



In the elaboration of a critique of references—formulated in the spirit of criticality (Rogoff, 2003) to hatch new repertoires—my angle is that the concept of ‘problem’ is a bad idea. It is bad in the same sense that aspects of problems are always in excess, unsolvable and in the sense “wicked”.

An aspect of the badness of this idea becomes externalised in a certain practice of referencing: using references as coin—in the exact sense that money is used as a token of trust—to boost the sense that the inquiry is going somewhere. Which is not in the aspect of problems that are wicked.

By ‘wicked problem’ I mean a problem that is such that trying too hard to solve it, adds to the problem. Not trying enough adds to the problem. Which means that one has to have extreme talent—or, luck—and his bull’s eye, and moreover achieve something which beyond the scope of solutions: exhaustiveness.

The result is what we see on several fronts: problem driven [artistic] research anticipating and postponing a solution indeterminately [as a kind of ‘final solution’]. An alternative to this cultural plight of distress is the **situationist** venue: that problems—especially “wicked” ones—transpose unto situations.

Situations are not only contingent—in the sense that they comprise found, negotiated and unknown elements—but matrixial: complex entities in which references can be of key importance, not to solve (or, postpone) a problem, but to **define the situation**, and thereby hatch the ability to act.

Here the difference is between acting/not. Acting will not solve anything, but it will move or transform the situation. It is an aesthetic-epistemic operator.



What I want to address here is **not** the idea of parallelism between thought and sensoriality—as previously—but the notion that the transposition of the senses to the transcendental, in counter-point to abstract thought, that resists representation, constitutes a **problem**. A problem always **invents** prostheses.

That is, it always creates **prosthetic** results proposing to solve the problem: human **add-ons** in terms of new knowledge, mediations, instruments and tools. The problem is **not only** a puzzle-like construct, but also a **lack** of something—that is being summoned—and a **solution** completes that lack.

Of course, **never** completely. There is always an **excess** of any problem which is not solved, which often revealed and stated as philosophical problems. Like the difference between practice and thought, good sense and common sense, which is then thematised—rather than solved—as a problematic relation.

For instance, by Deleuze (1969) in the **Logic of Sense** (featuring an analysis of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*). What is typical of Deleuze, in my reading, is that he uses so-called “wicked problems”—problems without solutions—as hatching grounds for his **great number** of ‘good ideas’.

The good idea, in this particular work (*The Logic of Sense*), is to consider the two leanings of ‘sense’—sensing and sense-making—as though they unfolded in something flat, or the same surface. That is, they are somehow contained without being solved. A good idea since the problem is wicked.

Another such good idea is one he is early to present in *Difference and Repetition*, at about the same time (1968). The idea that we engage with repetition with the notion that it will eventually yield something unique. It is an idea that we find in alchemy (Bourriaud, 2009) and all performing arts.

In this way of reading and referring to Deleuze we are opting for harvesting his models—of which we can gain depth and life by reading Deleuze—rather than an exegesis. I remember seeing Sylvie Guillem with the Kirov ballet at the Palais de Congrès/Paris: she articulated in **360°**, the ensemble **frontally**.

It is the same with Deleuze: his ideas are somehow cinematographic, and his performance somehow choreographic. His understandings of his topics are somehow folded into his philosophical practice. Maybe this is one reason why he has been so popular in the art-field. So, this is one way of referring to him.

In some sense, it is an unproblematic way of referring to Deleuze. His good ideas are more like **models** than theories. Of course, one can be interested in completely different aspects of Deleuze. But this is my interest. It is his talent in transposing problems into situations, and thereby deconstructing them.

It is not like Derrida. Because Derrida is problem-driven. In my basket of references this brings us to Immanuel Wallerstein's problem-**critique**: the key to interdisciplinarity (pace Fernand Braudel). He claims that problem-driven research has not produced interdisciplinarity but has **walled** the disciplines.