembly’. For its role played in the formation of consciousness see: Stiegler, *Technics and Time 3*, p,27

re-invention or even the invention of a new language, with the fuzziness as a choice. For example, in order to find further ways of thinking of democracy, it may be a good idea to put 'democracy' under the erasure. I identify this erasure as it provides a meaning zone, a fuzzy object to open up a space for productivity. Since the term 'democracy' stands as a possible expression of freedom, it has exhausted its sources and became a fuzzy object again and another expression should come to existence, which will emerge from within. To give the name to the activity of freedom differently may shift the terrain. Naming is the beginning, it is an intention, a tool to question 'ends' which creates a paradoxical relationship between the *eidos* and *telos*.

Subject-object, fuzziness as a spatio-temporal element

My understanding of objects is different from objectivity: for objectivity the world is the sum total of different objects, which exists according to the rules of matter. For me, every object in the world (including non-physical ones, for example, the character of Dostoevsky's novel or the element from Mendeleev's periodic table, or the number) has its individual position and provides the meaning accordingly. An object and the physicality are not the same, for an object it may or may not exist physically, whereas all objects are accessible including the fictional ones, because of their worldliness. For example, the fictional character, like Raskolnikov, is the reality of the world of literature. Within this position objects should be understood in their individual and trans-individuated way and alongside their proliferation. Besides, with the proliferation of objects, neither objectivity nor subjectivity is the choice, but in order to understand objects there is the need to 'return to objects themselves', to paraphrase Husserl's sentiment. This return doesn't provide a direct access to them and instead one encounters with fuzzy objects.

Objects are always fuzzy, and understanding of objects is possible because of this quality, rather than their being fixed. A circle, considered as a perfect geometric form, is a fuzzy object; because the circular line divides borders between the inside and the outside and creates the chance for the articulation: inside the circle and outside the circle multiple circles may be made. In this sense, objects reside in the world and the question of their creating an inside-outside relationship or the difference is crucial. In Plato's dialogues the notion of *khora* is explaining how the object becomes understandable through the beginning, the middle and the end and their gathering together, to which I will return later. Just to note here that by simply destroying this rule and instead creating a chaotic structure like in James Joyce's novels is also possible, besides the order and ordering/reordering is at the question here since *khora* allows to re-assemble and to create *a montage*.

First I would like to explain what I mean by the 'fuzziness' of objects. It should be understood in relation to thought, which itself becomes an object once getting in touch with other objects, which creates the 'subject-object' relationship. This gives the form to thought.⁵ Any form given to thought is fuzzy. This fuzziness is a spatio-temporal element of objects that provides the space and time, enabling an object to exist to a certain extent until it changes. For example the "replacement" of printed books for audiobooks and later for electronic books is the result of this 'time-space' configuration which is articulated by fuzziness of thought, which is a content of the book form. It is also important to say that these objects don't destroy each other like in Plato's destruction of the orality by writing, but stand in their difference to each other,

⁵I find the relation between thought and form in Arabic philosophy of the Middle Ages, especially Aristotle oriented philosophy of Avicenna, very convincing.

In the work of Avicenna it is called "*al wugud*", see on this: Barbara Cassion (ed.), *Vocabulary of European Philosophies*, p.42

and continue in a new state of fuzziness, which appears with newer objects. This also makes the question of contingency as a philosophical problem contradictory if to take into account the fact of the world of objects. If objects appear in the world continuously then understanding of objects is a necessary condition of philosophy. Philosophy is an absolute necessity with thought as it is a contrivance and an instrument. It is contingent with its fuzzy objects, such as language, consciousness and the self (the triad I described above) as the devices of thought. Their contingency also challenges the question of subjectivity.

The ‘subject-object’ relationship should be questioned again. The role of meaning, a much debated question, is crucial to my work, not because it “defines” objects, but because of its indeterminacy. Instead of being rejected or accepted, the notion of ‘meaning’ should be understood as *a model* of fuzzy object, the model that also plays an important role in the speech act, as the enunciation. This act is the model of ‘*pre*’ and ‘*over*’ acting, rather than the strict determination. In a speech act of “I am for gay rights”, for instance, it is the political utterance, rather than a personal identity plays the major role and the performative element is crucial. In this statement not the determination of the identity, but the conscious way of acting depending on one’s attitude takes place either as ‘*pre*’-determined or ‘*over*’-determined. Another example: when someone says: “In addition to being an artist I am also an activist” means to deny the possibility to define art as an active moment and automatically create ‘active/ passive’ divide, whereas in the act itself ‘*pre*’ and ‘*over*’ are assumed, since the speech act is emerged as the fuzzy object and more or less defined internal logic externalised not as a definition, but as a model. What is an object for the internal logic becomes a model after the externalisation.⁶

⁶ It also challenges a strict separation between the ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ and almost populist effects brought by this separation, which undermines the fullness of the experience and

Within the philosophical/cultural tendency I understand this question through terms such as ‘articulation’ and ‘conjecture’.⁷ These notions challenge further the absolute direct access to objects, which was first emerged in the early 20th century and re-emerged recently as ‘speculative realism’.⁸ It is ‘as if’ to separate, for example, objects created by artist, from artists, then the world would have become a full of objects speaking for themselves but without a single author. Just to mention: in the object-subject relationship, an artist creates the model of thought by translating the relation between the object and the subject. For the reasons that I disagree with both positions of taking either the side of the subject or an object: I am interested in fuzzy objects.

An example of the fuzzy object

In my own experience of both as an artist and as a philosopher I always face the question: how to make an art object in the situation of the proliferation of images, which provides an imbalance between images and ideas accompanying them? I am inspired by the question of the early conceptual artist Douglas Huebler: “The world is full of objects, more or less interesting; I do not wish to add any more.” My response to this question: if the world is full of objects, instead of adding to them, I create “a list” of objects. It is because objects are fuzzy, not determined. By taking lists as fuzzy objects I create an artwork consisting of ‘inventory- paintings’ and films about the movement of people.

instead provides a choice to stay one-sided. In the ‘theory/ practice’ the division is too artificially made and exhausted itself as a principle.

⁷ The powerful work of cultural theorist Stuart Hall and political theorist Ernesto Laclau should be noticed in relation to these terms.

⁸ At the early 20th century Henrich Wolflin proposed a new art history, ‘history without names’. It is said in the manner of his time thinking: an illusion of immediacy and its possibility for direct access to the world. Some hundred years later ‘speculative realism’ returns to this manner of thinking. See: Henrich Wolflin, *Principles of Art History*

The world, as the list of objects transcribed after coming to the contact partially by subjects, where an artwork is a *transcription*, rather than it is a depiction or a description. Hollis Frampton's film *Zorn's Lemma* is one of the interesting examples of how to address partiality of the world, so to speak, by visualising philosophical theories. Taking its basis from 'set theory' and in particular from the work of Max Zorn, who has created '*set of partial objects*' and influenced by this theory, Frampton's film describes how partially ordered letters of the alphabet reaches their close to but not a maximal level of reference to things, where every totally ordered object has an upper and lower bound.⁹ As such objects never maximally or minimally ordered and their existence depends on the alphabetical order, which is conditioned by the graphic presentation of the voice.

The *list* as a fuzzy object: art as a response to programming and engineering and its use for search engines, such as Google etc. The world of culture known to us is an application to the virtual reality, manifested in indices ordered alphabetically or just a chaotic list of objects. My previous work also consists of philosophical investigations into 'temporal objects', which includes the study of classification as indexing and alphabetic ordering in relation to time, images, new media, language and peoples movement or migrations in a global age. These engagements are part of my visual- philosophical research into the nature of fuzzy objects. This also includes my attempt to find the basis for a *non-essentialist* understanding of objects in their indeterminacy and as they are temporal objects.

In order to make a new inquiry into the understanding of objects I have adopted the theory of 'fuzzy logic' from the work of the American- Azeri computer scientist and mathematician Lutfi A Zadeh and developed it for the

⁹ Max Zorn was a mathematician who contributed to 'set theory' with his lemma, which is known as Zorn's Lemma.

understanding of fuzzy objects. Why objects appear to us in this and not another way and why is access to objects possible in this and not another way? I claim that it is because any object has a quality of the *quasi-object* and therefore in the state of fuzziness. Objects can be temporarily defined by the temporal effects of meaning in one context, however in another context this meaning will also change and shift into another temporal location. It is because objects are in a constant state of alterity and therefore the world inhabited by them is the world of otherness. Instead of being simply determined and fixed they proliferate.

Lists are ideal tools to maintain the connection between different times instead of cutting- off with the past. Lists are challenging the hierarchy and they provide the model for equality similar to Jacques Ranciere's notion of "a part of those who is not part of".¹⁰ Although there is a space of equality, the direct access to this space is depending on the choice made by the juxtaposition of objects. Lists imply a new way of composing, which is not in perspective or prospective; it is the juxtaposition of objects on the line. The list is nor linear neither nonlinear, it is on the line, which defies any hierarchy and provides the possibility to find a balance in order for them to function in cultural terms. In fact with the emergence of new technologies the functioning of the cultural is translated into the digital by making lists consisting of keywords guiding the search leading to new discoveries.

Fuzzy objects: zones of meaning, dissipative structures and temporality

The crucial question of meaning is decided within the space provided by fuzzy objects. These objects are a meaning-free: it depends on the context and it can be given and it may be not given in the same manner. In order to challenge the strict attitude towards this in the paradigm of 'identity thinking' and escape from meaning by the paradigm of 'absolutist thinking' it should be said: there is

¹⁰ Ranciere, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, p.75

no meaning outside of one's head and 'the one' is an object among other objects. The meaning is outside of objects. Fuzzy objects are meaning-free and this provides rediscovery of the meaning in changing contexts, which is not a fixed and determined meaning but a zone, where meaning can be given as included or excluded. This is therefore the question of culture, the dynamics of which is defined by the 'exclusion' or by the 'inclusion'.

I understand culture as a continuous and temporal exchange of fuzzy objects. These objects are not precise. Culture in this way is non-essential and always undermines the essence. One of the views of materialism is that material objects are physical objects and while immaterial objects are not, although after physically coming into existence they may also become physical. The notion of fuzziness undermines this deterministic view, while arguing that the character of Dostoevsky's novel or the location, which was intentionally built for the film by Lars von Trier in order to create fiction, is equally materialistic in the same way as trees or grass. In both ways their full realisation becomes possible with the meaning discovered. While attaining a full meaning (for a time being) objects remain open to influences to come. Depending on technicalities of cultural subjects these influences are accepted differently.

The human is the invention of technics. Humans are the invention of technology. By appropriating techniques that turned the human into a cultural being, techniques in their turn have replaced the human. AI is possible because the human intelligence is already and always artificial, since memory, the source of this intelligence is artificial.¹¹ Technologies, such as AI for instance, may in fact replace the human, but it will not replace the contingent thinking subject. Together with technics, thought has played an important role in the

¹¹ I explain this question in my book, which is the philosophical study of 'cinematic images' and the constitution of the subject and partly a critical study of the work of Bernard Stiegler. See: Azizov, *The Time of the Image*

constitution of subjects. The proliferation of technics provided the multiplicity oriented objectivity. These technics are manifested in the human depending on memory and culture has become merely an application amongst other applications. In this situation culture may be understood as the fuzzy object with the meaning as an exteriorized image of thought. Differently from the problem of 'representation' as well as 'solipsism', meaning can be said that it is an exterior image of thought that is formed and transformed by difference and repetition and constantly challenges the fixity. Once externalised it becomes a matter of culture and enters the *zone of meaning*.

Zones of meaning as sites of contestation

As I already mentioned above, for a while now, philosophy perceives objects in between two extremes: the identity and the Absolute. In relation to the question of identity, where to speak of this question in a deterministic manner no longer is possible and in relation to the question of the Absolute, of which to speak in the same manner as Hegel is not possible because of the persistence of 'multiplicities' theorised by the new very convincing ontology of Deleuze. Both the notion of Absolute and the question of the fixed identity are undermined by questions of 'unconscious', 'non-idea' and similar ideas thrown-up by the recent philosophy. In this plane of nominalism the absence of the precise identity and the absolute are two paradigms, which is the stipulation of the existence, which is true, but a complex existence, because in this situation of frenzy of knowledge to exist means to endlessly improve by discovering new techniques.

Another side of this complexity is the challenge provided by the recent claim of the philosophy of direct access to the world, which puts under erasure the Kantian ontology. It is also true that questions and accordingly principles of

methods prescribed by the Enlightenment philosophy have come to the crisis.¹² It is because this philosophy placed the question of civilization as it is primarily concerned with the ‘instrumental reason’, while creating its alternative that is culture. Culture has addressed itself to the specifics of the realisation of the being and the evolution of the ‘collective- creative- social’ reality, which has sharpened the conflict between the ‘instrumental reason’ and the aesthetic potential of subjects. The problem has been confusing with the denial of the meaning together with the ‘correlationalism’.¹³ Fuzziness of objects indicates the question of “why there is an access to this but not another object and there is only this but not another object?” and put this question in the direction of the meaning. The zone itself is a meaning-free and replaceable internally consistent system, precisely because of the fuzziness that is the characteristic feature of both meaningful and meaningless signs. This means that there is no essential fixed meaning and non- essence is the substantial basis of any object.¹⁴

I address objects in their both *meaningful* and *meaningless* form within the zone of meaning, in which their conflict helps to understand the object fully. I accept that the access to objects is possible, but this access is to the world of fuzziness, but not their complete determination.¹⁵ In other words, objects are not

¹² Three stages of liberation, Reformation, Industrial Revolution and Enlightenment education as a program in crisis and in addition it is not able to respond to demands of globalisation.

¹³ As I mentioned above, Kantian correlationalism is also his political decision, which saw in the Enlightenment a form of encouraging maturity and therefore building a schema which could assist the subject, where the schema is the technique. Technics de-temporalise themselves while being acted and it further de-formalises the reason behind it, which is definitely contingent.

¹⁴ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p.23

¹⁵ I call it “isotopologies” from ‘iso’ and ‘topos’. See: Zeigam Azizov, *Migrasophia (migration+philosophy)*, pp.22-37

expressed in meaningless signs, as Meilassoux puts it, and they are not already meaningful as structuralism puts it, they are in the zone of meanings and in a conflictual state.¹⁶ Fuzziness of objects indicates to the question of ‘why there is an access to this but not another object and there is only this but not another object?’ and put’s this question in the direction of the meaning. The zone itself is meaning-free and replaceable internally consistent system, precisely because of the fuzziness that is the characteristic feature of both meaningful and meaningless signs. This means that there is no essential fixed meaning and *non-essence* is substantial basis of any object.

The conflict of meanings

Each epoch produces its zones of meaning and in their turn these zones provide the possibility for the production of meaningful structures that are dissipative structures giving the way to another epoch. The reason why Marcel Duchamp’s work was possible in the early 20th century and not earlier or later is because the time before and after Duchamp’s work emerged as another zone of meaning..¹⁷ In the same way it is possible to explain the emergence of a particular science or philosophy. An artist or a scientist is the carrier of the meaning provided by the epoch by bringing together missing dimensions and making the grammar, defining the morphology and the syntax of these dissipative structures (not always in the ideal manner!).

Meaning provides a contradictory space, which may be inhabited by the reason on the one hand and by the expression (sensation) on the other. These contradictions may be separated, but not divided completely. They are temporal,

¹⁶ In a long treatment on the meaningless signs Meilassoux ends his thesis by asking, if there is anything that escapes the meaning. See: Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition: A speculative analysis of the meaningless sign

¹⁷ It is also true for all conceptual and formalist approaches in the early 20th century, when philosophy was engaged with the rigorous and strict formal logic oriented systems.

because of the changing conditions of their mutual exchangeability. This exchangeability creates a location of conflicts. This may also be called a zone of conflicts. I claim that before the contact there is a conflict of differences, which is a temporary condition that is not determined or as Deleuze has strikingly shown prior to the identity there is a difference and repetition. The *degree* of indeterminacy is explained by Lutfi A Zadeh's fuzzy logic. This logic is of not being defined because of the fuzziness of the essential qualities and finding its termination or temporary definition as a function only.

Being positioned in the zone of meaning for any object, independently of its being complex or simple, creates an access to the object. However this situation is better defined by the notion of 'fuzziness'. To speak of the 'fuzzy object' means that an object is in a situation of being grasped and any object is grasped in time; the complex ones take longer time and simpler objects take shorter time to be grasped. Lutfi A Zadeh has shown that depending on the degree of complexity the object provides more fuzziness. As a result, what seems to be precise loses meaning and what seems to be meaningful loses precision.

The 'fuzzy logic' indicates that neither identity nor Absolute can be defined as completely true or completely false but can range between their possibility to be understood. The space of possibilities resides in the zone of meaning. Once objects are *in the meaning zone they are accessible*. Their complexity may be understood according to the degree of their fuzziness. Concepts like Beauty, Good and Truth may be very fuzzy objects allowing dwelling in their meaningful strata until being understood in their configuration, precisely because they are not completely defined and not directly accessible. Some notions like God, which is in religious terms defined as the Absolute, are not in this zone of meaning, because its being is not accessible or meaningful, on the other hand the notion of the 'divine' may be accessible as it is used in the

aesthetics, for instance. This fuzziness allows the *direct engagement* with these objects.

The work of Douglas Huebler explains it well. After making a statement on the fullness of the world instead to stop ‘adding to them’ he simply continued his project of taking a photograph of the each person he met and by doing so creating a long visual inventory of objects which in fact is the direct engagement with “giving a form to thought” .¹⁸ Different from objectively accepting or subjectively refusing objects, he has created an on-going access to them appearing to his view by taking photographs and while creating a fiction out of the reality.¹⁹ He created ‘a zone of meaning’, similar to Plato’s *khora*, a place where it is good to think. In this manner of direct engagement with objects and in the place created by them, a zone of meaning is opening -up the perspective, which increases the degree of understanding of objects.

Dissipative structures: “division by limbs”

The conflict between the philosophy of showing the world as it is, which is impossible and to bring the ‘correction’ to the world by articulating temporal objects in their partiality, (which is the possibility of the impossible) is providing the existence of the fuzzy object of the culture. It opens- up a further possibility to articulate dissipative structures by the ‘division by limbs’.²⁰ These

¹⁸ See footnote 6.

¹⁹In 1971, Huebler began "Variable Piece #70 (In Process) Global," for which he proposed his intention “to photographically document the existence of everyone alive.” See:

<https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/artist/douglas-huebler>

²⁰ “‘Division by limbs’ is the reference to Plato’s use of the term for definition. I am also interested in the use of the term ‘angling’ but have no space here to articulate and only refer to them because of the similar attitude made by programmers in the realm of technologies and in general crucial to the question of ‘inventories’. See an interesting analysis of this text: an interesting analysis of this text: Gill, *Division and Definition in Plato*

possibilities themselves are defining points of fuzziness of cultures, because the subject is groundless. There is an infinite task of an on-going project of assembling meanings of objects, of derushage.

We can see the world in temporal objects but we cannot turn the world into them. Temporal objects manifest traces of memory and memory takes place as these traces disappear like in Freud's "*Mystery Writing Pad*". This makes the world partial, yet the 'invisible' part of the world rests in what is 'disappeared'. Kant was right to say that there are 'things-in themselves' that are separated from the phenomena. His error was saying that the 'things-in-themselves' cannot be known, instead of thinking of 'things-in-themselves' as a place where disappeared things may be discovered, where the thought already took place in the form of disappearance. From this minute any other thought takes place out of this place of 'things-in themselves'. The question is of going back to 'things-in-themselves' and combining it with the emerging knowledge. Kant has separated 'things-in themselves' from the phenomena for a time being, but forgot to go back to it later. Since objects are caused by the constant substitution of the object for the thought there is a fuzzy causation. Kant wanted to confirm this by saying that there is "the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me." The 'world as it is' is not comprehensible enough to be part of life, but ethic values are not eternal in the changing world. Any act is acting of '*as if*'.²¹ There is a need to discover 'absent-presence', the impossible essence as it emerges out of this impossibility of acting in other ways. There is a need to discover 'absent-presence', the impossible essence as it emerges out of this impossibility of acting in other ways. The absence of the essence is the default, which is made-up by techniques which pose the question of understanding.

²¹One of the great discussions on this subject see: Vaihinger, *The Philosophy of 'As If'*

The question of understanding is the individual politics and an aesthetic relation of each individual. Compared to 'big politics', which dominates by coordinating the understanding of the world, individual politics have a degree of resistance. To understand is to resist, creating one's position. Galileo's position was an individual politics of understanding. There is such a thing as individual politics which is manifested in the freedom of subject's relation to the big politics. This relation is obviously not accepted because 'the big politics' wants to control individuals. Creative work is, perhaps, the only way to express any kind of freedom, but again any creative form starting from philosophy to art, is contaminated and articulated by 'the big politics'. In this contamination lies the possibility to re-articulate the possibility of the impossible. This is different from the politics of anarchy: anarchism is possible as a personal attitude only and it will never become the state politics.²² However, if this subtle attitude, anarchism, is the discovery of the impossible through ideas then it may also become a creative act. Ideas are anarchistic from the start and their elasticity and flexibility for the contingent development, which makes them tools of freedom. That is what Umberto Eco meant when he said that "lists are anarchistic".²³ Lists are made in order to comprehend the infinite. Lists are good alternatives to artefacts in trying to address our relation to space and time. With the proliferation of artefacts this relation is lost. In the words of Marc Auge," (...) this basis of the symbolic activity that defines the essence of humanity is not possible except by means of artefacts elaborated by industry and available on the market".²⁴ Lists on the other hand don't have any such identity despite their being used in the market and industry constantly. They

²² Anarchy is a choice, but it is an individual choice and even privilege, which cannot become a political force for others. However, 'the political is personal'.

²³ Umberto Eco, <http://www.umbertoeco.com/en/umberto-eco-on-lists.html>

²⁴ Marc Auge, *The Future*, p.7

don't have any internal order, although they may be made into the alphabetical order.

Temporality: the inventory as the condition of the division and difference

Analysing Plato's *khora* Derrida pointed out that the logos is the "wild animal" before it becomes the ordered cosmos.²⁵ All depends on the organisation or even re-organization of the margins of the text which expresses this logic. It is also true that this "wild animal" is still present (as an absent- present) in the ordered cosmos. It is like in the example of the alphabetic ordering: often used for indexes that supplement books and other written materials. Now it is also widely used in electronic writing as the basis of search engines and electronic dictionaries and encyclopaedias.

What is remarkable about this kind of ordering is that the only logical connection is made by the first letters of words that became alphabetically ordered lists, although words themselves may not have any semantic affinities. If even the order addresses a particular subject, a list of things related to just one idea, the order of the list still remains open to be disordered and restructured again. It is easily made by subjects that are aware of the temporality of lists. This temporality or a temporal order is a finite element that works in relation to the infinity. Because it is not possible to reach the infinity, so is the finite element, but for the time being it may be ordered to look like so. But this is also not strictly finite and with the discovery of this finitude a new, infinity oriented thought emerges. It makes the list worldly, since one can find the way to re-order what seems completely fixed and as such to find the connection between the complex technicality of the list and the everyday activity of re-organising things. This worldliness provides the possibility for further spacing.

²⁵ Derrida, *Khora*, , p.163

Spacing may take place in a different manner since the index is the reservoir of memory.

Edmund Husserl in his return 'back to things themselves' coined a methodology of making an inquiry backwards or the return inquiry, step-by-step grasping, in order to grasp and describe rigorously how understanding takes place.

Ruckfrage, in the English translation 'questioning back', elaborates the missing elements of understanding by reconstructing the past. It is different from the nostalgia for the past. It is about being taken to the past and to the future, not in a nostalgic manner and not backwards, but searching in different times tools for 'giving place' and it is the discovery of the missing. What is missing will still be absent, but its discovery in time as temporal objects will extend the life of the question: what is not possible in the impossible?

Jacques Derrida reflecting on Plato's *khora* brings a passage from Plato's *Timaeus*. Timaeus after telling the story which passed to his elders from the wise man in Egypt in order to elaborate the full memory of the story says:

Now all the details of the cause are put side-by side, like the building materials for carpenters, what we have to do is to rebuild out of these details according to our own judgement, but first we return shortly to the departure point and repeat our way up to the point which we just reached and then we will try to make a suitable conclusion to our story.²⁶

By the way of ending his own text Derrida concludes:

Now we will try to give to the end of our story the head of which coincides with the beginning in order to discover the intention that preceded this story.²⁷

In other words it is deconstructed in the manner of changing places of the end with the beginning, because only in this way we can discover the intention of what has come before.

²⁶ Ibid.p.163

²⁷ Derrida, *Dissemination*, p.181

A similar perspective is created by lists too and in this perspective one needs to find the way to freedom. But this freedom is only the freedom of re-discovery or it is the freedom of ‘something’. Freedom is, in this sense, a freedom of something. This ‘something’ is something of the particular, a particular thing, the residual element of the universe. This something is proliferated and multiplied and endlessly turned into lists, sometimes in the alphabetical order and sometimes in a non- order at all. This disturbs and distracts the thinking of the whole. The world doesn’t exist any longer as it is described in books and other sources and we can’t know anything at all. In the index, the world is turned into a list of items, ideas and people. The event of the comprehension of the infinity doesn’t occur any longer and instead there are endless lists that replace the infinity and together with this any form comprehending. If you want to know about the world, make a list! No need to write books or essays; make indexes of characters and ideas instead. Because understanding of the infinity will derive from lists that are residues of the world. The list is a schema and a fuzzy object made out of the residuals of knowledge existing as temporal, fuzzy objects.

These temporal objects are the evidence of the material world capitulated in and through time: everything is a matter, the residues of the time. Matter produces ideas, so there is no division between the matter and the idea. However there are quasi-objects as a result of the formation of materials that can be divided into physical things and ideal things. Ideas in their turn materialised, either by forces of nature, i.e. fossils, stones, mountains and other geo-biological objects or by culture, like letters of the alphabet are materialisation of the voice as an idea. It should also be noted that fuzzy objects also include historical events that took place historically and remain to be grasped by knowledge. So what has been once considered as ‘eternal states’, such as empires, kingdoms or states like the Soviet Union are also temporal objects that existed in history and suspended

their existence but the discourse about them continues in a never-ending manner, which creates the zone of conflict of contradictory meaning formations.

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