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# Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Cinema

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## Chapter 5

# Suspended Gestures: Schizoanalysis, Affect and the Face in Cinema

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*Our work begins with the human face. . . . The possibility of drawing near to the . . . face is the primary originality and the distinctive quality of the cinema.<sup>1</sup>*

*—Ingmar Bergman*

Gilles Deleuze thus invokes Bergman in the first volume of his *Cinema* books, in a chapter on affect and the face. Within these volumes, Deleuze borrows from Henri Bergson's theory of perception and time to craft a film-philosophy that opposes linguistic or psychoanalytic approaches to cinema. It seems somewhat peculiar, then, that Deleuze's discussion of affect centres upon the role of the face, a role he further links to that of the close-up. This move is anomalous for several reasons. Though the *Cinema* books chronicle a seemingly endless taxonomy of signs (e.g. perception-images, recollection-images, chronosigns, qualisigns), Deleuze is careful to avoid simple correlations between the theoretical concepts he discusses and concrete formal techniques. He further avoids readings of filmic content that might reduce the film-event to a static 'text' that could be decoded. The implied link between depictions of faces, the stylistic use of close-ups, and the generation of affective responses thus appears, on the surface, to be somewhat inconsistent with Deleuze's larger project.

Moreover, the association of the face with affect treads close to cognitive and psychological models, which typically read the face as a register of interior states, a means of both communicating and eliciting emotional reactions. If facial expressions are signs, this seems to suggest the presence of a subject whose face 'speaks' emotion, as well as a separate spectator-subject who reads and emotionally responds to the messages conveyed. Such a scenario seems entirely at odds with Deleuzian theory, which questions the notion of a coherent subject, opposes clear distinctions between interiority and exteriority and is deeply suspicious of the Saussurean split

between signifier and signified, let alone the implication that one's face might transparently signify some truth about interior psychic states.

Deleuze's interest in the cinematic face is far more complex than it might initially appear. His references to faciality invoke a long history of fascination with the physiognomy of the close-up in film theory, in particular the writings of Jean Epstein and Béla Balázs. At the same time Deleuze's approach here intersects with his work with Félix Guattari on faciality, representation and structures of power in the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* volumes. Given the centrality of the face to film theory, psychoanalysis, and Deleuze and Guattari's formulation of schizoanalysis, faciality seem a productive place to begin to imagine a schizoanalysis of cinema. If the face has traditionally been approached as a site for both the creation and expression of human subjectivity, schizoanalysis engages with faciality, particularly as it is deployed in the arts, to enact a provocative challenge to the systems that produce such subjects. Deleuze and Guattari write, 'Reading a text':

is never a scholarly exercise in search of what is signified, still less a highly textual exercise in search of a signifier. Rather it is a productive use of the literary machine, a montage of desiring-machines, a schizoid exercise that extracts from the text its revolutionary force. (1983: 106)

Although Deleuze and Guattari specifically reference literature here, they are explicit about the centrality of artistic practice in general to their schizoanalytic project. This project rejects the reign of an expert analyst, a figure versed in the cloistered code of an institutionalized discourse who performs a diagnosis of the art-object-cum-analysand. Instead of a self-enclosed system of modelization (a system that presents a pre-formulated interpretative schema), schizoanalysis is an open 'meta-model' that can serve as 'an instrument for deciphering systems of modelization in various other fields' (Guattari, 1998: 433). Rather than interpreting pre-constituted subjects, schizoanalysis maps the nexus of forces that work to make subject formation possible. The goal is to expose the repressive operations of such systems, dismantling them and opening them to unforeseen connections with outside elements. The tools of schizoanalysis are inconsistent and continually evolving, arising, as they must, from their unique social and historical conditions. The key, for Guattari, is to seek out, within these social contexts, those assemblages of enunciation 'that are capable of fashioning new coordinates for reading and for "bringing to life" hitherto unknown representations and propositions' (Guattari, 1998: 433).

The arts are one of a constellation of social, technological, scientific and aesthetic fields through which schizoanalysis can work, bringing to light the connections and flows that constitute the machine of a social regime. Yet the arts occupy a privileged position, for while they are necessarily embedded within dominant political and economic systems, they nevertheless have the potential to deterritorialize, bursting open and extending beyond the system to forge new alliances. These new connections are expressive and creative, providing the basis for the assemblages of enunciation that, for Deleuze and Guattari, offer a means of political transformation.<sup>2</sup> A schizoanalysis of cinema, then, would not approach a film as a representational object to be analysed or decoded. Instead, schizoanalysis confronts the film-event as a machinic force, exploring the means by which 'collective arrangements' of filmic enunciation might function within, through, and against larger systems of social power. These systems, namely here the capitalist-familial regime, strive to reterritorialize and repress, to code and contain subjects according to pre-existing laws. As a corollary of this 'civilized capitalist machine', the film industry invariably produces works that reinforce the dominant values of that system. Yet film, as an art, is also a 'desiring-machine', one that produces affective expressions that are not always strictly coded, and which have the potential to deterritorialize (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: 32). As Guattari writes:

Commercial cinema is undeniably familialist, Oedipian, and reactionary. But it is not intrinsically so, the way psychoanalysis is. It is so 'on top of everything else'. Its 'mission' is not to adapt people to outdated and archaic elitist Freudian models, but to those implied by mass production . . . While its 'analytic' means are richer, more dangerous, because more fascinating than those of psychoanalysis, they are, in fact, more precarious and more full of promise. (1996: 165)

Cinema is not only firmly embedded within the capitalist power structure, it typically functions as one of that system's most potent tools of subjectification. Yet for Guattari, the language of cinema, unlike that of psychoanalysis, is 'alive', it contains, in its machinic excesses, the potential to challenge repressive systems and to 'modify the arrangements of desire' (1996: 165).

Schizoanalysis is thus engaged in a series of destructive and productive tasks. It must dismantle Oedipus, castration and other impediments to the 'flow of desire'. At the same time, schizoanalysis entails two productive activities. The first involves 'discovering in a subject the nature, the formation, or the functioning of *his* desiring-machines, independently of any

interpretations' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: 322).<sup>3</sup> This task requires viewing the partial objects that comprise the parts of the desire-machines as they are dispersed, resisting the temptation to organize them under the rubric of a structural whole. The second task has to do with the revolutionary potential of a 'schizophrenic escape' (1983: 341). The goal here is not to leave the social context behind, for this would be impossible, but to couple escape with a social investment. This escape, which is more precisely a virtual potentiality, lies in the mapping of the 'machinic indices' of 'libidinal investments in the social field' (1983: 350). Schizoanalysis here creates breaks, schizzes that take up the flows of unconscious desire to 'resect them according to mobile and nonconfigurative points' (1983: 351). In relation to the face, then, a schizoanalytic approach first aims to dismantle the territorializing traits associated with the face as a representational and signifying entity. This dismantling in turn provides for a productive movement beyond repressive configurations towards new, creative assemblages. This potential movement must always be approached, however, as firmly embedded within the social. The line of flight is not an individual liberation: it is the schizophrenizing of a social regime.

The sections that follow will attempt to map the visage of faciality as it surfaces in a number of Deleuze's, and Deleuze and Guattari's texts, where each figure the face according to different modalities and artistic media. I will then turn to a film that deploys the face in a manner that resonates with both the destructive and productive functions of schizoanalysis, Pedro Almodóvar's *Bad Education* (2004).

### Affect and faciality

The notion of affect, for Bergson, arises from an interval between perception and action. For both Deleuze and Bergson this interval is a 'center of indetermination', a delay brought about by the living being who subtracts from the chaotic swirl of images that comprise the world just those perceptions that are of interest, those things that the being can act upon, or which might act upon the being (Deleuze, 1986: 61). This delay or space marks the seat of lived existence, what Deleuze calls 'a coincidence of subject and object', a mixing of sensations from the outside and the experience of the being from the inside (1986: 65).

'Perception', Bergson writes, 'in its pure state, is, then, in very truth, a part of things. As for affective sensation, it does not spring spontaneously from the depths of consciousness to extend itself, as it grows weaker, in

space; it is one with the necessary modifications to which, in the midst of the surrounding images that influence it, the particular image that each one of us terms his body is subject' (1991: 65). Living beings, then, are the contingent centres binding assemblages of perception-images, action-images and affection-images. Though the most immediate goals of any being are geared towards action, there is nevertheless a residue, an after-image that arises from the act perception – namely, elements of images not filtered into action. These images, distilled from their immediate context, are thus 'framed'; Deleuze describes them as 'isolated', part of 'closed systems' or 'tableaux' (1986: 61). Although the body as a whole may remain temporarily immobile or inactive within the space of the interval, there is a certain 'effort' generated in response to this after-image: affection. What we find with affect is that body movement is truncated and turned into expression, a movement of the sensorial capacities, and a temporal shift towards memory and the sheets of the virtual past.

Affective sensation, for Bergson, is a physiological, sensory response to what might otherwise be transmuted into outward physical movements. Deleuze describes the phenomenon as a 'motor effort on an immobilized receptive plate', a gestural expression of affect (1986: 66). He further suggests that this mode of expression is most clearly manifested on the face, leading to his rather curious assertion: 'the affection-image is the close-up, and the close-up is the face' (1986: 87).

The first point one should emphasize here is that Deleuze does not limit his discussion to the human face, and in fact stresses the manner in which all kinds of objects, landscapes and images are capable of being 'facialized' in film. The question here is not one of resemblance (an object that looks like a face), or an anthropomorphic subjectivity, but rather to ask what it is that faces *do* (see Rushton, 2002). There are two poles associated with what faces do, for Deleuze: one a reflective, unified surface, the other a multiplicity of parts that move, shifting between states, independently. Deleuze offers the example of a clock. When looking at the clock, one might focus one's attention on the incremental movements of the two hands – what we find here is an 'intensive series'. One could also focus on the face of the clock as a whole, a 'receptive immobile surface' (Deleuze, 1986: 87). Each of these qualities exists simultaneously, two 'conditions of possibility' that can either open through serial movements to connect with other worlds or occupy the reflective space of the interval (Rushton, 2002: 231). While the human face is clearly the nexus from which this notion of faciality emerges, Deleuze extends it into all manner of images that possess

these poles: even that which does not resemble a face can be 'facified', and as such, look back at us (1986: 87–8).

Deleuze does not deny that the face, in our everyday encounters, serves to convey information in a number of capacities: it distinguishes one individual from another, it serves in a socializing capacity and it works to communicate information. Yet in the close-up, these capacities are 'dissolved', the face becomes a 'phantom', opaque, distilled from its spatio-temporal coordinates. As Balázs describes this process:

[W]hen a face that we have just seen in the middle of a crowd is detached from its surroundings, put into relief, it is as if we were suddenly face to face with it. . . . Our sensation of space is abolished. A dimension of another order is opened to us. (Deleuze 1986: 96)

This abstraction, this lack of individuation is disquieting precisely because the face no longer functions in its everyday capacity as a situated, communicative interface. Stretched across the screen, the face is held immobile by the close-up, yet is animated and traversed by mobile expressive parts.<sup>4</sup> The decontextualized face confronts us with its impenetrable topography. Ungrounded, the face serves as sheer potentiality, a suspended gesture.<sup>5</sup>

What Deleuze associates with the face, then, can be extended to any type of shot that works to isolate and extract some kind of expressive quality in and for itself. In Peircean terms, the affection-image is associated with firstness, a 'quality of feeling' in itself, encountered with no outside reference – it is a state of possibility prior to any linkage in a system of signification, or to a sequence of action-reaction. For Deleuze, this abstraction of space can extract a kind of 'faciality' from all kinds of images (parts of the body, objects, landscapes) with an expressive intensity. The question is not merely one of form. Deleuze argues that shots that are not technically 'close' can achieve the status of the close-up through the collapsing of depth, or 'the suppression of perspective', such that the image elicits an affective power or quality (1986: 107); one might likewise presume that some technically close shots fail to perform as close-ups in this capacity. Thus while for Deleuze the close-up face in cinema may not exist as such in a literal sense. The quality of faciality and the function of the close-up is clearly that of pure affect.

The affection-image exists as a kind of tableau vivant, vibrating immobility, in a perpetual state of inbetween-ness. It becomes a sheer surface, a screen of potentiality with an extended duration that supplants action and agency (Deleuze, 1986: 99–100). The face as affection-image marks a

threshold between worlds, a moment of forking time where various potential paths, actions and lines of flight transect.

### Signification and subjectification

Although the facial encounter is indeed one of potential openness, this does not necessarily lead to the degree of destabilization that Deleuze associates with the time-image. Indeed, one must read the discussion of the face in the *Cinema* books in the context of Deleuze's collaborations with Guattari. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari discuss the face as central to the twinned processes of signification and subjectification, a means of centralizing, classifying and enforcing systems of power. This function of faciality is not universal; it is engendered by particular social regimes based on their configurations of meaning, rule and power. Deleuze and Guattari outline several types of social regimes in relation to this question of faciality (a list, which they clarify, is not exhaustive). Polyvocal 'primitive' societies are relatively decentralized, and while there is certainly a level of symbolization at work, it, too, remains localized, corporeal and open to transmutations. The signifying regime, however, centralizes power with the state. The body of the despot-leader stands in for the body of the state, and the leader's face becomes the signifying centre from which all meaning radiates. All signs are filtered through this face, and interpretation (embodied in the figure of the priest) spirals outwards in rings of decreasing conformity. In art-historical terms, as Ronald Bogue illustrates, we might envision the despotic face as the icon of Christ Pantocrator, omnipotent, facing directly forward, encircled by a halo, or gazing down from the summit of a dome (2003: 96). Counter to the face of the despot is the body of the tortured, the scapegoat who loses his/her face, and whose line of flight, in that first step before exclusion, marks the entropy of the system, that which resists signification, everything that is 'bad' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 116).

The post-signifying regime, by contrast, is marked by a recuperation of the scapegoat's line of flight, rerouting it into 'into the positive line of our subjectivity, our Passion' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 122). The figure of the wandering prophet embodies this figure, driven by passion rather than interpretation. The relationship to the face of the despot shifts here; there is a turning away – God averts his face, and the subject turns away in fear (1987: 123). This is the regime of betrayal – the people betray God, but in doing so, fulfil God's wishes by taking evil unto themselves, enacting, as such a double betrayal. We find ourselves here confronted not with a

central governing face, the face seen from the front as with the Byzantine icon, but rather by 'a face-off between two countenances that become gaunt and turn away in profile' (1987: 124).<sup>6</sup> We might look here to the semi-averted gazes in Duccio's *The Calling of Saint Peter and Saint Andrew*, or the faces of Christ and Judas, eyes locked, frozen in direct profile among the backdrop of the crowd in Giotto's *The Kiss of Judas*. This is the point of subjectification, a vortex, a site of de- and reterritorialization that gives rise to the subject of enunciation, as well as the subject of statement. Deleuze and Guattari compare this to the analysand in psychoanalysis, who is always subject to the discourse she speaks, or rather which speaks through her, whereas the analyst never has to speak at all (1987: 129–32). These various regimes, for Deleuze and Guattari, almost always exist in mixed states. The face that governs the mixed despotic-passional regime is not just any face, but rather the white wall/black hole system that Deleuze and Guattari link historically with the year zero (1987: 182). Rather than a concrete face, we find at the heart of this system an abstract machine that performs the integrated processes of signification and subjectification through the mask of the White Man par excellence, as Deleuze and Guattari describe him, 'Jesus Christ superstar' (1987: 176). The empty black hole of this face is a machine that blindly evaluates the faces that pass before it, computing degrees of deviation and gridding the subjects that pass through it. In other words, the face as a signifying and subjectifying entity is the product of an abstract system, one that constitutes that face as a means of individuation, categorization and identification according to a matrix of surveillance, power and control. Race is central to this system, and hence Deleuze and Guattari's insistence that this facializing machine be described as a *white* wall with gaping black holes, a system with deep historical, political and geographical roots, through and against which all other faces are organized and defined. The white wall/black hole system overcodes, or facializes, not just subjects but the world; it is programmed to obviate the presence of an outside through an unending series of signifying chains, all hurtling towards the depthless black hole of subjectivity (1987: 179).

There is another entity that can be born from the excesses of the facial machine, a 'probe-head', like an automated missile, that functions to defacialize, to deterritorialize and as such to create new transversals between different traits and strata (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 190). We might look here to an artist such as Francis Bacon. Bacon draws forth the head, the body, obscured by the face, the 'meat', unleashing a realm of indeterminate, animal fleshiness. The point is not merely to abstract or deform, but to touch a nerve, to illuminate the resonances between bodies obscured by our representational regimes. This returns to the question of affect:

'The affect is not the passage from one lived state to another but man's nonhuman becoming. . . . It is a zone of indetermination, of indiscernibility, as if things, beasts, and persons . . . endlessly reach that point that immediately precedes their natural differentiation' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 173).<sup>7</sup> In light of the involution of signification and subjectivity that Deleuze and Guattari link to the face, we might thus locate within the affection-image two tendencies: one towards the kind of facialization that imposes order, that grids the subject, and the other towards a deterritorialization of the face that counters the subject as well as the larger system of representation. An interrogation of the face would thus require the same destructive and productive tasks associated with schizoanalysis, a tearing down, and an excavation, accompanied by a movement outwards:

Dismantling the face is the same as breaking through the wall of the signifier and getting out of the black hole of subjectivity. Here, the program, the slogan, of schizoanalysis is: Find your black holes and white walls, know your faces; it is the only way you will be able to dismantle them and draw your lines of flight. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 188)

'The face, what a horror', Deleuze and Guattari write. 'It is naturally a lunar landscape, with its pores, planes, mats . . . and holes: there is no need for a close-up to make it inhuman; it is naturally a close-up, and naturally inhuman' (1987: 190). Indeed the face, as affection-image, is a block of sensation. Much like Bacon's paintings use colour, rhythm and the figural to make visible new corporeal relations, the cinematic face harnesses its own specific qualities (duration, movement and configurations of space), to unleash an expressive force. This focus on sensation, affect and a not-necessarily-human corporeality forms the clearest link between these two distinct, but overlapping presentations of the face: the decontextualizing face found in the *Cinema* books, and the primitive-head/Christ-face/Probe-head figures in *A Thousand Plateaus*.<sup>8</sup> As a plateau between perception and action, a threshold for both signification and subjectivity, the face is central to the schizoanalytic project.

### Beneath the gaze of the father: *Bad Education*

It would be a mistake to read Deleuze and Guattari's work on faciality in a literal sense, focusing too closely on concrete human faces, rather than on structures of power. The reason they choose to describe this process as 'facialization', rather than a more abstract term, is because it is with the

human face that we initially and most overtly engage in these processes. With this in mind, I would like to reflect on a film that explores precisely this dynamic: Pedro Almodóvar's *Bad Education*. There is a level on which the work re-enacts the trauma of the despotic-passional regime. There are clear visual parallels to the kinds of facial relationships Deleuze and Guattari describe, as well as thematic resonances. What is at stake here, beyond the concrete depictions of the face, its visual distortions, or the narrative content, is the deployment of sensations that excavate the forces and networks that define a particular moment. Almodóvar explores the relations between faces as a means of illuminating the physiognomy of the fascist-Catholic regime, and excavating the pervasive, lingering micro-fascisms still registered in the visage of post-Franco Spain.

*Bad Education* is comprised of several versions of a narrative nested within one another, as Almodóvar describes them, like Russian dolls.<sup>9</sup> The heart of the story involves two young boys, Ignacio and Enrique, who fall in love while students at a Catholic boarding school in 1964. Ignacio has become the obsession of his literature teacher, Father Manolo, who ceaselessly preys upon him. Manolo, unable to possess the object of his desire, is consumed with jealousy, and expels Enrique from the school, severing the boys' relationship. This story is presented to us in a highly mediated fashion; however, the present day of the film is 1980, where the adult Enrique, who is now a film director, is visited by an actor who claims to be Ignacio, who gives him a story, 'The Visit', based on their childhood experiences. The tale unfolds through a web of narrated 'visits' and texts (written, filmic and verbal), each revealing enfolded layers of betrayal, impersonation and falsification.

The polyphonic layers in the film are comprised of stylized tableaux, each fixated on the performance of the face. Faciality in this context is explicitly relational. We see the frontal face of the child as a love object, gazing at length directly into the camera. We see as well the averted face of betrayal and shame, the face of lust, and, like a true film noir, the exchange of recognition and affection between faces that will be undone by a darker unmasking (assisted, in one instance, by digital effects, as the faces of the boys metamorphose into what we assume to be their adult countenances). We see the face of the filmic icon, Sara Montiel, in a coquettish 3/4 view, floating on a theatre screen above the silhouettes of the young boys, who pleasure each other beneath her benevolent gaze. Montiel's face is revisited in the performances of her imitators, the aging drag queen and the impostor Ignacio, who remains still the visage of desire. Most pervasively, we see the confrontation in profile that marks each visit. Almodóvar presents an

endless profusion of such shots, where each character 'faces off' the other in stark, perfectly centred direct profiles highly reminiscent of Giotto's *Judas*. We find here as well a 'facefication' of surfaces (walls, posters, statues, text), sometimes nearly literal, unleashing a 'looking back' that seems palpable even to the characters. The climax of this attention to the face occurs when Ignacio is violated by the priest, resulting in a fundamental split; as a stream of blood flows down his forehead, the image itself rends open, tearing his face in two.

The face here, which is in fact a face constructed through the adult Ignacio's written story, proffered by the figure of Ignacio's brother and impostor, visualized through the adult Enrique's film version, becomes a surface, a wall on which the story is written and a vortex into which subjectivity spins. It is a marker of time as well, its torn surface echoing the ripped layers of the movie posters that form the strata of history in the film. The encounter with the face is always a performance, a fact that Almodóvar emphasizes not only through the framed narrative, but also through the proscenium of the screen itself, whose aspect ratio slides open and closed like curtains around the image throughout the course of the film.

There is another type of face that emerges within this context. Beyond the human face, the only other image that sustains such close attention within the film is that of the written word. As Ignacio's tale unfolds through its many written iterations, the characters, and the camera, repeatedly fall into the face of the typewritten page. The text itself becomes another kind of white wall/black hole system, shot in a manner that echoes the exchanges between faces, rendered with a sensuous tactility. The written page is often the force that sets the stage for a 'visit', and is treated by the camera in much the same way as the human face, in consuming frontal close-ups, and in paired encounters, in profile. Signification and subjectification occur here, but in the same manner in which the relations between faces are dissected by the image, the text here, too, falls into fabulation far more often than it reveals the truth.

Thus while the face, in all its incarnations in *Bad Education*, might not go so far as to dismantle the power-relations that govern the despotic-passional regime, it brings to light the perversion that lies at the heart of the machine. The machine that is interrogated here is a very specific one, rooted in its cultural context. The narrative does not make its political grounding fully explicit, yet the carefully plotted temporal settings (the childhood trauma in 1964, Ignacio's story set in 1977 and the present-day film production set in 1980) mark key moments in Spanish history. Almodóvar's project is far more political than it is religious. From behind the Christ-face, the visage

that governs this system is clearly that of Franco. It seems key to note, as well, the regime of cinema that maintains a spectral presence throughout the film, registered within the mercurial ambitions of Ignacio's actor-brother, the schizoid pleasures of the queer-queen-mother Sarah Montiel, as well as in Enrique's (and Almodóvar's) position as author. Clearly such systems, like the narrative, are folded into one another.

If the passional regime centres upon the point of subjectification, within Almodóvar's passion play that point is subverted and multiplied. Deterritorialization is not complete. (We remain grounded in the character of Enrique, the singular 'real' identity, the recipient of the final, albeit incomplete, textual communication from his lover and the partial, if unreliable double for the writer/director Almodóvar himself.) What is significant, however, is the painstaking manner in which these positions and relationships are exhumed, and the role which affect plays in suspending, bifurcating and redirecting the trajectory of action. The complex interactions between signification, adoration, subject formation and systems of control are unraveled through assemblages of faces and their myriad affects.

In exploring this multifaceted potential of faciality – a genealogical exploration of history, paired with a force propelling towards change and futurity – *Bad Education* deploys the face in ways that undermine restrictive presentations of subjectivity and identity, interior and exterior. Simultaneously, through its various performative iterations, falsifications and resonations with its environment, the face is rent open to new trans-subjective alliances. The film achieves this not by asserting a universal sensation, a common denominator emotion, but by exposing the repressive system through which subjects' faces and sensations are coded. This is not a flight into pure abstraction but a slow, painful process of excavation. We find a reiteration of the narrative of subjectification, but one that is continually exposed as false. This is not an encounter with the other so much as it is the realization that the creation of subjects, in and of itself, is oppressive, painful and perverse. The affection-image, when it is mobilized towards its most radical potential, provokes us to both feel and think this fact.