

*A machinic assemblage, through its diverse components, extracts its consistency by crossing ontological thresholds, non-linear thresholds of irreversibility, ontological and phylogenetic thresholds, creative thresholds of heterogenesis and autopoiesis. The notion of scale needs to be expanded to consider fractal symmetries in ontological terms... What fractal machines traverse are substantial scales. They traverse them in engendering them. But, and this should be noted, the existential coordinates that they 'invent' were always already there... we need to rediscover a manner of being of Being — before, after, here and everywhere else — without being, however, identical to itself; a processual, polyphonic Being singularisable by infinitely complexifiable textures, according to the infinite speeds which animate its virtual compositions. - Felix Guattari, Chaosmosis*

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Where can we find an abstract machine? But they have no single position in space: only a series of instructions, for plugging other machines together.

1

They come in swarms: a family relation between machines, a family of spaces for operation. The operation is survival: using energy creatively to intensify and prolong function.

1.1

Specifically and generally, machines transform energy; similarly, formal transitivity is the source of the abstract machines' genetic relation.

1.2

Abstract machines can themselves be divided into equivalent classes of sub-species which are all isomorphic to one another.

1.3

But the most fundamental family of machine, the one to which all the species belong, is the abstract machine, or simple agent.

2

A machine is a libidinal, alchemical abstraction made concrete, where the abstract machine is distinguished by its formality.

2.1

An abstract machine embodies a purely discursive distinction. It is a shift in viewpoint, a transgression of a limit up to a complete transference of energy. A pure transformation of lead into gold without waste or remainder.

2.2

The abstract machine is incorporeal, because it operates between within and without, by distinguishing within from without.

3

The ontological question is entirely the question of the appropriate schema for this strangely mixed topology, the logic of discrete abstract space.

3.1

The abstract machine arranges distinctions. It is a thought gloriously vanquished by its own triumph.

3.2

The machine is not only noise, but relation: it moves and eats. The machine coordinates spaces to transform energy; the abstract machine distinguishes species from the spaces it operates over, evolving new paths over the energy fields it transforms.

3.3

A war machine on the outside, a state machine on the inside. And an abstract machine within both.

4

The abstract machine opens the ontological question by reorganizing the space.

4.1

Technology is not equivalent to the abstract machine. We never produce without becoming: what matters is, as always, whether the machine works, or even, how the machines break down.

4.2

Technology marks time today, and perhaps even tomorrow. It seems there will always be the need for new machines which bond instead of break, which liberate time from the cage of repetition, which inspire our thoughts, which motivate our actions and stir our beliefs beyond any limits we knew were possible. The abstract machine — is hope.

5

The abstract machine is a symbol which symbolizes the act of making a symbol: it is a count.

5.1

The terrifying importance of the abstract machine is of course political. But the machine is the overman: are we afraid to say it?

5.2

By transposing a tangled hierarchy of intensities, the abstract machine can create a new agency, it can breathe life into a new social excitation, it can exploit secret well-springs of desire, it can even motivate the unconscious group subjectivity towards higher goals in a controlled but effective way.

5.3

God is dead only because we needed better machines — healthier machines.

6

What are we but dividers and re-combiners of genetic flows? What is thought, what even is life, but a self-organizing machine which distinguishes spaces?

6.1

A rule transformed of obscurity into clarity. It is the symbol or signifier, an absolute image.

6.2

A trial always follows retroactively from a ruling, our first key to the curiously machinic logic of decision-making. A sensitive machine, with a head possessed of a sequence of complex probes, is able to stand up and face the problem.

6.3

To judge is to not fail to distinguish between minimally different spaces, to sediment one's perspective into a fundamental rule. Thus justice insofar as it applies to rendering verdicts is always negative, even if the ruling is innocence/made innocently.

6.4

Trials always begin with the mapping of the interconnected series of spaces, with a customary presentation of the divergent viewpoints on the behavior. But in reality all we have is a noisy crowd all shouting their impressions at once — until the judge must finally shout: silence! For unless there opens up a space in the crowd for the marking of privilege of one set over another set, the mapping, and therefore, the trial, cannot even begin.

6.5

In fact, the rule must be in place before a mapping of the spaces can even occur.

7

There are three distinct aspects of the abstract machine which we can describe qualitatively. First, it provides a mapping between an interconnected sequence of spaces. Second, it marks the privilege of one set over another set in these transactions. Third, it uses these distinctions as new models to create an arbitrary number of new problem spaces including its own.

7.1

We can imagine a swarm of agents populated over an open problem space. The agents live in the space: their outside is another agent's inside. This fractal recursivity allows the creation of potentially limitless interfaces between various species of problem-spaces.

7.2

A well-selected sequence of transactions arises evolutionary, not by chance. Paths encode distinctions on a field, maps encode fields onto distinctions.

7.3

Abstract machines trace new maps, experiment with new paths. Algorithms embody formal distinctions (of complexity-family); in other words, abstract machines compute new interfaces from genetic operations.

