

How Does Aesthetics Express Itself? Deleuze, from the Imperceptible to the Affects

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ABSTRACT

To overcome the traditional representative conception of aesthetics, inhibiting the creative and disruptive power of the sensible, while relegating its creativity to artistic activity, Deleuze proposes an expressive account of sensibility, conceived as an intensive field of individuation that expresses itself through affectivity. The article will retrace the essential passages of this operation, from the establishment of an intensive domain of individuation in early transcendental empiricism to the radical short-circuit of anthropocentrism in his late constructivism. Moving from the paradox of the imperceptible, particular attention will be paid to the Deleuzian conception of the affects, the peak of the radicalization of his aesthetic proposal. It will be argued how it offers a fundamental link to an ethics of power, making the limits of the discipline implode.

KEYWORDS

Gilles Deleuze; Aesthetics; Expression; Affect; Imperceptible.

When it comes to writing, I'm always moved by some ecstatic form of adoration, or contempt, or hate. By something corporeal that possesses me – desire, or a headache.¹

Patrizia Cavalli

In a well-known passage from *The Logic of Sense*, Gilles Deleuze claims: “Aesthetics suffers from a wrenching duality. On one hand, it designates the theory of sensibility as the form of possible experience; on the other hand, it designates the theory of art as the reflection of real experience” (1969, p. 260).

What he is denouncing is the condition by which, in modern Western philosophy, the study of the sensible has been dis severed from the theory of art and beauty, relegating it to the gnoseological process – namely its bottom step, while establishing a domain of

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¹ Benini 2022.

autonomy for the artistic production.

The consequences of this operation are multiple, but their common denominator is that the creative and disruptive power of the sensible is rendered harmless, meekly submitted to the higher faculties and to the high-handedness of the cogito; while the creation involved in the arts is conceived as the result of spiritual and exclusively human activity, detached from the wider spontaneity of reality/nature. Aesthetics is atomized into disconnected domains: the relationship between sensible or affective experience and artistic creativity is not the object of inquiries (at least, not of the ones of what has later been called “the greater canon”² of philosophy). Sensibility is either intended passively, concerning cognition, or its activity is secured in a delimited area.

More than fifty years later, the situation does not seem entirely different, both if we think about the successive thematization of the aesthetics within the philosophical tradition³ (see: Dreon 2022) and if we bear in mind the sclerotization of certain disciplinary distinctions⁴ (see: Longo and Blanchard 2021; Longo 2023).

In what follows, I will briefly reconstruct the essential passages through which Deleuze overcomes this “wrenching duality”, to dwell on an aspect of his expressive account of aesthetics that is particularly relevant in understanding the restoration of its effective power.

I will take the cue (paragraph 2) from recalling his early works on transcendental empiricism, namely, his critique of the paradigm of representation and the link established between aesthetics and intensity. I will then move (paragraphs 3 and 4) to the constructivist approach developed in collaboration with Félix Guattari (in

² I am referring here to the distinction proposed by Rocco Ronchi between the major canon in the history of Western philosophy (major for a statistical reason – for the authors belonging to it are the most studied ones) and the minor. This latter counts illustrious but marginalized names: William James, Henri Bergson, and Alfred North Whitehead, for example. Despite the imbalance, Ronchi argues that the instruments for facing contemporary challenges should be looked for in the authors belonging to this minor line of thought (See: Ronchi 2017).

³ The ongoing downgrading of the sensible has been denounced, among the others, in the second chapter of Roberta Dreon’s latest book, where she questions “the conception that sensibility is primarily constituted by sensory perception and reflects an eminently cognitive characterization of experience” (p. 13) by proposing a qualitative aesthetics from a Pragmatist point of view. In addition to testifying a reduction of the sensible perceived in different traditions from the Deleuzian, what interests us in this perspective is the resorting to an affective dimension of experience. The solution of extending the aesthetic field is in many respects parallel to the Deleuzian one I will develop throughout the article.

⁴ Giuseppe Longo provides a good example of a scientist committed to denouncing the rampant reductionist approaches in life sciences, caught between molecular biology and computer coding, and to proposing an epistemology of complexity and radical creativity, where an expanded aesthetics has a primary role.

particular, in *A Thousand Plateaus* and *What is Philosophy?*), where, through the imperceptible's paradox, the authors refine the connection between aesthetics and intensity, explicating its creativity and, consequently, its connection with the arts. In these texts, the question of intensity is tied hand in glove with an original conception of the affects. I will linger on it, as it is crucial in understanding the transformative power of the sensible and in conceptualizing its affective dimension from a cosmic perspective. Eventually (paragraphs 5 to 7), I will support the cogent actuality of such a view by resorting to some perspectives that have recently appeared both in the Deleuzian secondary literature and in the so-called "Affective turn" (Ticineto Clough and Halley 2007), largely inspired by Deleuze's reading of Spinoza.

Rather than aiming at an exhaustive reconstruction of the Deleuzian reconciliation of aesthetics, the article aims to show how it follows a radicalization parable that finds its peak in the late concept of the affects and what its legacy could be.

Early Deleuze

In chapter III of *Difference and Repetition* (1968), Deleuze goes back to Plato and Aristotle to accuse an image of thought that he believes to be responsible for the aesthetic dichotomy and other problematic conceptualisations: the paradigm of representation and recognition. From such a posture, thinking philosophically consists of a transcendent or transcendental activity of categorising, modelling, and thus determining. What is looked for (or projected) in the real are *a priori* principles of identity and their balanced ratios: resemblance, opposition, and convergence. Conceiving the philosophical enterprise with such an image of thought means systematically subduing the identity difference, bridling the novelty in a logical grid. However, the paradigm of representation is not only problematic from a gnoseological perspective. In a Nietzschean fashion, Deleuze repeatedly claims that it is also and foremost a structure of power. To use the words of Michel Foucault, "On one side, they [the categories of representation] can be understood as the *a priori* forms of knowledge, but, on the other, they appear as an archaic morality, the ancient decalogue that the identical imposed upon difference" (1970, p. 171). The Deleuzian critique should then be understood in ethical and vitalistic terms: the categories of representation are an eternal cage that represses the richness of experience, presupposing a fixed instance that controls it by

objectifying it, *de facto* preventing the novelty from appearing and preserving the *status quo*. This is why aesthetics is lacerated, isolated, and completely inhibited in its effective power. The paradigm of representation subjugates *pathos* to *logos*.

I will not dwell here on the critique of this image of thought, as it is a wide and rather well-known topic of Deleuzian philosophy that runs through his entire oeuvre⁵. What I would like to specify is that

It by no means follows that there can be no such thing as representing how things are. What follows is that there can be no such thing as representing how things most fundamentally are, in their raw difference. The assault is not an assault on the very idea of representation. It is an assault on the idea that representation is a paradigm that reveals the ultimate character of reality (Moore 2011, p. 569).

What is then the *ultimate character of reality* and how is aesthetics related to it? In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze claims that reality is eminently the difference, the intensity that precedes any actualization, or embodiment. It is the difference that does not exist (since it does not have a body, or a proper space-time), but insists. It is what he calls the virtual, the domain of pure difference in its raw creativity, free from any *a priori* determination; that by which the given is given.

However, using the expression “ultimate character of reality” – as Moore does, might be misleading: although transcendental empiricism might be open to this kind of interpretation (see: Sauvagnargues 2009), Deleuze is not establishing a hierarchy between different levels of reality and therefore a transcendence, as in the logical grid of representation. “The virtual [the domain of intensive differences] and the actual [the domain of bodies, of existence] are themselves ultimately abstractions”, what counts is the “cusp” (Moore 2011, p. 560), the process of individuation that takes place through continuous exchanges from the intensive and the extensive orders of reality and that guarantees the becoming. As Simondon, what Deleuze claims is the “existence of an energetic, non-material world” (Simondon 1982, p. 6), coherent with the physical discoveries of the twentieth century (see: DeLanda 2002).

In this emerging ontological shift, “The aesthetic no longer involves determining the *a priori* forms of sensibility as in Kant, but the intensive matter of all real experience” (Lapoujade 2014, p.

⁵ Although Deleuze does not use the expression *paradigm of representation* in his later texts, the critique of the flattening of philosophy (and knowledge in general) on the operation of judging can be found in almost all his works, in different forms. For example, in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (1981), he criticizes the *clichés* of representation, in *What is Philosophy?* (1991) he argues against opinions, while in *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1993) he includes a chapter entitled *To Have Done With Judgement*.

112). Deleuze's transcendental empiricism overturns Kantian transcendentalism: space and time cannot be the *a priori* forms of sensibility because proper space-times are from time to time created with each process of individuation, as they belong to the domain of existence and not to the one of intensity. But above all aesthetics is not about a subject determining the conditions of possibility for experience but experience itself posing its real intensive constraints of individuation. For Deleuze subjectivity is never given. It is not the prerequisite for experience, but it is its processual product. *Pathos* is not submitted to *logos*; it is that from which *logos* emerges and is continuously exchanged in a porous process.

Nonetheless, if it is true that, in transcendental empiricism, aesthetics become the generative pole of experience from which the cogito depends, the subject remains in an ambiguous position, as it is still the standpoint from which aesthetic experience is accessed. The model of transcendental empiricism is the Kantian sublime, where the ordered relationship between the faculties is unhinged and the sensible is carried beyond the limits of representation, to encounter the virtual. In transcendental empiricism short-circuited is the intellect as the faculty of recognition, reducing the difference in identity. As David Lapoujade has underlined,

What characterizes transcendental empiricism is the immediate relation that establishes between aesthetic and dialectic, between the sensible and the Idea, the phenomenon and the noumenon. Transcendental empiricism is the immediate union of the aesthetic and the dialectic. There is in Deleuze only one aesthetic of intensities and one dialectic of the Ideas, and no more (2014, p. 113).⁶

The Paradox of the Imperceptible

Having freed aesthetics from its subjugation to the cogito, opening to it the domain of pure intensities, transcendental empiricism faces an apparent contradiction that solves its ambiguous positioning of subjectivity, marking the switchover to constructivism.

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze argued that aesthetics is about encountering the intensive difference that structures the real. This intensive difference, however, does not exist, does not have an extension, and therefore is imperceptible. How is it possible for sensibility to perceive what is by nature imperceptible, what

⁶ To avoid ambiguity to the possible extent, it should be noted here that the Idea is a synonym of the virtual for Deleuze. This means that the dialectic should not be understood as the science of the systemic unity of everything, but as the principle of intensity, of exteriority, always insisting on what is given and making it become in disjunctive heterogenesis.

is always escaping the perceptive threshold? The solution to this apparent impasse lies precisely in the perspective from which aesthetics is understood. If aesthetics is still conceived as the faculty of a subject that receives or intentions a *datum*, the task will result impossible; no matter what perceptive threshold one adopts, as the virtual will always precede the actual, the given. Nonetheless, if the posture of a fixed individuality is overcome together with representation, a particular form of strabismus can be exercised – achieving what Deleuze, in talking about the duality of aesthetics, refers to as “experimentation” (Deleuze 1969, p. 260), the real activity of the reunited aesthetics. That is, the liquidation of the subject/object coordinates in the radical expressivity of reality – no longer about encountering the given, but rather about individuating with it, experience constructing itself. To do so, any remaining transcendentalism should be eliminated, collapsing the intensive and extensive domains of reality on the same ontological level.

It is the plane of organization and development, the plane of transcendence, that renders perceptible without itself being perceived, without being capable of being perceived. But on the *other* plane, the plane of immanence and consistency, the principle of composition itself must be perceived, cannot but be perceived at the same time as that which it composes or renders. In this case, movement is no longer tied to the mediation of a relative threshold that it eludes ad infinitum: it has reached, regardless of its speed or slowness, an absolute but differentiated threshold *that is one with the construction of this or that region of the continued plane* (Deleuze, Guattari 1980, p. 281).⁷

The introduction of the concept of the plane of immanence to solve the imperceptible’s paradox is the capstone for the further development of the deleuzo-guattarian conception of aesthetics (Gil 2007, pp. 451, 452). Indeed, “The force of paradoxes is that they are not contradictory; they rather allow us to be present at the genesis of the contradiction” (Deleuze 1969, pp. 74-75), showing how it is in conceiving aesthetics as the faculty of a subject that the dichotomy art-sensible is immediately placed. On the contrary, conceptualizing reality as an immanent plane of imperceptible experimentation permits both overcoming the subject-object dualism and its subsequent relegation of the sensible to gnoseology and extending creativity to experience in general, radicalizing the idea of transcendental empiricism but definitively leaving subjectivity as the prerequisite for the experience. Aesthetics abandon any remaining representation, becoming heterogenesis itself: “one with the construction of this or that region of the continued plane” (Deleuze, Guattari 1980, p. 281).

⁷ Italics by the author.

Art and the Capture of Forces

This is the reason why, in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (1981), Deleuze can claim:

From another point of view, the question concerning the separation of the arts, their respective autonomy, and their possible hierarchy, loses all importance. For there is a community of the arts, a common problem. In art, and in painting as in music, it is not a matter of reproducing or inventing forms, but of capturing forces. For this reason, no art is figurative. Paul Klee's famous formula – 'not to render the visible, but to render visible' – means nothing else (1981, p. 56).

Both the arts and the sensible are conceived as two faces of the same creative *activity* as, in specific ways, they intercept and express the imperceptible/intensive order of reality, moving on its plane of immanence and experimenting with it: the aesthetic dichotomy is finally overcome.

But the arts and the sensible are not the only ones sharing this connection to the intensive domain of reality. Experience *tout court* is an activity of creation through individuation in an intensive field. Placing the activity of "capturing forces" at the heart of creation ranks the sensible and the arts in continuity with every experience. Creativity, once confined to an autonomous domain, innervates all levels of reality or, reversing the perspective, art is not autonomous nor exclusively human. With the reconciliation of aesthetics, Deleuze affirms the univocity of being.

Therefore, it should not be surprising that artistic creation, as experience in general, must find its specific way to address the problem of inhabiting the domain of intensive differences without dissolving in it. The problem is one of individuation, of giving consistency to the dynamism of the process. Still, if in transcendental empiricism the focus of the issue was in freeing the difference from identity, in these later texts the attention goes to its constructive side, becoming "the problem of chaos". Art cannot limit itself to capturing forces, freeing them from representation. By expressing them it must create something, make them last. And, to do so, it must establish a plane of immanence. After all, the lesson of constructivism is that nothing is given and simply perceived: everything constructs itself. As Deleuze and Guattari claim "The struggle with chaos that Cézanne and Klee have shown in painting, at the heart of painting, is found in another way in science and philosophy: it is always a matter of defeating chaos by a secant plane that crosses it" (Deleuze, Guattari 1991, p. 203).

But the initial polemical target, the paradigm of representation, has not lost importance. Chaos and representation are respectively the positive and the negative faces of the same revolutionized account of aesthetics. "It is as if the struggle against chaos does not take place without an affinity with the enemy, because another

er struggle develops and takes on more importance – the struggle against opinion, which claims to protect us from chaos itself” (*Ibid.*). This is why art should not reproduce what Deleuze calls the “*clichés*” (Deleuze 1981, p. 86) of representation. An artist does not deal with ordinary and biographical sensations, as those are already perceptible and categorized: her work consists of grasping the forces of reality before they are conceptualized and organized by the subject, expressing them in their non and pre-human status.

How can a moment of the world be rendered durable or made to exist by itself? Virginia Woolf provides an answer that is valid for painting and music as it is for writing: “Saturate every atom”, “eliminate all waste, deadness, superfluity”, everything that adheres to our current and lived perceptions, everything that nourishes the mediocre novelist; and keep only the saturation that gives us the percepts (Deleuze, Guattari 1991, p. 172).

Although creativity is diffused, every act of creation has its specific modality: being is univocal, but what is shared is precisely the difference. For this reason, if in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* Deleuze still defines the material of the arts with the generic name of forces, in *What is Philosophy?* he specifies what their particularity is, claiming that the task of art is to construct a bloc of sensations, “a compound of percepts and affects” (Deleuze, Guattari 1991, p. 164). As Anne Sauvagnargues underlines, “The capture of forces reveals the community of arts that binds literature to non-discursive arts. Or better, it shows how, even in literature, the effect of art cannot be reduced to the discursive, as it is a true logic of sensation, a *semiotic of the affects*” (Sauvagnargues 2006-2007, p. 39)⁸.

In the last paragraphs, I will argue how affects work and why they are crucial to understanding the actuality of the Deleuzian aesthetological project.

Rethinking the Affects

The concepts of affect and percept, the elements at stake in the arts to form blocs of sensations, are at the centre of Deleuze and Guattari’s last work together, *What is Philosophy?*, as they try to define the specificity of art in relation to two other creative activi-

⁸ Quotation translated by the author. The original version being the following: “La capture des forces révèle la communauté des arts qui lie la littérature aux arts non discursif. Mieux, elle indique, pour la littérature y compris, que l’effet de l’art n’est pas réductible au discursif, véritable logique de la sensation, sémiotique des affects”. Italics by the author.

ties: philosophy and science. They are the object of the last chapter: *Percept, Affect and Concept*.

What is the conceptuality of these neologisms? As obvious as it might seem, it is important to specify that Deleuze and Guattari introduce them because all the other pre-existing concepts are not accurate enough to describe what they have in mind. Therefore, affects and percepts are not synonyms for affections, feelings, emotions, or perceptions. What characterises them is that they are a-subjective and do not refer to a lived experience. Otherwise, art would once again find itself with a representative task. Affects and percepts are pure *pathos*, freed from *logos*. Using their own words,

Percepts are no longer perceptions; they are independent of the state of those who experience them. Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them. Sensations, percepts, and affects are beings whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived. They could be said to exist in the absence of man because man, as he is caught in the stone, on the canvas, or by words, is himself a compound of percepts and affects (Deleuze, Guattari 1991, p. 164).

While I have already mentioned the revolutionized account of perception in talking about transcendental empiricism, here I will focus on the reception of the affects. This dimension of experience still requires a more in-depth analysis, especially if we consider that, traditionally, it is a much-neglected modality of the sensible. Furthermore, I find it particularly useful in understanding the originality of Deleuzian aesthetics, as it coagulates and radicalizes the earlier instances, offering interesting insights. But before dwelling on its possible efficacy and actualization, a few considerations are necessary.

First, it should be noted that, as it is a late but pivotal concept, the interpretation of the affects is an object of debate inside the Deleuzian secondary literature. Brian Massumi, for example, has extensively focused on them, especially in his text *Parables for the Virtual* (2002), where he coined the expression “autonomy of the affects”, later taken up by others, to underline this impersonal character of affectivity. Still, as Noëlle Batt has noted, the risk of isolating the concept to understand aesthetic creativity, as Massumi does, is reifying and absolutizing its role: “A concept never operates alone and is precisely defined by the other concepts with whom, at a given moment, it establishes specific relations” (Batt 2006-2007, p. 5).⁹ Therefore, in talking about the role of the affects in Deleuzian aesthetics, it will be essential to bear in

⁹ English translation by the author, the original version being the following: “Parce qu’un concept n’opère jamais seul et que ce qui le définit précisément, ce sont les autres concepts avec lesquels il entre en rapport à un moment donné”.

mind the greater parable in which they operate. An important effort in this direction is the chapter *The Affect of Force. Semiotics and Ethics* written by Anne Sauvagnargues in *Deleuze and Art* (2005). Here, the concept of the affects is thematized in relation to two of Deleuze's main references: Nietzsche and Spinoza. Deleuze devotes several texts to their thought: *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962), *Expressionism in Philosophy. Spinoza* (1968), and *Spinoza. Practical Philosophy* (1970), but the Spinozist conception of the affects is also directly addressed in the course Deleuze held on Spinoza from 1978 to 1981 at the University of Vincennes.

Like Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari are interested in how the affects work, rather than how they are defined. This is why they use the concept of the affect to refer to a passage over a threshold, to a transition from a degree of power (more concretely, a certain capacity to act) to another one. The affects are precisely becomings, those processual and intensive individuations to whom we have already referred as the domain of the sensible. They are not subjective correlates; rather, they are intensive fields in which individuals are caught and evolve. The affects are the continuous passages over a threshold that constitute the processuality of reality and its creativity. They are experience itself, as far as it lived, conceptualized from an immanent point of view, individuating itself:

Affects are precisely these nonhuman becomings of man, just as percepts – including the town – are nonhuman landscapes of nature. Not a “minute of the world passes”, says Cézanne, that we will preserve if we do not “become that minute”. We are not in the world, we become with the world; we become by contemplating it. Everything is vision, becoming. We become universes. Becoming animal, plant, molecular, becoming zero (Deleuze, Guattari 1991, p. 169).

Actualizing Deleuze

The relationship between the affects and their efficacy is particularly fruitful, as it offers an important opening of aesthetics to ethical considerations, certainly not extraneous to Deleuze. Suffice it to think that his predecessors are Nietzsche and Spinoza and that, as I have argued, Deleuze's aesthetics is innervated with vitalistic motifs since its very beginning. The whole critique of representation and the passage to an expressive conception of sensibility should be understood on this plane. This is why I believe that the late notion of the affects constitutes the peak of a radicalization parable that the Deleuzian aesthetological project follows.

This link has certainly not escaped some of Deleuze's interpreters,

as I have briefly mentioned before. An example of a Deleuzian philosopher who has made this theme the centre of her contributions is certainly Rosi Braidotti, who has extensively relied on the Nietzschean distinction between active and reactive forces to distinguish between a critical posture and an affirmative ethics, although relying more in general on the role of the intensive dimension of being as a transformative power, rather than specifically on the affects (see: Braidotti 2019).

Nonetheless, a wider and more direct political interpretation of the Deleuzian conception of the affects is flourishing today outside the more restricted aesthetic domain and its secondary literature, witnessing the disruptive potentiality of Deleuze's aesthetic conception. I am referring to the so-called "Affective turn", a transversal movement that has placed affectivity at the centre of socio-political studies, to examine both the empowering potentiality of certain positive affects and the possible political use of the negative ones, as, for example, fear.

If the Deleuzian affects are conceptualized as becomings, their type could indeed inform about the quality of the passage they are expressing. As David Lapoujade claims: "That is one of the essential features of individuation in Deleuze's work; individuation makes groundlessness rise as a field of experimentation within the individual entity to transform it, subject it to metamorphoses, tear it from its territorialities" (Lapoujade 204, p. 127). The recently published work of Georges Didi-Huberman, *Brouillards de peines et de désirs. Faits d'affects 1*, for example, goes in this direction, showing how a revolutionized account of affectivity, freed from the control of subjectivity and restored in its effective power, can help conceptualize the political not in voluntaristic terms, but rather as based on sensible ethics.

The conceptions of the affects as power modulator permits to radically overcome the primacy of judgment, to create an ethos of the sensible that covers all levels of experience, linking each creation to a non-human mode of existence.

Conclusions

The Western Modern conception of aesthetics is mainly representative: it conceives sensibility as the passive faculty of a subject that determines reality for gnoseological needs. Of course, its traditional object is also the creativity of the arts, but these are thought of as autonomous and exclusively human activities that have little to do with the creativity of experience in general. This is why, in 1969,

Deleuze denounces the duality of aesthetics, trying to overcome it. To do so, he completely revolutionizes the conceptualization of the sensible, proposing an expressive account of aesthetics in which the primacy of the cogito and gnoseology is overcome and where experience expresses itself through sensibility.

Today, this Deleuzian operation is still very actual, as the atomization of the sensible persists. To understand the far-reaching radicality of the Deleuzian passage from a representative to an expressive conception of aesthetics, it should first and foremost be noted that what he questions in the earlier account is not its veridicality. Deleuze is not interested in conceiving the sensible as something that can be submitted to the categories of the intellect and judged, nor to prove that this description is false. On the contrary, he argues that this framework is precisely what inhibits the effective power of the sensible, reducing the difference in the identity, and preventing the novelty from appearing. This is why his account of aesthetics moves, from the very beginning, on an ethical plane – rather than on gnoseology. Indeed, the whole Deleuzian philosophical project could be addressed on this level, as he “produces something profoundly life-affirming, a cultivation of joy and a celebration of power” (Moore 2011, p. 543).

Throughout the article, I have shown the passages through which Deleuze achieves the reunification of the sensible, starting from establishing an intensive domain of reality in his transcendental empiricism, to completely short-circuit the principle of subjectivity in his constructivism. In this sense, Deleuzian aesthetics could be said to follow a parable of radicalization, where the earlier instances are maintained and exacerbated in his late conception of artistic activity and affectivity.

His conception of the affects, in particular, is exemplary. Affects are thought of as intensive domains of individuation that permeate every form of experience, transforming them and making them become. This is why they are at the centre of the so-called “Affective Turn”, a transversal domain of studies that focuses on the wide political use of affectivity. Aesthetics expresses itself through the affects, inaugurating an intensive domain of the sensible that goes hand in glove with and immanently founded ethics. Using the words of Anne Sauvagnargues, “Art is real, it produces real effects on the plane of forces and not on the one of forms. What results is an original displacement of the fracture between real and imaginary, where the imaginary ceases to be a mental fiction, and art a distraction of the culture” (200-2007, pp. 40, 41).¹⁰

¹⁰ English translation by the author. The original version being the following: “L’art est réel, il opère des effets réels sur le plan de forces et non sur celui des formes. Il en

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