



Multiplicities, Multitudes, Christine Buci-Glucksmann, 2000

Minute dots, pixels which make up digital images. A mosaic of dots, whose position and luminosity is now calculated by computer. Screen dot, dots of snow, the pixel makes it possible to see the composition and the battle of images. And just as Richter painted as a photographer, here painting is done by means of video and computer-generated images. For the dot already has a long history. The smallest segment since Alberti, it was to be the starting point for the decomposition of the picture in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is a multitude both real and potential: the dots and flecks of light of a Monet, the chromatic pointillism of a Seurat, the dot breaks down figuration and recomposes the luminosity of a floating image which is increasingly abstract and simulated. Little by little, it becomes a dot in an infinite process, dot-fold of a virtual cavity and a point of light, as in kinetic art.

But digitalising the video tape in order to reconstruct it better, we pass from a figurative, mimetic approach to the dot to a completely different approach, that of simulation and the "intoxication of number". For creating beings from numbers, as Pythagoras wanted to, defined a veritable "binary state". The intoxicating effect of numbers whose logic is based on two values, 0 and 1, which brings about thanks to its own power an infinite proliferation of numbers invading the screen. A picture of numbers in the style of Jasper Johns with a tautological eye rediscovered and reduced. For numbers are the world - that of merchandise, speculation and arithmetic. Stock exchange tables, flows of money, millions and millions of figures, in lines, in diagonals, twisted, blurred and illegible. A digital infinity in bright colours of all the flows and networks of an unconscious global perspective. A planetary mind with its models, its powers and its strategies. For here, invisible money, speculative flows and networks of information define a culture of flows, which is also a digital madness become world and power.

But amidst this proliferating multitude of a universal capitalist-merchant baroque, an "art of multiplicities" is perhaps being born. Invented by Riemann's non-Euclidian geometry, multiplicity cannot be reduced to the single quantitative of number. There are intensive multiple grandeurs, whose known space is always only a particular case. Going from one region of space to another, from one point of view to another, practicing a curved or negative space in four or n dimensions, is always reinventing "a third eye", that of the mind or the virtual. Spiral eye like many programs of pictures, numbering eye and without number, cybernetic network creation and nomadic journey, like those pure intensities the desert, the sea, the infinite city and all the micrological folds of the digital. For in the end, does the eye woven with the virtual grasp the beings or the extra-beings, a human experience or the leaking of all experience in the impersonal waves and the "binary tides" of time proper to other natures?