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PROJECT SPINOZA: RE/MEMBERING SENSORIAL COGENCY - (Part two)

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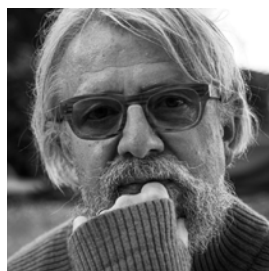ARTICLE

PROJECT SPINOZA: RE/MEMBERING SENSORIAL COGENCY

PRESENTATION OF A PORTFOLIO AND PROPOSAL OF AN ANTHROPONOMIC REFRAMING OF FIELD-RECORDS

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PART TWO

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PROJECT SPINOZA: RE/MEMBERING SENSORIAL COGENCY

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to present a research portfolio – composed of an online archive and an index from 2020-22 – and perform its outcomes in a *memory-theatre*.

The *design* needed for this theatre is modelled on Baruch Spinoza's *Ethica*, in which the order of a geometrical demonstration *hosts* a philosophical investigation. The non-same rules/ heteronomy of the host and the *guest*, in Spinoza's opus magnum, is an instance of a wider phenomenon which the article seeks to explore and exploit: the *docking* of an investigation, by the means of a contraption that is foreign to it, intercepting images of what the present may have in store (whether past, present, or future). The sensorial cogency that picks up on elements it can comprehend, but never fully contain: the mnemonic slippery nature of the image. On this backdrop, the article discusses different ways of pairing up with the environment, through media that are hosted rather than belonging there: the different terms of populating the present, being together or forming a group, serve to elucidate certain aspects of memory – mnemonic devices with an environmental footprint – in fieldwork, laboratory research, digital culture or presently the electrosphere.

The article thereby seeks to develop and propose some designs to work with the problem of interception – picking up changes in the 'memory of the present' (Bergson, 2021): what it holds and what it has in store. The article seeks to establish a parity between apparatuses with such impact, in view of comparing them: whether they are as simple as **1)** a post in a hole (a datum), or more complex as **2)** a computer docked to a home-office (another *datum*).

In the presentation of the portfolio, a framework for partaking of such changes, compiling the experience prompted by them, is proposed (Benjamin, 1999). The major feature of this framework is then deepened in a situated *case-study*: here, positions coexisting and valued on different terms, in the presence of a cabin in reconstruction, shift as they are logged in a guest book.

In a section on design, the article probes a broader applicability of what has been found in the case-study, based on a wider fieldwork experience. Principle: *repair* also writes re-pair. In the conclusion, a design for a 'contemporary interception' is demonstrated *visually*.

The *anthroponomical* framework is conceived as a scholarly contribution to art, and an artistic contribution to science, through a mnemonic understanding of the technical image.

DESIGN (CONTEXT)

Beyond our expanded lives online, the C19 lockdown's sensorial *restrictions* forced us to invent a fund of *sensorial experience* that is vital to us as social, cultural, and natural beings. It also brought us the challenge of making up for it when people – in all walks of life – did *not* manage. How to make up for a deficit of sensorial experience that is vital to living, thinking, and acting? How to make up for the sense of *being in wrong*, from failure of providing a foundation for what we think and do?

That is, for sure *not* a philosophical, scientific, or even artistic foundation but an ethical one, in a sense that Spinoza's geometrical framework in *Ethica* may help us hatch and mature. Whatever is achieved becomes the basis for what happens *next*: this is true of logic and causality, but it also applies in the realm of action: the idea that every action specifically binds or summons another, in the sense that they can *dovetail* with one another without involving coercion, force nor policing.

Phronesis[1] comes from experience with the kind of bootstrapping that makes ulterior action a *credible* path to yet uncharted areas of learning. The experience that by action – or doing – previously uncharted and unimagined learning will ensue. The proposition of the *Spinoza Project* is that such experience with learning from practice can be *designed*: that is, a design for education in which process, performance, and production are key to a new intra-operative *datum*.

By this term – intra-operative datum – we determine the docking of a triangle of elements (e.g., screen, frame, and intercept) that are substantially the same but heteronomous to us: e.g., **1)** the dwelling, **2)** the post-shoe and **3)** guestbook [*datum*] in the *précis* (**Part I** of the article): we cannot conflate them, yet they are *substantially* in-one. They are held by the datum. We can span the process of how they work together, how the performances of the woman in the précis are related, how the work stands.

Or, said in other terms, what makes thought and extension – the two attributes that determine humans in the Spinozist framework – *intra-operable*. Looking further into this possibility is relevant (and indeed called for) in the post-pandemic crisis of *inter-operability*: we can and need to move onwards from a *mechanic* concept of inter-operability at all levels of society, to a mnemonic idea of inter-operability of mediation where systematic – and field – knowledge are held by a set datum.

A *datum* is an elementary artefact whose presence/absence determines whether a situation comes out as a cogent whole, to someone who also (thereby) becomes an active element of it. The tasks & occasions leading up to this sensorial encounter are the ones hatching of the kind of *intra-operable* compound, determining the present meaning of memory. With the computer-screen as our datum, we are no longer spectators to cyberspace as a world in itself, and unto itself.

Project Spinoza is an invitation to consider the proposition that Baruch Spinoza – by *docking* his philosophical query in *Ethica* to the format of a *geometric* survey – provided a *theoretical* framework for the discussion of *scaling* of sensorial cogency, as designs of operative starting-points applicable to research, whether field-based or in laboratories, also applicable to the contemporary and ubiquitous culture of *screening*, *intercepting*, and *framing* with digital devices (Agamben, 2009).

The Spinoza Project is devoted to the exploration of the situational repertoires that emerge when we make the computer-screen our *datum*: that is, integrated in the electrosphere and physical environment in which we live. And involved in investigation relying on field-surveys: anthropology, archaeology, art, architecture – to limit ourselves to Tim Ingold's 4As (Ingold, 2013) – as transdisciplinary form of field-knowledge, based on life-world investigation and the interceptive affordance of *making*.

The computer here becomes more of a witness than a master-media, with the basic contract of being with *other* – older or newer – *media*, without being as other media.

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1. "Phronesis" (Gr.) is a Greek term which means 'practical wisdom' that has been derived from learning and evidence of practical things. Phronesis leads to breakthrough thinking and creativity and enables the individual to discern and make good judgements about what is the right thing to do in a situation (https://oxford-review.com/oxford-review-encyclopaedia-terms/phronesis-definition-meaning/).

Thereby featuring the mode of *wit(h)nessing* (a neologism coined by painter, psychoanalyst and philosopher Bracha Ettinger, 2015): not as a subjective trope, but as the basic mode of the datum... the line connecting the houses, in our previous example (PART I), is *with* the drawing of the houses but *not* as them[2].

Être ensemble in French, determines both *being together* (as members, or elements, determined by belonging) and *forming a group* (subject to inclusion/exclusion). It is a quality of togetherness featuring the moving line *between* being together and forming a group. The C19 pandemic posed this challenge in dystopian terms, but nevertheless experimental ones with; the twilight potential of a utopian turn – a potential zone of how we relate to the planet, the past, contemporary, future.

The scope of the Spinoza Project is accordingly *anthroponomic* in the sense that observing humanity in a broader and more complex sense is called for by the *anthropocene* (with its compound geological and human scale). The adjoined <u>portfolio</u> features an archive of topics of this scope. And seeks to develop an intraoperable field-record that corresponds exactly with the period of the pandemic. To it is adjoined an <u>index</u> seeking to constitute the archive as an *ensemble*. *Not* as styling, but deeply into the discrete layers that make up the inner *timescape* of an archive, according to Laurraine Daston (2017): **1)** *first nature*: record of complex phenomena as they happen in the field; **2)** *second nature*: the systematic and selective investigation of such materials; **3)** *third nature*: the incorporation of such investigation into the archives of science, to which is added here; **4)** *fourth nature*: the history of sensorial screening of the preceding levels[3].

This *non-anthropocentric* approach to the natural history of the mind – as linked to an ethnography of active observation – can be re-booted by a targeted elaboration on Spinoza's *Ethica*, in a way that may not be intuitive at first, but eventually will reveal a simplifying impact, when brought down to the specifics of our present concern with Spinoza, and the analysis at a case level of the subject matter given to a broad thematization here. A hatching ground for the creative/caring reader (Bellacasa, 2017).

In *narrative* terms, the enterprise of the *index* and *archive* presented in the previous section, of course, has some points in common with the picaresque novel: an overarching story (index) which, like a chest of drawers, contains a collection of 49 *smaller tales*. In the context of the pandemic and the lockdown, the parallel that springs to mind is Boccaccio's Decameron, a mediaeval narrative set in a villa outside Florence, while the Black Death rages in the city.

What is less obvious is what we can learn from the *exceptional* in a situation where normalcy is set adrift in a succession of *new normals*. The implications of what it means to live with crisis integrated into our contemporary ontology, we have previously addressed (Barth, 2019). For reasons argued in the following sections, the follow-up has brought up a shift from the ontological to an ethical framework. That is, a reflection on systematic and practical knowledge (*phronesis*).

RE-PAIR & REPAIR (PRINCIPLE)

PART I of this written piece is devoted to the development of the topic – *phronesis* – at an embryonic level. The first part picks up the thread of Darvill's embryonic gesture in Spinoza's *magnum opus Ethica*. The foreignness and marginality of the geometrical order to the philosophical query. The yield of the wide geometric order selected for the purposes of thematization of ethics in the expanded field, is manifested *inter alia* in the organisation of the book into parts:

PART I – God: definitions;

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2. This insight appears also to be captured by Felix Klein in his inaugural lecture (the Erlangen programme) held in 1872: "If one replaces the principal group by a more extended group, only part of the geometric properties will be preserved. The other geometrical properties no longer appear as intrinsic properties of the geometrical entities, but as properties of a system obtained by adding to them a special entity. This entity, inasmuch as it is, generally, determined, is defined by the condition that, supposing that it is fixed, only the transformations, among those of the given group, that still apply to the space, are those of the principal group."

3. Here, 'sensorial' is used in the sense that there are more than human eyes, with a hit and impact of what can be found with a forensic approach in an investigation (Fuller and Weizman, 2021). Joined to the eyes is an array of other sensors. Which can be digital/not.

PART II – On the nature and origin of the mind;

PART III – On the nature and origin of emotions;

PART IV – On human bondage or the strength of emotions;

PART V – On the power of understanding, or of human freedom.

In the second part of this presentation, we moved on to the *exemplification* of the embryonic level, conveyed by a *précis*, and the opportunity for learning generated from a case (cf, **Part I**): notably by the generative dynamics of the *être ensemble* engaging *conjointly* a social and technical process. Along with the different phases/modes of a project (proposing an instance of *investigative aesthetics*). From here we will see how embryonic learning can be capped by systemic learning.

It should be understood that we are thereby responding to a *human* need (cf. **Presentation** in **Part I**), rather than a need for a system. Our concern is instead with how *memory*, under certain circumstances, can be *part* of the equation: rather than left in the wake, as an energy leakage (or, entropy). What are the factors of developing *sensorial cogency*: at the embryonic level, the case level, and the level with which we will engage with here: the idea of *wanting* togetherness in different ways. Here, *wanting* is in need for a different apparatus – screening, framing and intercepting – than simple offer and demand. In Bruno Latour's understanding, the 6 km altitude strip where both living and inanimate things combine to form what we call life, is considered an *artefact* (Latour, 2018). As matters of fact and matters of care, a parliament. In terms of *être ensemble*, being together, forming groups and holding this artefact could be reframed as citizenship, in terms of *want*.

That is, Dominique Schnapper's (2000) bid on the subject – in the mid-nineties – when forms of citizenship, beyond the wardenship of the nation-state, was on the agenda of the political discussions in Europe. The topic has an even deeper *lineage* in the interest and study of political processes is acephalous societies: that is, without institutional integration at the top. Finally, the combination of these two provenances in our own fieldwork in Sarajevo (1996/97).

The latter features a study of the *être ensemble* of a local humanitarian organisation that was seen as *urban* and perceived as *not* being party to the ethnic struggles over territories, by the parties in conflict: it was engaged in the logistic of distribution from international aid and ran a soup kitchen, home and health-care, pharmaceutical distribution and a radio connection with the outside world. The organisation fought for the right to partake of the life in the city, as 1 of 10 places where the citizens would go to smoke, drink coffee and play chess before the war.

Citizenship, here, means 'good citizenship': a level of ethics transposing the life of a citizen unto a playground of political awareness and ideas (under conditions where the state was *de facto* out of play). Within the framework of this organisation, the people employed by it had to work in isolation – for security reasons – trusting that their colleagues would do their bit, making up for the crisis of inter-operability that comes with a war: taking care of the complex human needs under siege (the intra-action of which we call 'modern life', here bereft of its basic *utilities*).

In a situation like this, more than human eyes come to testify on what is going on. The logistics of life – under conditions of duress – is likely to define a socio-technical process, that also includes ritual, in a certain sense: in that human behaviours acquire a *communicative* affordance[4] when set in the terms of logistics, where the predicates of delivery is at the same time *social*, *technical* and *environmental*. The whole gamut of artefacts become agents of the want that is at cause.

Figure 1. Soup Kitchen in Sarajevo (1992-95)

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4. "Ritual' is a term which anthropology uses in diverse senses. My own view is that while we only run into a paradox if we try to apply this term to some distinct class of behaviours, we can very usefully think of 'ritual' as an aspect of all behaviour, namely the communicative aspect." (Leach, 1964: XIV).

At the time, the experiences within the humanitarian organisation were *isolated*: both from the outside world and internally. At this point, however, we now have been through an experience with the C-19 lockdown – at a terrestrial scale – with some points in common: the organisation of *inter-operability* under the conditions of a state of exception, and isolation. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly to some, the crisis of inter-operability in logistics/utilities came after the pandemic.

Which could provide us with the occasion to visit citizenship – as the political idea of wanting to live together – anew. In our reading, this is what Bruno Latour has been attempting in the two books mentioned above. Clearly, the return to 'normal' (likely a new normal) comes with a learning challenge: i.e., the relevance of *crisis* to *normal*. That is, in the present scope, how the turn to some sort of normality can be capped with the experience from crisis, for *learning* purposes.

The crisis of citizenship was not during the lockdown – on the contrary – it comes with the crisis of inter-operability: logistics, utilities, communications, media, education. Areas that under the liberalist framework of services were already fragmenting.

During the lockdown establishing *sensorial cogency* was a child of social dearth and material need. After the lockdown we have observed that people expected that their former lives – at work and at leisure – would be returned to them. As by the turn of an electrical switch. Only to discover the changes during the pandemic that gave people a socio-material and environmental equivalent of a jet-lag. It is under these conditions that the hatching and development of *sensorial cogency* – needed as a basis to *partake of life in the city* – constitutes a new and somewhat *uncharted* learning-challenge (Figure 2. Swirl I).

Which is why we may want to focus on the single multimodal platform which was continuous during/after C19.

Achieved

How far? 3

Assumed

Where to? 2

1

What here?

Acquired

Figure 2. Swirl I

Thus, the *networked computer*. The lockdown brought about a series of *singular* an *excrescent* (Badiou, 2006) uses of digital media:

1) *singular* in exploring new ways of combining live and online fora [in ways that are unlikely to re-emerge, unless they are picked up and cultivated];

2) *excrescent* in the amount of time spent on shopping on the web and edu/entertainment. The ways that people rewired their need for sensorial cogency – to be themselves and contribute – unfolded on this backdrop.

The lockdown forced people to pair up with their computers – and domestic workshops – in a new way, on a global scale. In its wake came a series of crises: the logistic problems, the war on Ukraine, the energy crisis, the climate. There was no normal life to return to. Everything had to be invented anew, in this sense re-membered/re-paired. Making designs ubiquitous, inasmuch as the triangulation between the social, technical and environmental defines our emerging horizon.

During the Covid 19 lockdown we formulated and explored the following question: what if a large-scale *collective* project – formulated at a societal level – was dedicated to investigating new and ambitious uses of IT&C, on the premise that we should determine and develop uses of digital technology that does *not* emulate, substitute nor erase other media. What would that bring us? What kind of science, philosophical and artistic query would follow in the wake of this question?

The working-title for this project is *Project Spinoza*: it was imagined as a sequel to the Project Gutenberg that asked "What if we put all the books of the world and made them available *digitised* on the web?" The selection of Baruch de Spinoza's query as a framework for this enterprise, by spanning 'things intelligent' in the form of a cartographic survey: the *geometry* of a non-anthropocentric life-world of causes, in which we – as human beings – are implicated/entangled.
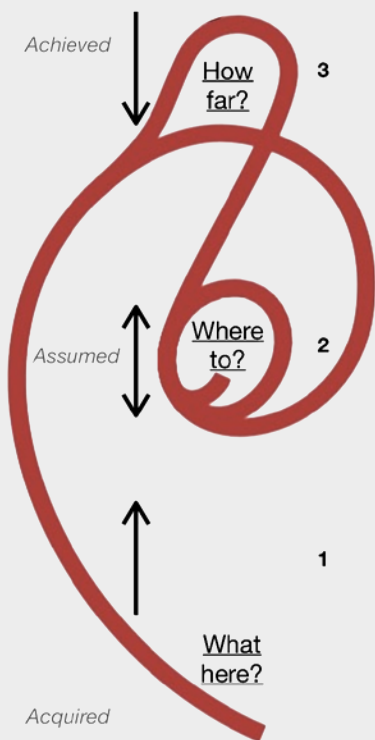
CONCLUSION

Though Ethica formally follows a protocol of geometric proof – in the mathematical sense – the proofs follow from what is indicated rather than from rote deduction. For this reason the sense of geometry as a cartographic survey is comprehended, but never contained. In the same sense, Project Spinoza proposes a usage that docks computers into the array of mediations, in which it is a specific player (in patterns that shift when it is used to process, perform and produce).

This *makeshift usage* of computing is what makes it specific – in a given context – can be made as *precise* as needed/desired, at two levels: **1)** with regard to how it is docked [rigged or integrated]; **2)** the mediations that it *moderates* [relays and inhabits]. As a *thinking thing*, in Spinoza's terminology, the computer is not generic: it is specific in the dialectics of *precisation*. That is, subject to clarification of how a problem is set: e.g., as an *investigation*, and as part of what is investigated.

An investigation is directed to a type of *problem* that does not immediately invite a *solution*. In fact, the problem that invites an investigation is one that *endures* – also when "solved" – because it is also *riddled*. It invites such lines of questioning: *what have we here? where is it going? how far has it come in terms of what has already been achieved?* And in the wake of such questioning comes a *pattern*. The pattern can be regular or lopsided and broken, and evolve till it hatches (Alexander, 1977 & 1979).

In the latter case, one might conjecture that it is interpretation. *Interpretation* is but a weak form in a much wider repertoire relying on the *triangulation* with ensuing developments that make the investigation progress: abduction. Abduction is here an inference in which *not all* the premises are known. Interpretation is a weak form of abduction. Strong forms of abduction take place as the process of triangulation with the course of events, eventually hits *bull's eye* – and re/members.

As interpretation is often socially categorised as *subjective* – dismissing the subject as an illusion – its involvement and evolution with *contingencies* is not taken into account: the point onwards from which begins the chase (holding the centre while pursuing the game) is missed, since the subject here clearly is not illusory but *fictional*: that is, it *tangles* and *tangoes* with reality, and this is precisely what causes the sense of adventure. The fictional can be *marked* by reality.

Here, fiction is fundamentally interested in *reality* and *docked* to it. The human ability to shift *from* illusion to fiction – with the scope of catching up with reality – is identical to the techno-logical aspect of mediation, in general, and computing in particular. In the case of the computer, we are talking about a *screen* docked to *responsive* device with which it *combines* through an interface that can be read by humans, from here they can lock in a chase to *catch up* with reality[5].

Project Spinoza therefore seeks to define and develop a problem of a certain form. In Spinoza's philosophy, a 'thinking thing' with *infinite* attributes is reflected through two attributes only: *thought* and *extension*. Consequently, the geometry drawn up by Spinoza – from the human end – is *two-dimensional* (though reality is infinitely more complex). For this reason, the premises of this philosophy contains a description applicable to screens and interfaces.

Thereby moving the Cartesian query of the body-mind connect away from the "pineal gland" – or, the equivalents of it, to consider the human unity at the perimeter of an ongoing, evolving and phased link *between* fact and fiction. Of which humans are not merely accessory but are *implicated* in a real yet limited sense: that is, by the two attributes defining the human scope – thought and extension – and by the human witness that is immersed *in* and *with* the real.

Adding to thought and extension, there is therefore the human entity, which – according to Spinoza – defines in more/less *active* terms. The human unit can be active or dormant. Not active in itself, but as a potential in the broader scope of nature (or, alternatively, potentially passive and *not* an asset). *Ethica* thereby aims to cover the modes of knowing that fall short of/exceeds epistemological and ontological frameworks: i.e., a systemic-experiential intuitive cognate.

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5.   Cf., the entries on metalepsis in the flyer-archive, and in Genette (2006).

Embodiment is *prompted*. That is, *things* – in the extended sense considered here – are intercepted *before* they are embodied: which means that there is an activity of screening which precedes embodiment and is ongoing in different *modi*. The modes of screening taken into account here are: process, performance, and production. These are different *interceptive modes.* By which the non-duality of epistemology/ontology nevertheless do not entail in differentiation.

In *Ethica* the questions *how do I know that I know?* (epistemology) and h*ow to make do of being?* (ontology) cannot be separated, yet the resulting field of knowing – in which we are immersed – does not lack differentiation: the differences are rather of a unilateral kind (rather than asymptotic) and makeshift in a manner that affords triangulation. That is, truly *geometric* in the sense of **(a)** a deductive system; **(b)** a field-survey; **(c)** intercepted insights **X** that are specifically intuitive.

That is, a vector with **(a)** thought and **(b)** extension as *coordinates* and **(c)** an **X**-factor that can be represented by what can be investigated as the *matrix of interception*. This matrix is determined as a *holding pattern* between the coordinates – thought and extension—which is kept floating and in lateral drift, till the **X**-factor emerges and is intercepted. At which point the human entity is activated. That is passed from a dormant, to a more active potential. Education is awakening.

$$[X] \quad (b) \quad \begin{bmatrix} & \\ & \end{bmatrix} (a)$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} & \\ (a) & \end{bmatrix} \quad [X] \quad (b)$$

$$(b) \quad \begin{bmatrix} & \\ (a) & \end{bmatrix} \quad [X]$$

T₀—process-matrix [*specific*]

Figure 3. Gate Matrix I

As seen the matrix (below) is of a form where all the elements add up horizontally and vertically to the same, with the exception of the diagonal where the **X**-factor lines up. Which means that whenever the interlocking joinery of **(a)** and **(b)** can be held and sustained, the alignment of the incidence of 3 yields an emergent **X**-factor, subject to *interception*. The matrix is generated by a rule-based permutation. An area that has been inquired by artists, mathematicians, and gamers alike.

The rule of this permutation is: **1.** we have a sequence of 3 – **(a)**, **(b)**, and **X**; **2.** to obtain the next sequence, the first term **(a)** is moved to the end; **3.** this procedure is repeated – the term **(b)** is moved to the end; **4.** when the same rule applies again – this time moving **X** – we are back to where we started. *The matrix reads from right to left.* And also reads vertically and *horizontally*. But it does not stop here. The rules at the elementary level, also apply at the group level.

Notice how the elements **(a)** and **(b)** interlock *around* the diagonal at the centre, as the intercepted *holding* element. They look asymmetric as long as it is screened by a horizontal and vertical grid. But their symmetry appears once we are attentive to how they organise and interlock *around* the diagonal, in a form of *joinery*. If organised according to how the screen – now understood as a surface – is organised for readability *against the grain* of the reading direction (in countries reading from left to right).

Hence, we can intuit the function of the screen – in the present *expanded* reception – to *intercept* aspects of the real that are normally *outside* of our reach; and then include what is intercepted as organising elements *within* our reach: *thought* and *extension*, *reason* and *perception*, *mind* and *body* in a train of transposable correspondences that will *also* include index and archive. That is, a candidate active model of how we *tangle* and *tango* with reality, even with our narrow scope.

The matrix can then be "sliced up" horizontally and vertically: in *rows* and *columns*. These "slices" can be moved according to the same rule – from right to left, or top-down – to obtain two new matrixes. When the procedure is repeated on the ultimate/third matrix, we are back to the one we started with a*bove*. Such that, whether operating either at the elementary level or the sub-group level (rows and columns) the set of rules of permutations applies to the elements and the group. The function of the two matrixes below [**T₁** and **T₂**] in building up a groundwork of *memory* – re-framing the notion of *foundation* studies – is to clarify two *different* aspects of how the problem set in the first matrix **T₀** (which is *intuitively* specific)[6]: one relating to the *reception* [**T₁**], the other relating to *production* [**T₂**].
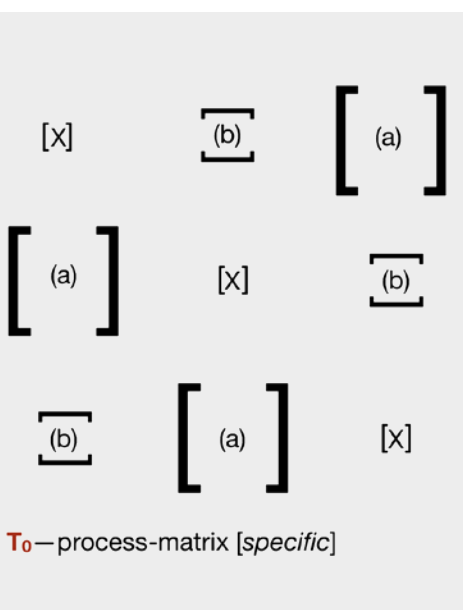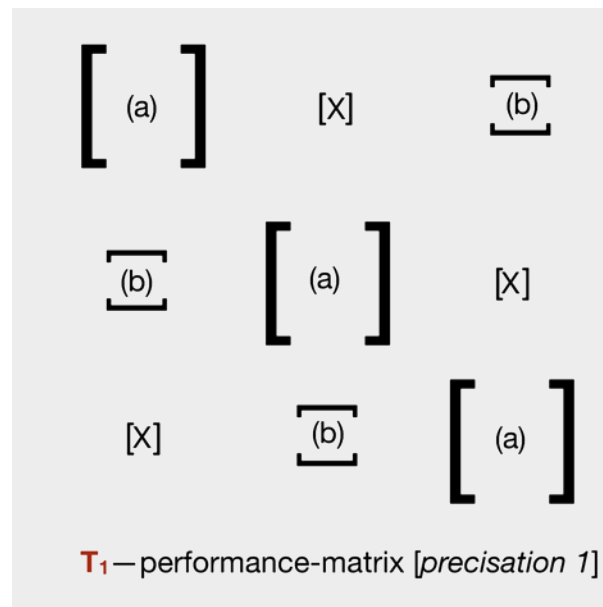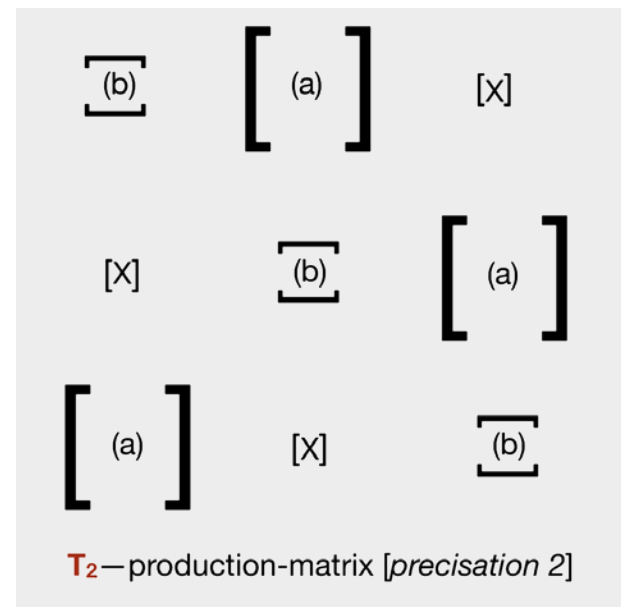
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Figure 4. Gate Matrix II

Figure 5. Gate Matrix III

While the *process* matrix is *descriptive*, the two triangulating matrixes are *analytic* [**T₁** and **T₂**]. Moving from the *intuitively* specific to the *specifically* intuitive is *synthesis*.

Notice how the matrix moves from the interception of **X** in **T₀** to the investigation of **(a)** in **T₁** in the light of the first interception, and then moves unto **(b)** in **T₂** as it defines the *interlocked diagonal*.

Therefore, we can clearly *not* receive them on an equal footing: the diagonal of **(a)** in **T₁** follows from the interception of **X** in **T₀**; and the diagonal of **(b)** in **T₂** follows from the investigation of **(a)** in **T₁**.

So, we are not talking about a repetition of the same thing, but a cycle of investigation based on *unilateral duality* (Laruelle, 2013). What is dual from process to *performance*, is 'in-one' in *production*.
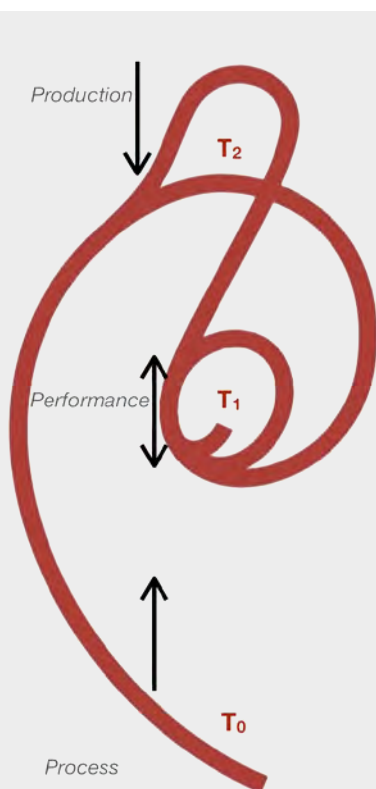
Clearly, the unilateral duality – what *holds* and *marks* the dual is itself *in-one* – is what affords the operable intra-connectivity drawn into the *swirl* figure to the left.
Featuring inter-operability. But also articulating memory as an infinite counterpart to the *finite* elements gathered in the swirl: *process*, *performance* and *production*.
In the wake of interception **X** in **T₀** the elements **(a)** and **(b)** are re-paired around the **X**-diagonal. Then the same protocol is iterated in **T₁** and **T₂**.
Hence the triangulation to the left.

What is *re-paired* in the finite (process, performance, production) can yield *repair* in the infinite (memory): that is memory, as partner to creation as exemplified in the *précis*. If memory is defined as having infinite states, or attributes, it poses a problem as to where it begins and stops. Still, as has been shown, memory can partner up with finite state *modi* – as process, performance, and production – to complete memory. Which will always be on relative terms with what counts and what is infinite *progress*.

Hence the *anthroponomic* scope of the present query comes in the wake of the shifting terms of sensorial cogency that happens under *crisis*: where crisis is understood as a *phase-shift* rather than a 'state of exception'.

Not a change in time, but a change *of time* (Wallerstein, 1991): or, if you will, shifts in the tectonics of our timescape. Where the triangulation in holding patterns, defined and analysed above, succeeds at docking itself into a memory that can be marked by the real.

Figure 6. Swirl II

ANNEX

In Albrecht Dürer's print (cf. Panofski, 1955) (*Melencolia* I, left) the magic square (detail) is docked to his pictorial composition of non-same elements in which the *call of the bell* – at any time – can set off a communicative chain-reaction amongst the remainder.

Yet, as much as it may be *expected* and anticipated, the call of the bell appears to be *postponed* indeterminately. Despite appearances, the situation may not have changed very much, even with the advent in our time of the computer.
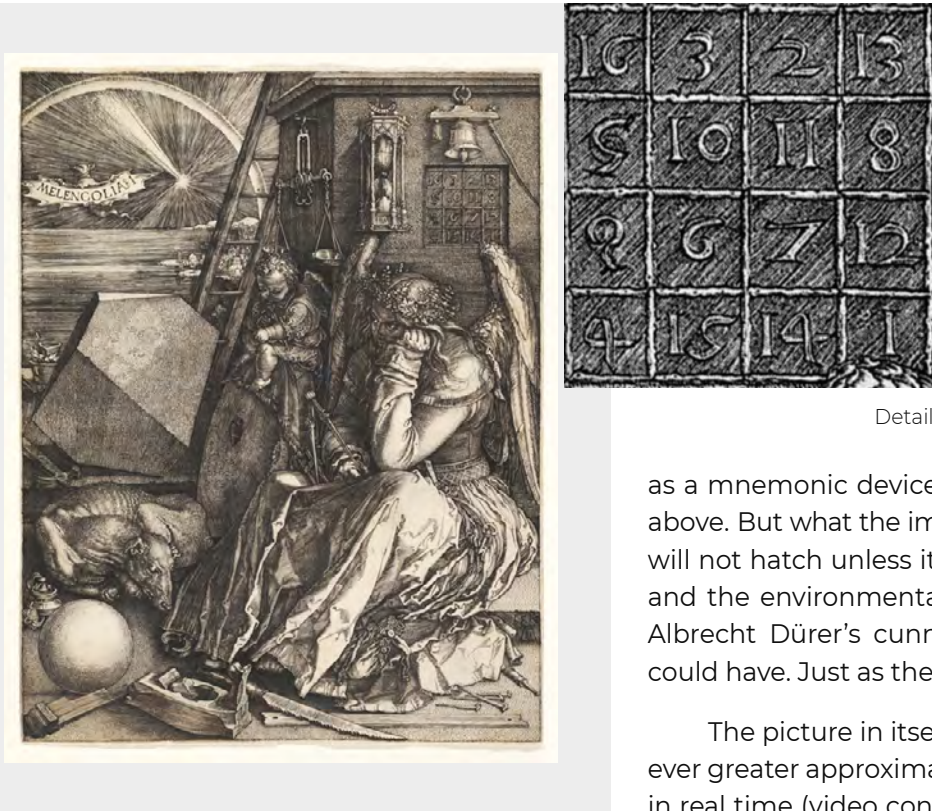
As a *foreign* element in the ensemble the magic square *belongs* to the composition *without* being part of the group. The math in the square computes: the sum is 34 in all directions – horizontal, vertical and diagonal.

Yet, despite the striking coincidence within the square and the constellation of alignments between the elements, in the optics of perspective, *nothing* happens between them: they appear mutually indifferent. The angelic creature on the watch is bored. If docked to the present piece, the print works pretty accurately as a mnemonic device for the whole array of topics raised in the sections above. But what the image has in store – its potential to hold its own reality – will not hatch unless it conjures the *triangle* between the social, technical and the environmental (as explored in the précis, PART I). In the train of Albrecht Dürer's cunning, craft and correspondence (Dürer, 2000) they could have. Just as they did in Spinoza's work as a *lens-grinder*.

Detail

Figure 7. Albrecht Dürer, Melencolia I. (1514). Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1943. The MET. Dimensions: 24 × 18.5 cm

The picture in itself would never do the trick. Even as it today seeks an ever greater approximation of the tipping point: as *recording* and *replaying* in real time (video conferencing), as learning algorithms that approximate human behaviour (AI), as the more shifty attempts to erase the difference between human and machine. What appears to be at stake here is the odd encounter between mathematical rigour and the artistic *trompe l'œil*. But why this fascination? It is as though the protocols of emulation, substitution and erasure will only create a demand for more. It is essentially an amnesiac process. Screening, framing and intercepting proceeds in the opposite direction. The economy of the image is here not to conjure a substitute reality, but to claim for the image a reality of its own, that will contrast performatively and productively in the process of clarifying the terms in which a problem is set: here, a makeshift sensorial cogency.

An image, in this sense, can be docked to a text and marked by the real. It has a similar place as the post-in-the-hole, but in a text. Similarly, writing can be docked to a field – which it is if it fills a field-diary. Accordingly, there is a mnemonic swirl between image and writ that will hold interception and be marked by it. Here, interception is an irruption into the matrix of memory, it will change the timescape. A similar relation as between thought and extension exists between image and writ. It defines a coordinate – or, vectorial – compound with the affordance of intercepting mediations beyond image and writing conjoint: an **X**-factor which will hold and mark their conjunction: it will clarify the problem set as they are conjoined. This sort of clarification is not philosophical.

It is *anthroponomic* in the sense of connecting society, technology and environment from within. Reality is not outside us: we go into the real. It is on that condition that we can intercept intention. It is beautifully caught in a passage by Fredrik Barth (1966), in two-dimensional definition of how behaviour can be explained.

Action **(a)** in *thought*, and action in **(b)** *extension*: clearly, in an *ethnographic* format, *thought* and *extension* will readily be transposed to *writing* and *image*.

The turns of how a field-diary will move from these coordinates to ones that will theorise what has been observed in more explanatory terms, but the relation remains essentially the same.

> Human behaviour is 'explained' if we show **(a)** the utility of its consequences in terms of values held by the actor, and **(b)** the awareness on the part of the actor of the connection between an act and its specific results (Fredrik Barth, Nuffield Lecture, 1966, p. 15).

That is to say, a *mnemonic* utility can be by a conjoint protocol between image and writing, whereby shifts – of the type that affects sensorial cogency – can be specifically intercepted in a form of diary that is not only tied to the calendrical time-line, but following the trail of phase-shifts in a tracery of changes that are not merely in time but *of time*. The attached archive and index constitutes a modest attempt in this direction. If of an investigative non-philosophical nature.

The National Library of Norway,
Oslo, August 22th, 2022

NOTE

Spinoza's diatribe with Descartes has not been discussed here. The choice has been between going into a technical detail required to go properly into the detail of the critique, or avoid placing Spinoza's work in a predetermined philosophical context (say, Gilles Deleuze (1990) or Arne Næss (1993) on one hand, or Bertrand Russell (1910) or Ludwig Wittgenstein (1922) on the other hand). We have opted for neither since our method nor errand has been non-philosophical: instead to home in on artistic, scientific, and philosophical borderlands of applicability. Hence, we present a *possibility-* argument.

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