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THE OBJECT OF ALIENATION: THE ‘PERCEPTUAL TACTIC’ AND A SURFACING OF ARCHITECTURAL MEANING’S ANTAGONIST

When reflecting on his stage sets for Massine's ballet *Aleko* and Bohn's *Firebird*, Marc Chagall explicitly sites his intention to impart colour to play and for it to exist autonomously. This tactic he believed would stifle the rise of representation. Such recourse to a proposed material sensation sets the scene for this project, as it purports to challenge the trajectory of the codified object, its associated usage and the qualification of such an object by an understanding of its meaning.

The object of this research is the appropriation of architecture by the discourse of the meaningful, precisely its investment in the architectural object through a simultaneous production / perception threshold. Meaning, understood as an adjunct of a philosophical humanism, is centrally positioned within the two dominant modes of contemporary architectural thought. Identified by their reactionary motives, these architectures attempt to either re-find a lost meaning by adhering to a Baudrillardian criticism of contemporary societies ‘ecstasy of communication’, or destroy all meaning by employing the non-communicative, the embrace of a non-design. Herein lies the double bind of the performative architectural object. The stratified relations dictating the coupling of meaning and communication are substantiated through conceptual indices which acknowledge the same truth – meaning as dogmatic principle. In other words commitment to ‘pure’ communications or alternatively, formalisms whose communicable meaning is delayed by a recourse to syntactic structure, suggests an uncorrupted and lucid surfacing of meaning in each circumstance: symbolisms and formalisms.

The instruction of the meaning object is complicit with a systemisation of society due to its perceptual bifurcation; the subjective projection onto the object and the objectual luminance of its source subjectivity. Such a systemisation makes powerless the organic force of the idea, emphasising the weight of the historical artefact as model for its recurrent representation. The estrangement of the ‘individual’ from the self is pronounced by the movement of this estrangement through a mirrored validation of a perceived external reality – a reified world of objects. A systemised society is therefore a product of a self perpetuating psychological and spatial estrangement.

If there is a possibility of non-meaningful communications, far from being a negative condition and evident today, it is a yet to be realised requiem for the encapsulation of an alterity in architectural production. Can the architectural object cease to be conveyor of meaning by recourse to immanent communications facilitating truly participatory events? To determine such specific manifestations there must be an exploration of immanent communications or temporal behaviours as infections of physical object demarcations. Such a proclivity toward simultaneous non-methodological operations of natural and urban contingencies and the effectuation of experience is explicit in a transcendental empiricism vitalised by Gilles Deleuze.

To point toward the embracing of immanent objectual communications I will deploy Gilles Deleuze’s observations on the ‘perceptual tactic;’ a multivalent system for the production of meaning, where meaning becomes the ‘intentions with which we perceive the object.' The mechanisms which stratify subject / object relations produce objects bound by ethico-historical fabulations. Such an analysis of the ‘perceptual tactic’ ensconced herein is tantamount to revealing contradistinctive communications, indeterminate coordinates for the production of anterior objectual geographies.