

UTKU B. DEMİR

MASTER'S THESIS

0.1 *random quotes*

On its first or Lacanian approximation, the body without organs is simply the constellation of partial objects constituting our desire in its transitive mode. It is described by Deleuze and Guattari as the 'real inorganisation' of desire such as one finds on the reverse side of the Big o: '[There] desire is shifted into the order of production, related to its molecular elements, where it lacks nothing, because it is defined as the natural and sensuous objective being, at the same time as the Real is defined as the objective being of desire' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 311). Desire, on this understanding, constantly surpasses the neat triangle of mommy-daddy-me imposed by psychoanalysis. (Poster, Savat, and Deleuze 2010, p. 145)

Deleuze adapts an idea from William Burroughs when he labels the emergent post-disciplinary dispositif; control (Deleuze, 1995, p. 178) (MacKenzie and Porter 2021, p. 5)

In relation to the former, Deleuze returns to the brief examples of how disciplinary institutions are breaking down and being supplanted by mechanisms of control located in the continual modulation of individuals. (*ibid.*, p. 7)

1

Deleuze

1.1 *Philosophical foundation of difference*

Following Heidegger, Deleuze points out that since at least the pre-Socratic Parmenides Western philosophy has favoured unity, stability and sameness over diversity, change and difference. The result of this philosophical choice was, Deleuze avers, a “dogmatic image of thought” (1994, 131) according to which difference has for the most part been conceived in negative terms as what is not the same, not unified, not universal. In the dogmatic image of thought, difference has in other words always been made subject to identity. (Kruger 2021, p. 173)

1.2 *History*

1.2.1 *Modulation*

While Deleuze notes Foucault’s awareness of the transformation of the disciplinary institutions as early as the end of the second world war, in his own formulation Deleuze marks the following state of this transformation as the modulation. The *molded* individuals of the disciplinary societies are produced through confinement, whereas the *modulation* traverses in an ubiquitous sense “both the social field and the life-course of individuals” (MacKenzie and Porter 2021, p. 6).

1.3 *Control*

Galloway provides a striking case in point: ‘the society of control is characterized not by the power of the institutions of modernity, or pre-modernity, the army, the prison, the university, the church, but instead by what he [Deleuze] called the ultra-rapid forms of free-floating control that are inherent in distributed networks’ (Galloway, 2006, pp. 318-9). (MacKenzie and Porter 2021, p. 8)

While it is now widely understood that disciplinary institutions segment individuals and populations into a series of independent subject positions, control institutions function by separating the components of individuality in ways that tend toward the dispersal of these individuals across the whole social field, often in conflictual and contradictory ways. (*ibid.*, p. 9)

1.4 *profile*

I wonder if it is still possible to practice critical thinking after a computational turn, which despite its pretence to ‘objectivity’, appears as a turning point away from the ambitions of modern rationality anchored in empirical experiment and deductive – causal – logic and, despite its promises of personalization and better taking into consideration of individual merits, needs, abilities, preferences, does not address individuals through their reflexive capabilities or through their inscription within collective structures, but merely through their ‘profiles’ (Rouvroy, 2012, p. 2). (*ibid.*, p. 15)

1.5 *Algorithmic Governmentality*

Thirdly, what she calls ‘algorithmic governmentality’ is a regulative form without subject, such that it does not allow for or enable the reflexivity necessary for critique (Rouvroy, 2012, p. 2). (*ibid.*, p. 16)

Because today’s watchers want profit, not personal intimacy, they are interested in profiles, not specific people, and their attention is drawn to opportunities, not embarrassing information. If they are interested in vulnerability at all, then they mean vulnerable to appeals, like the new mother’s enveloping concern for the health of her newborn, or the teenage boy’s fixation on the size of his biceps. What comes next is not psychological persecution; instead, it is online coupons discounting a baby car seat, it is a protein drink free sample (Završnik and Levičnik 2015). (Brusseau 2020, p. 7)

1.6 *Intro Attempt*

Deleuze’s conceptualisation is a social organisation without institutions, without walls, and without constraints at least in a disciplinary sense.

This article revisits the concept of modulation in Gilles Deleuze’s Postscript on Control Societies, in which he announces control societies as the new paradigm succeeding Michel Foucault’s disciplinary society. Deleuze characterises this shift in terms of a shift

from 'moulding' to 'modulation', namely from a form-imposing mode to a self-regulating mode. (Hui 2015, p. 74)

The concept of modulation is an attempt to explain the new, or emerging mode of production under capitalism.

These external instruments—be they technological, linguistic, political, or economic—do not merely assist us; they actively shape the contours of our reality, influencing how we think, interact, and exist (Rijos n.d., p. 6).

1.7 Generative AI

Though contemporary forms of generative AI retain significant traces of former scientific and computational regimes in statistical practices, conditional probabilistic knowledge, and so on they are dislocating epistemological arrangements ¹ and opening novel ways of perceiving, characterising, classifying, and knowing the world. In sum, we consider generative AI to embody a series of mutations in computational ways of knowing, and these mutations are reconfiguring political models of the world. (Amoore et al. 2024, p. 113)

¹ Foucault's concept

"Generative techniques have their own political logic of distribution, distinct from the Aristotelian notions of distributive justice – who is entitled to what, or what a fair distribution would be – which preoccupied political theorists in the late twentieth century (Rawls, 1971; Walzer, 1983), and different from the "distribution of the sensible" that decides what or who can be perceived (Rancière, 2010, p. 36). The politics of distribution in generative AI stem from a different tradition, that of probability. This sense does have precedent in political thought, notably in the ways that statistical populations became the objects of government in the modern period (Foucault, 2007, pp. 108–9)." (ibid., p. 3)

The transformer architecture likewise has inescapable political implications as a means of dividing, partitioning, attending to, and acting upon the world (Rancière, 2007; Foucault, 1991). (Amoore et al. 2024, p. 6)

In this way, the epistemic forces of generative AI point to a different horizon of power and resistance: where the claim to an underlying distribution must contain the possibility of multiple other distributions, or points on the distribution that were discarded alternatives. (ibid., p. 8)

2

Question Marks

2.1 Utku Remarks

At the end I referred to Kruger [2021](#) who associated a different aspect of Deleuze in his analysis to a possible future AI architecture striving for AGI. Kruger's analysis is, however, is one to be associated with cognitive science. My approach was oriented to address a political theory related aspect in the whole constellation we know call AI which is to be parted into different categories in terms of theory in near future. The distinction I would like to emphasise is, as my thesis hopefully underlines, we are more and more involved in a cognitive political theory, and my intersection built with novel AI architectures is only a small part of it.

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