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AND

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"AND is of course diversity, multiplicity, the destruction of identities. [...] But diversity and multiplicity are nothing to do with aesthetic wholes [...] or dialectical schemas [...] When Godard says everything has two parts, that in a day there's morning *and* evening, he's not saying it's one or the other, or that one becomes the other, becomes two. Because multiplicity is never in the terms, however many, nor in all the terms together, the whole. Multiplicity is precisely in the 'and', which is different in nature from elementary components and collections of them."
(Gilles Deleuze)[1]

Here

In her excellent essay on the "Articulation of Protest"[2], Hito Steyerl discussed specifically this articulation at two levels: on the one hand at the level of symbols, in other words as the verbalization and depiction of political protest, but on the other hand also as the internal organization and structuring of the movement. She describes both levels as montages, compositions in the form of inclusions and exclusions based on content, of priorities and blind spots. She specifically analyzes these blind spots

in the case of the Indymedia production *Showdown in Seattle*[3], which was shot and edited while the protests against the WTO in Seattle 1999 were still going on. As Steyerl points out, both the manner of production and the results paradoxically correspond to the chain of production of the corporate media they criticize, the myth of information in the mainstream media correlates with that of counterinformation from Indymedia. And what comes out is "the voice of the people", a sum of voices "that sometimes radically contradict one another, such as those from environmentalists and unions, different minorities, feminist groups, etc."[4]

It is undoubtedly a recurring challenge in the representation of movements and protest forms, to neither capture and thus halt the flowing heterogeneity in filmic representation, nor to disguise their contradictions as pseudo-synergetic addition. Hito Steyerl rightly criticizes the naive stance of the pioneers of the globalization-critical protests and the beginnings of media activism with Indymedia. In the comparison of the two-and-a-half-hour Seattle documentary and the self-critical (as well as self-satisfied, for my taste) strategy of Godard and Mieville in *Ici et ailleurs* (1974), Steyerl asks whether the addition of the AND is not completely blind and thus more a process of subtraction, in which contradictions and oppositions are not at all communicated, but are instead mutually exclusive.

Here, however, distinctions need to be made. First of all, a distinction between political movement and moving pictures: what Steyerl presents as being sophisticatedly interwoven, the montage of film and the montage of the movement, does not work in quite such an analog way as it seems. To the extent that heterogeneity as unbroken counter-information insists on an oppositional truth, there is indeed a danger of homogenizing this heterogeneity in its film representation, generating a filmic totality that results in

effects similar to those of the criticized spectacle machine despite the contrary intention. In relation to the activist Indymedia example from Seattle, however, it should also be mentioned at another level that the counter-hegemonic images of resistance and revolt cannot be dismissed with a fundamental critique, simply because to cineasts they seem "not reflected enough". The production of images of protest, which is necessarily as spontaneous as it is precarious, is a form that generates specific and structurally conditioned problems just as much – albeit in a completely different way – as the auteur film, regardless of how reflected and aesthetically sophisticated it may be. Steyerl's critique is accordingly to be made constructively useful to promote a further development of media activist practices. In the artificial *Here* of the media activist montage, there is no way out of the logic of the addition of images, only the best possible forms of self-criticism and reflection on the problem.

There

There, with the concatenation of the movement, it is at best a matter of a flow, where there is nothing to assemble and therefore nothing to add. Just as the Deleuzian AND sweeps all relations along with it, here it is not a matter of arbitrary addition (or subtraction) either, but rather a movement, of which the components can only ex post be depicted as such. It is only at the levels of organization and representation that Hito Steyerl's question can be raised of what it means "if nationalists, protectionists, anti-Semites, conspiracy theorists, Nazis, religious groups and reactionaries all line up in the chain of equivalencies with no problem at anti-globalization demos"[5]. It is not that I want to level this evident problem of most contemporary protests,

but the question of a possible exclusion of certain positions and, even before that, of the communication of contradictions only arises within the fixed framework of a dialectical method intended to relate the existing elements of the movement to one another, but not in the Deleuzian idea of concatenation. The fact that someone may march along with or without a (revolutionary or reactionary) placard in a demo, does not necessarily have to do with that which Deleuze calls becoming revolutionary.

Deleuze's philosophy attempts to counter the EST (French for <is> as a placeholder for <being>) with an ET (French for <and> as an indication of a <becoming>), and this is not a philosophical game – let alone a mathematical one – but rather a concept intended to replace the logic of identity and representation with an interplay of difference and repetition. "AND is neither one thing nor the other, it's always in-between, between two things; it's the borderline, there's always a border, a line of flight or flow, only we don't see it, because it's the least perceptible of things. And yet it's along this line of flight that things come to pass, becomings evolve, revolutions take shape."[6]

On the other hand: the irregularity of movement and mass, the lack of explicit and harmonized political demands, contradictions that are not and cannot be suspended, these are not only the ingredients of spontaneous political movements, but also the foundation of a long refined technique for denying these movements primarily their legitimacy and their seriousness.[7] The shapeless and formless masses has been a component of reactionary propaganda for centuries: the chaotically anarchistic was as much a subject of theoretical polemic aggression in Hegel's interpretation of the French revolution as with the many bourgeois and also dogmatically Marxist authors, who labeled the Paris Commune as the *baiting crowd* – to use Elias Canetti's term here, who was one of

the few to counter this negative concept of the crowd with a positive concept.

Describing the crowd less as a baiting crowd than as flow and lines of flight, less as *formless* than as noncon*form*ist, means not threatening the war machine with reterritorialization, not allowing it to become an instrument of the state apparatus and simultaneously welcoming the wildness of its deterritorialization[8]. Here it cannot be a matter of an "unproblematic addition of political desire"[9]. At the same time, though, we must give up a thinking that presupposes a foundational and fundamental meaning of movements that conjoins all their parts into an identity, thus also making them coherent.[10]

Everywhere

"To lead a better life I need my home to be HERE ..." Thus begins the musically wonderful Beatles song entitled "Here, There and Everywhere" with an unfortunate tendency to be a hymn to reterritorialization. The complete opposite of the totalizing <everywhere> in the lyrics and title of the song is Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt's <in every place>: Empire can be attacked *everywhere*, in *every place*. This is one of the strongest statements in "Empire": that there does not need to be a horizontal concatenation of the battles, in order to attack Empire. On the contrary: if the mechanisms of power function without a center and without central control, then it must also be possible to attack them from every place, from every local context. "If there is no longer a place that can be recognized as outside, we must be against in every place."[11] In *Thousand Plateaus*, with the *smooth space*

(that is always in danger of being turned into a striated space by the state apparatus), Deleuze and Guattari provided the theoretical foundation for these kinds of considerations: "[...] the coupling of the place and the absolute is achieved not in a centered, oriented globalization or universalization but in an infinite succession of local operations."[12] The smooth space is simultaneously local and yet not bounded. In this way the attack of the war machine on the state apparatus becomes possible from every local position.[13]

The dichotomy of the real and its representation or of the political movement and its depiction is broken down here with the promotion of a different paradigm. Instead of the paradigm of representation in striated space, the paradigm of occurrence and diversity unfolds in smooth space. Here the images, signs and statements do not function to represent the world, but rather to let the world take place. Specifically in the context of Seattle 1999 that Hito Steyerl discusses, Maurizio Lazzarato emphasizes the strategic role of images, signs and statements: "they contribute to allowing the possible to emerge, and they contribute to its realization."[14] It is not as the solution to the problem (not even the problem of the addition of contradictions), but rather as opening up what is possible, that the framework of signs takes effect. For instance, through the invention and statement of the slogan "another world is possible", the possibility of another world is opened up and also becomes, to a certain extent, reality. In this context, *Showdown in Seattle* also becomes a line in the event that is actualized in the concatenation of bodies, but also of slogans, of internet communication, of images and statements of the Indymedia video.

[1] Gilles Deleuze, Three Questions on *Six Times Two*, in: Deleuze, Negotiations, New York 1995, p.44

[2] http://eipcp.net/transversal/0303/steyerl/en

[3] http://www.whisperedmedia.org/showdown.html

[4] http://eipcp.net/transversal/0303/steyerl/en

[5] http://eipcp.net/transversal/0303/steyerl/en

[6] Gilles Deleuze, Three Questions on *Six Times Two*, in: Deleuze, Negotiations, New York 1995, p.45

[7] cf. Klaus Neundlinger, Einübung ins Aufbegehren. Ein Beitrag zur Materialgeschichte des Glases, Vienna: Turia+Kant 2004

[8] cf. Raunig, http://www.eipcp.net/diskurs/d06/text/raunig_massen.html

[9] http://eipcp.net/transversal/0303/steyerl/en

[10] cf. Klaus Neundlinger, Einübung ins Aufbegehren. Ein Beitrag zur Materialgeschichte des Glases, Vienna: Turia+Kant 2004

[11] Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri, Empire, Cambridge/London 2000, p.211

[12] Gilles Deleuze / Félix Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, London/New York 1988, p.383

[13] See also the critical comments in Raunig http://eipcp.net/transversal/0902/raunig/en

[14] http://eipcp.net/transversal/1003/fr/en