The object in motion
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Things, objects, are no longer still. They move, wander, pulsate, whether according to physical laws or not, yet they do so. They are no longer static symbols that exist in function of a superior norm. They are simply allegories, autonomous points that look upon the world from "their point of view". The object has become a mobile form that cannot be fully captured. When we perceive it, we look upon it and see it blurred, as if a digital "morphine" effect, like it was said yesterday. Or better yet, like when we take a snapshot of a racing car speeding past: we sense the car, we know it is a car, yet its form is distorted, fleeing forward. We need a high-sensivity film. We need some device to approach reality.

This is, in short, the starting point for the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze to analyze with particular subtlety this question of the transformation of the relations between object and subject in our age, though always with an eye on Leibniz, the Baroque and the birth of the mathematical thinking. He came to ironically re-propose a new terminology, coming from the studies of Bernard Cache. The new object would be an *objetil*, an object projectile, phantom-like, fugitive. The subject that adapts to the new situation would be a "super-ject", a super subject to the degree that it must be prepared for brusque shifts in speed and direction, according to the interest of whoever guides it. The objectile recalls the Baroque world but also our own, "when the fluctuation of the norm substitutes the permanence of a law, when the object is situated in continuous variation".

It is indeed intriguing to observe how the twentieth century has shown to what degree the thinkers of the 17th century established the idea of the world we now contemplate. The investigations that were carried out on the atom are extraordinarily revelatory in this sense. Strictly speaking, noone has seen an atom, as it cannot be seen. As Werner Heisenberg showed long time ago, when we try to illuminate an atom with a photon in order to observe it, the atom automatically is displaced; it begins to move, not allowing it to be seen still. The existence of the atom is indicated by deduction, after the observation of certain parallel phenomena. The essence itself of matter is invisible for us, as we cannot completely capture

it. And was it not Leibniz who said that we can only have perceptions of things, but not complete images of them?

For its part, the transformation of the object refers to a correlative transformation of the subject. The subject, the super-ject (term that Deleuze borrows from Alfred Whitehead), is structured in respect to its point of view. The point of view, says Deleuze in *Le pli* (or *The Fold*), "is not exactly a point, but a place, a position, a site, a "lineal focus". It is called a point of view to the degree that it represents variation. This is the foundation of perspectivism. The subject is whatever reaches the point of view, or is more or less installed in the point of view. The point of view does not vary with the subject; it is the condition for which an eventual subject might grasp a variation (metamorphosis); or, something equals X (anamorphosis). . . . It is not a variation of truth according to the subject, but the conditon for the truth of a variation to be presented to the subject. This is precisely the same idea as Baroque perspective".

This circumstantial conjunction that the subject discovers in its desire to capture objective visions of things which are in constant movement, brings with it a new picture in the relations with the world. The necessity of the Baroque to identify a mobile universe, to actively participate in velocity (as the only possibility to begin to define what cannot be seen) generates the spectacle, the notion of the necessity of participation for whoever wishes to share in the world.

If the object that we are trying to see is no longer there, in a certain and well-defined position, how can we know where it is? The projection of desire shifted to a new status: from the visual acknowledge of the desired object to the non-visuality of it. It doesn't mean that the object is not there, it's simply that we can't see it easily; or even better, that the object, although it's there, it's never the same, because our appreciation of it depends on its position.

Andrea Wollensak has passed to me an interesting note by Marcos Novak which fits here: "Entities will behave as "ghosts", passing through each other freely and interacting on the basis of a list of operations vaguely reminiscent of their real-world analogues. As we become acclemated to this new ecosystem, our nostalgic desire for the vestiges of realworld physics will for the most part disappear. We will adjust to cyberspace far more easily than cyberspace will adjust to us".

All this stuff leads to the Leibnizian idea that the body is a necessity and that the body is a room without windows, so any approach to reality has to

be done through an allegorical exercise, just thinking that there's no wall there, although it exists physically.

Leibniz and others invented the digital language. And digital objects accomplish what Leibniz said about the body: the body is a necessity for the being, cos it's the only strategy for the others to know where you are; the digital world are representational constructions, façades, that are necessary to locate the real things, things that are no longer still. But Leibniz also pointed that mobility makes the bodies change so we gotta have a good wardrobe to be ready for all the shifts and sudden movements. Digital language's façade provides us with an amazing capacity to build these strategies: such a capacity that we ourselves are strategic devices, always ready to be at the right spot in order to catch the image of the thing. Our digital bodies are exactly what a dummy is in relation to the ventriloquist. At the prize o gaining, depending on everyone, to lose the window through where we shown up towards the world. A body without windows which has to reinvent itself once and another.

So we are living strategies. The cyborg, today, represents the subject equipped with the necessary devices to be able to relate with a speedy world; devices that enlarge our senses in front of a reality that demands from us a very accurate and high-skilled training. Our relationship with the world seems for many the task of secribing it with total precision. As if we were at the Enlightment Age. This description or hyperindex is based on the location, identification and actual visual contact of the object.

All cyborgs' vision devices that we can see in films (like the alien Predator, for example) are addressed to detect more than to see. The vision becomes a sort of surveillance job of the things that are in movement. Then, a digital processor will put together the information and will establish the proper decision for the subject to take. Cyborgs, Leibniz thought were searching for the chord, for the poliphony that makes the decision the best for you to take it.

Objects are in motion, nowadays in the hyperspace, and we build up mechanisms to be able to be in touch with them: Optical Fiber, laser, light photons going faster than we can think. They help us to represent the world, and they help us to represent ourselves in the world. But, how can we represent them? How to represent the motion, the desire itself?

The mobility of the object is directly related with the end of desire as we have known it to date. As Leibniz pointed out, desire is no longer

addressed to an external object; the object is just inside us so we have to find the "chord", a meeting point with the world that is out there. We have to appeal to allegories –that's to say, to hire signs and make deals with them– in order to target the object of our desire. We can be succesful or not, but it won't be the fault of the world but our own fault for not to be able to make the right connection. Very christian, indeed. And something, besides, very useful if someone wants to use it as an argument for punishing you.

Desire in the age of the blurred object and mobile subject is run by the idea of the strategy, of the performance, of costumes that fit perfectly in any different occasion. We have bodies that have no windows. Today's digital and computer culture renews this metaphor. No windows to see outside, cos the outside is blurred, cos there's no established self. So we need to set strategies, screens to represent ourselves and to capt the attention of the object for it to stop for a while. Then, we possess it, as a fetish, cos the object in front of us only represents a certain point of view that we presume ours. The possession of an image is a fetish because this image doesn't represent its actual reality; it's like a trophee in our wall; like an elk's head above the fireplace, which was killed just in the moment that it stopped.

Living in a world of speed recalls the adventures of my dear Coyote and the fucking Roadrunner. The poor Coyote inventing all kinds of tricks and traps to catch the pedantic and blurry ostrich. But never gets him, never. Mic, mic, only the sound is recognisible; the trap fails and the coyote falls down in the precipice during 10 long seconds until we see a little cloud of dust at the bottom. He's crashed. I remember how the creators of this cartoon were fucking me up every saturday evening. The impossibility of getting the desired object frustrated me and the only thing I wanted was the bloody death of the nasty bird. My desire wasn't ever accomplished and finally it became, I presume now, the pleasure in watching it: desire was always defeated.

But I also remember that maybe the first vision I had of a cyborg was my friend the Coyote. Equipped and armed with all kind of devices, engines, rockets, special automatic body extensions, special glasses, amazing vehicles, ACME products, etc, the Coyote got ready to face a reality that was faster than him. The Coyote was a fabulous living metamorphosis, but never ate roadrunner, which was the thing he'd have liked the most in the world.

A blurr world puts into question, and we have to congratulate ourselves for that, the notion of body and identity. It is hardly surprising then, that the most interesting analyses of modern personality are to be found in discourses which try to dismantle the concept of stability, as a category centered on *balance,* and on the articulation of an entity which is always representable. Deleuze and Guattari have opened new channels of investigation in this regard. In their work, schizophrenia, the sum of different personalities, is not only an (undeniably brutal) illness or biological state, but also a potentially liberating psychic condition that is produced within a framework of capitalist social structures. The State is constantly trying to neutralise its destructive potential by means of a continuous codification of its flux. For Deleuze and Guattari the schizophrenic subject has the possibility of emancipating itself from modernity's normalised subjectivities. A subject which is basically contradictory, even its very formulation of itself. Contradiction, then, is not an effect of a schizoid situation, but is the reason for which the subject not only has a single reasoning process, but also has many at the same time, and all of them legitimate given that each and every choice responds to a specific type of genre. "Schizoanalysis opposes the plethora of mechanisms, discourses, institutions, specialists and authorities that block the flows of the unconscious. Deleuze and Guattari refer to the deterritorialised body as the 'body-without-organs'. The 'body-without-organs' is not an organless body but a body without "organisation", a body that breaks free from its socially articulated, disciplined, semioticised, and subjectified state (as an 'organism'), to become disarticulated, dismantled, and deterritorialised, and hence able to be reconstituted in new ways. The question would be then: why to reconstitute it again? This could be a potential reading of a critical cyborg: "The nomadic, the rhizomatic, the schizophrenic are fragmented, libidinal bodies, which seek to smash identity based on representation. They have no window, Leibniz would insist. Whereas psychoanalysis is based on the capacity of the individual to give himself a common name by means of integrating himself into the general flux of behavioural cause and effect, generating neurosis, schizoanalysis "opens the lines of the movement of desire far from socially-imposed hierarchical forms". In this regard, revolutionary men and women are those who instead of creating discourses which are opposed to power, refuse to reproduce themselves, to territorialise themselves, something which directly threatens the capitalist social order, which follows the guideline of "one man, one space, one index". Leibniz got almost crazy because he guessed that identity was a fucking boring thing, cos noone could never explain it. And he got crazy cos he couldn't say it. If he would have done it, he would have denied the very existence of God.

Leibniz didn't talk about a symbolic world, where the object, once is seen, is dead. He talked about an allegorical world, where the object, once is seen, shows only a side of it, our own side. Leibniz thought of a world of interactivity, because one touches the object to see how he himself is touching it. The spectacle thinks of a world of interpassivity, where one touches the object to possess it and thus killing it, so the object becomes a well-shaped item, blank of content. The promise is that we, the spectators, are going to be able to fill it with our own meaning.

The slow-motion mechanism reflects to a very interesting extent this necessity of building up something able to frame and locate the world and the moving objects in it. In reality, the vision of the cyborg is devoted to dissect and penetrate what is hidden in the present; its way of looking at the world is a sort of hyperspeed slow-motion. That's the fundamental of the digital gaze. Slow-motion controls the way we perceive time and therefore is able to establish the potentiality of desire. That's because slow-motion is about controling the perception of the end, of death. The destiny of the narration is handled for not having any importance. Slow-motion denies death.

Actually, was George Melies the one who tried for the first time the slow-motion technique. And it's not unworthy to think about the relationships between the main technique in cinema, elipsis, and the slow-motion, because both have to do with the idea of how depicting time when space is not available, because it's in motion.

Let's imagine ourselves watching in TV a basquetball match. Michael Jordan is shooting the ball. Two seconds later, the ball will touch the backboard and the ball will go in or maybe out. Easy. Two seconds that are simply two real seconds in live audience's mind. But, in the sport news, we'll see these two seconds enlenghted up to a minute or more. The slow-motion reproduction of the shot, of the ball flying over the players' heads, of the public getting up slowly from their seats, close-ups to the public's faces, opening their mouths with excitement... Slow-motion allow us to unveil the whole momentum, to frame it in order to make it narrative. Slow-motion narrates our desire of getting the picture of the world. But, to construct a 1 minute of slow-motion means to have a script. Who makes it? To what extent is that reproduction of time the real one? Who establishes the story? Slow-motion is the most amazing way to frame death. We know that the ball shot by Jordan has only two chances in this story: to go in or to go out. Like death, the outcome of Jordan's action is perfectly known. The question is to show it as if the end wouldn't have any importance. Slow-motion constructs the world around this self-evidence:

it's not important if the ball went in or out. It's just the cosmos around that it's depicted. The spectacle is perhaps based on this: how to create something from nothing; how to stop reality and reconstruct it for it to be good, desirable, consumed, devoured.

Let's think in Sam Peckimpah's films. He's been considered the master of the slow-motion technique. Everytime that someone is gonna die, Peckimpah shows him falling down slowly, the smoke in the gun, etc. The slow-motion death is directly related to the compulsive desire of catching the real movements of the body, every detail that may help us to establish the overall meaning of things. We surveille. Death is not the main thing in Peckimpah's takes. The real reason for slow-motion is to runsack how death happens. In this sense, evidently, we are talking about an erotic death. Death in Peckimpah's films is something extremely beautiful: both the filmmaker and the viewer enjoy death because it doesn't happen in a sudden: we got time enough to see the process and construct a narration of it.

General Schwarzkopf understood it perfectly. He doesn't like Leibniz. He showed us a few pictures of a speedy war. Death wasn't there, just images/symbols of war that had nothing to do with real death, but with desire. Desire for consuming death, in slow-motion, canned death. Simulated-like Cyborg visions of war and desire, a gaze for surveillance, for institutional surviving, devoted to control and no longer to see.

Like a cyber version of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, that sees everything but never is seen, Predator, the bad-looking alien carried a tekky system that made him invisible. He could become blurred all in a sudden. But the very beast itself also had body appliances and a vision system provided with complex identification analysis, able to operate in different contexts. It sounds like the perfect definition for the posmodern institutions, doesn't it? But also, for the subject itself.

The obvious velocity of things runs parallel to our own velocity as things or signs that we are. The world is an infinite universe of different systems and we have to be able to translate them. We need to be technologies ourselves. But, which system must I use to get in touch with them? The desire of an universal code is the essence of institutional control, cos it's the legitimacy which to appeal to when implementing the surveilling policies: the common good.

The construction of the new techno-body with the purpose of finding a new identity is exactly the goal of many in the cybercommunity and in the institutions. Why to be one when I feel like 100? it occurs to me.