

What is ‘the Haptic’?: Consideration of *Logique de la Sensation* and Deleuze’s theory of sensation

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In his work entitled, *Francis Bacon: Logique de la Sensation* (1981) (transcribed as *FB* in the following discussion), Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) develops his theory of sensation by considering the work of the painter, Francis Bacon (1909-1992). In his book, Deleuze picks up the sense of ‘haptic (in French, *haptique*)’, which derives from “*aptô*” in Greek and shows a “possibility of seeing [regard]”[1]. Though Deleuze takes this concept of sense from Alois Riegl (1858-1905), he adds to this term or concept meanings different from Riegl. While Riegl uses it with the meaning of “close-range” vision to describe Egyptian low relief artwork, Deleuze applies it to Bacon’s paintings in order to analyze and describe them. This fact clearly shows that Deleuze uses this term in his own way, and that there are more meanings than those that Riegl puts forth. Moreover, as mentioned above, if *FB* is considered as a theory of sensation more than a simple theory of painting on Bacon, then it can be said that the concept of ‘the haptic’, which is symbolized by Bacon’s paintings, plays the central role in Deleuze’s theory of sensation. Therefore, what is the concept of ‘the haptic’ or what is the theory of sensation for Deleuze? Grasping *FB* as a work in which Deleuze develops his theory of sensation, this paper aims to clarify the concept/sensation of ‘the haptic’ and analyze his theory of sensation.

When his theory of sensation or the concept of ‘the haptic’ is referred to, it seems that it is often discussed from the point of color. For instance, Ronald Bogue mentions the relation between the concept of ‘the haptic’ and color, which will also be important in this paper. However, “the action of the hand”, which Deleuze considers essential in Bacon’s paintings, and the concept of ‘the haptic’ itself are not mentioned sufficiently. Furthermore, when considering these topics, prior studies are often inclined to presuppose “the senses as transparent senses”, which have already been divided into the sense of sight, touch and so forth[2]. On the other hand, Mototaki Shinohara develops Deleuze’s theory of sensation into one of his own, focusing on the relation itself that is made by the senses of vision and touch, the concept of color, and the concept of body[3]. This paper doesn’t take the stance that the senses are divided into individual senses, but places great importance on the “intermingled (nontransparent) senses” or the dynamic combination of the hand and the eye, as Shinohara mentions, which becomes something like a new sense, by “*I-kotsu*” of the senses[4]. Moreover, this paper aims to show the relation between the concept of ‘haptic’ and the concept of chance that are brought into a theory of sensation by the action of the hand. There are two reasons why its relation is emphasized: One is that a hand that makes countless interplay with the eyes, and even the actions of the hand itself are important for the theory of sensation or for the theory of art centering on the concept of ‘the haptic’ in *FB*. The other is that its theory of sensation or art

leads to the concept of body and the vital dynamics concerning “the moment of chance” thorough the concept of the hand or the action of the hand. This chance-ness itself brought about by the hand also seems to support the aesthetics of Deleuze as “aesthetics of line”, an idea developed by Mireille Buydens[5]. Touching back briefly on Riegl’s concept of ‘the haptic’, this paper makes clear the difference between the concept of ‘the haptic’ in Deleuze’s and Riegl’s work, and clarifies or interprets the additional meanings Deleuze adds to it. By the way, we should pay attention to the fact that the concept of ‘the haptic’ already appears in *Mille Plateaux* (with Félix Guattari, 1980) (transcribed as *MP* in the following discussion), written one year before *FB*. Referring to chapter 14, “The Smooth and the Striated” in *MP* where the term of ‘the haptic’ appears, we discuss the concept of ‘the haptic’ and conclude as follows: the concept or sense of ‘the haptic’ is a sense that captures a moment of transition from one aspect to the other, or a moment of transition or variation. It also relates to the body as “flesh” or “meat”. Moreover, the concept or sense of ‘the haptic’ is the sense that grasps accident or chance.

To arrive at such a conclusion, we discuss the following: In § 1, focusing on *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie* (1964) by Riegl (transcribed as *SK* in the following discussion), Riegl’s concept of ‘the haptic’ is analyzed. In § 2 and § 3, the concepts of ‘the haptic’ in *MP* and *FB*, and their relations are examined. To do so, this paper especially focuses on the concept of the Smooth in § 2 and three elements of Bacon’s paintings as discussed by Deleuze as well as the concept of colors and various modes of hand in § 3. In § 4, “the action of the hand” used by Bacon that relates to the concept of ‘the haptic’ is compared with the one of Jackson Pollock, called a “painter of the hand” in *FB*. In § 5, the “Diagram” that controls the action of the hand and the concept of body is analyzed.

1. The Concept of ‘the Haptic’ in *SK*

As clarified in *FB*, Deleuze takes the concept of ‘the haptic’ from Riegl’s *SK*. Although not to be able to be examined in detail, it should at least be discussed briefly.

When considering the concept of ‘the haptic’ by Riegl in *SK*, we should pay attention to the fact that the term ‘haptic’ is not actually used in it. Correctly speaking, this word is not used by Riegl himself in it. We don’t find this word in the text but rather in the notes. As Emile Reisch, the editor of *SK*, points out in the foreword, this note was added by Reich himself in the response to Otto Pächt’s suggestion. According to Reisch’s note, it is said that Riegl says self-reflectively that the word of “taktisch” is not proper and he should have used the word of “haptisch” instead of it in response to a critique on *SK*[6]. The passage to which Reisch adds this note mentions Egyptian reliefs that Riegl describes as “taktisch”. At the very least, it shows that the contents that are described as “taktisch” in *SK* can or should be also described as “haptisch”. Then, though a little bit long, this paper should quote and review this passage on Egyptian art, which corresponds to the concept of “taktisch” or “haptisch”.

“...The greatest adhesion to the pure sense perception of the (seemingly objective) material individuality of objects and, therefore, the possible greatest assimilation of the material

appearance of the work of art to the plane, yet not the optical plane, imagined by our eye at a distance from the objects, but the tactile plane suggested by the sense of touch, because on this level of development, to be certain about (touchable) impenetrability also means having the conviction [*sic*] of the material individuality. From the optical point of view, this is the plane which the eye perceives when it comes so close to the surface of an object, that all the silhouettes and, in particular all shadows which otherwise could disclose an alteration in depth, disappear. The perception of objects, which characterizes this first level of the ancient *Kunstwollen*, is thus tactile [*taktische*], and in as much as it has to be optical to a certain degree, it is *nahsichtig*; ancient Egyptian art expresses it in almost its purest form"[7].

The aforementioned note is added to the word underlined, in which the word of "taktisch" should be exchanged for "haptisch", and, as following sentences in *SK* show, both meanings of "taktisch" and "haptisch" are "*nahsichtig* (close-up or close-range vision)". As to this close-up vision, Riegl himself mentions it with the expression of "palpating (*betasten*)" the relief figure and ground in a note of *SK*. It can be considered as an expression that presents the mode of close-up vision as "seeing like groping".

As this paper has clarified, Riegl thinks of the concept of "haptisch" as close-up vision. The words haptisch, haptique, or haptic are all derived from the Greek verb, "aptô" that means "to touch". Deleuze doesn't read Riegl's concept of "haptisch" as the external relation between the eye and the hand but as "one of possibilities of seeing"[8]. Though he borrows Riegl's concept of "haptisch", Deleuze adds his own original considerations to it[9] – the sense of touch (or the action of the hand) and the concept of color. For instance, Riegl finds three steps in the relation between eye and hand in an ancient plastic art: First is the vision as "Nahsicht" (close-range vision) in ancient Egyptian art – it is seeing like touching, in other words, it refuses three-dimensional perception (e.g. shadow or depth). Second is the vision as "Normalsicht" (normal vision) in classical Greek art – there is depth by appearance of shadow and the viewer needs to stand at a further distance from objects to perceive them than in the case of close-range vision and ancient Egyptian bas-relief. However, in this case, the viewer will not stand so distant from the object that the connection of each part of the object becomes indistinguishable. Such vision is the middle between close-range vision and seeing from a distance (*Fernsicht*). This vision is called "tactile-optical" as well as "Normalsicht". The third step is "Fernsicht" (seeing from a distance) in the art of the late Roman Empire – the viewer absolutely separates from the tactile element that we recognize in ancient arts. Separate parts of the individuals are isolated through deep shadow and the three-dimensional expression is more foregrounded. This mode of "Fernsicht" (seeing from a distance) is called the "optisch" mode as well[10]. While Riegl tries to apply this linear transition from the sense of touch to the sense of vision in the modern arts, Deleuze doesn't adopt same point of view. He distinguishes relations between the eye and the hand in his own way, rejecting Riegl's linear model in favor of one that discusses the action of the hand and nonlinear modes of the eye. He distills this model through the analysis of paintings[11]. To consider this topic, first, this paper examines the meaning of 'the haptic' in *MP* in the next paragraph and uses it as a clue to clarify the difference between Deleuze and

Riegl on the concept of ‘the haptic’. Then this paper explores Deleuze’s concept of ‘the action of the hand’ and ‘color’ in detail in following paragraphs, especially §3 and §4.

2. The Concept of ‘the Haptic’ in *MP*

As mentioned above, the concept of ‘the haptic’ is referred to in chapter 14 of *MP*, “The Smooth and the Striated”. In that chapter, Deleuze considers the concept of ‘the haptic’ by using the ideas of “le Lisse (the Smooth)” and “le Strié (the Striated)” in a section titled, *The Aesthetic Model: Nomad Art*.

The Smooth and the Striated can be referred to as follows for the time being: the Smooth is immeasurable and defined as continuous variation, heterogeneity and virtuality. On the other hand, the Striated or “le Strié”, derives from the past participle of the French verb, “strier” which means “marking with line”, and can be understood as something sectioned or divided. While the Smooth is a ceaselessly varying force and can’t be divided without variation of its quality, we can understand that the Striated is the Smooth divided or varied into the measurable according to a measure or scale. Moreover, Deleuze makes the binary of “abstract line-concrete line” enter to discuss the Aesthetic Model[12]. A notable feature of the “abstract line” is “inorganic life”, which is opposed to “the organic”. For Deleuze, the organic just appropriates or diverts life because organization of things means loss of relational variation. As opposed to the organic, the inorganic breaks the frame of organization and retrieves the dynamics of life. Though, as Deleuze himself says, the relation between the Smooth and the Striated is not so simple, we shall take it as such for further consideration on the concept of ‘the haptic’ itself for the time being[13].

The relations between the Smooth and the Striated, and between abstract line and concrete line bring the concept/sensation of ‘the haptic’ and “the optique”(optic in English) to our discussion. These two binaries allow us to consider the relationship between the concept of ‘haptic’ and “optic” as follows: the Striated derives from the Smooth. However, when that occurs, the Striated loses the seamless virtuality of the Smooth and becomes differentiated; the Striated must follow a unit, measure, or scale (the Striated is “measurable” as mentioned above) and must become stable. In addition, we can consider that the optical sense is related to the mode of the concrete line. It is a stable and static sensory mode, which emerges when organization cuts the “relations of life”. That is to say, the five individual or discrete senses (like vision, hearing, or touch) can be considered as sensory modes without any interaction with one another. On the other hand, ‘the haptic’ sensory mode is totally different from the five discrete senses. It shows a seamless virtuality based on continuous difference and differentiation. It is also a mode of force that is highly fluid and a mode of sense that diverges ceaselessly and is always changing. Moreover, an abstract line has a quality of running incessantly from the frame of “territORIZATION” and we can discern a movement in it which is deeply connected with the Smooth. Originally, the Smooth is a concept that refers to the hand or the movement of the hands (e.g. “sleek”, “velvety” and so on). It should not be considered as the sense of touch but the “action of the hand”. Because, if considered as just the sense of touch, it gets categorized as one mode of the five discrete senses. Then, in art, what or how is the action of the hand beyond

the sense of touch that only means “being in contact with something”? It can and will be clarified when this paper examines the objects that the sense of ‘the haptic’ grasps, and its sensory function. In the following discussion, this paper will clarify the concept of ‘the haptic’ in *FB* and analyze the method that Deleuze thinks of as Bacon’s own.

3. The Concept of ‘the Haptic’ in *FB*

First of all, we shall briefly confirm how Deleuze addresses Riegl’s idea on the arrangement of bas-relief. Deleuze describes it as follows; “Aloïs Riegl defined it [an arrangement of relief] as follows: (...) Bas-relief brings about the most rigid link between the eye and the hand because its element is *the flat surface*, which allows the eye to function like the sense of touch; furthermore, it confers, and indeed imposes, upon the eye a tactile, or rather *haptic*, function. (...) It is a frontal and close view that assumes this haptic function, since the form and the ground lie on the *same plane* of the surface, equally close to each other and to ourselves”[14]. As these quotations from *FB* show, the concept of ‘the haptic’ described there has the same meaning as Riegl’s in §1. Concerned about Riegl’s idea on bas-relief, Deleuze analyzes Bacon’s paintings according to three pictorial elements – material structure (structure matérielle), Figure(s), and contour. In Bacon’s paintings, material structure or plane(s) is represented as a background painted thin in monochrome. Figure, the term from Jean-François Lyotard, is a non-personal existence that is not personalized yet[15]. It relates deeply to the dismantling of the face. In Bacon’s work, models are painted deformedly as Figure(s). This means that the identification of models is impossible when painted as Figure(s), which is totally opposite to normal portraits in which we can easily identify those who are painted. It also means that Figures refuse to become illustrative characters and refuse the narrative-ness which each original subject has. The interaction of the material structure and Figure(s) recurs and it is made possible by contour. Contour, also called the ring or round area, works as a place for the interaction of the material structure and Figure(s). In other words, it converts or turns the material structure into Figure(s) and Figure(s) into the material structure. As such, contour can be also considered as a membrane that can bring about these reversals, or as a sort of an interface. We can summarize the relation among these three pictorial elements as follows: through the contour as membrane, a diastole from the ground to the form occurs and a systole from the form to the ground occurs. The diastole-systole pair is made possible by the relation between the ground and the form. A ground of the thin fields (“aplats”) of uniform color, as a plane, and a form as Figure(s) are in immediate proximity to each other at the contour. The relation is “*the correlation of two sectors on a single Plane, equally close*”[16]. The mode of a plane, Figure(s) and contour makes Bacon like the Egyptians who worked in bas-relief. Because the form and ground are very close to each other and are even mentioned as being on a the same plane, Bacon’s paintings can be compared to Egyptian bas-reliefs.

Therefore, Bacon’s paintings can be said to correspond to bas-reliefs. The material structure or plane(s) (corresponding to the ground) and Figure(s) (corresponding to the form) interact at the contour. These three pictorial elements correspond to the three elements of bas-relief that Riegl defines. It seems to show that Deleuze follows Riegl faithfully and tries to

locate Bacon's paintings within the occidental context of art history in which Riegl and his theory play a central role, and which centers upon the visual sense. However, as mentioned above, Deleuze's ideas about Bacon's painting go beyond Riegl's point of view. Deleuze analyzes them using his own concepts, one of which is the concept of color. Color modulation dissolves the three pictorial elements in Bacon's paintings and at the same time allows them to emerge again. The concept of color can explain the interaction among them as well.

Then, as Deleuze himself says, "It is color, and the relations between colors, that form this haptic world and haptic sense, in accordance with relations of warm and cool, expansion and contraction"[17], the concept of color is definitely linked with the 'haptic' sense. We should pay attention to Deleuze's concept of color, which is categorized in two ways: One is the Newtonian optical color. The other is the Goethean physiological color, which brings about the sense of expansion-contraction. It is the Goethean sense of color that is linked with the 'haptic' concept. The Goethean color is one core element of Bacon's technique. The other core element is the technique concerning "the action of the hand". In regards to the relation between color and Bacon's technique of "the action of the hand", Deleuze mentions as follows: "Colorism, with its own means, merely claims to give this haptic sense back to sight, which it was forced to abandon when the planes of ancient Egypt separated and diverged. The vocabulary of colorism – not only hot and cold, but "touch" [*touche*], "vividness" [*vif*], "seizing hold of life" [*saisir sur le vif*], "achieving clarity" [*tirer au clair*] – attests to this haptic sense of the eye..."[18].

By the way, as we have already touched upon slightly in the latter part of §1, in reference to painting, Deleuze categorizes and analyzes the actions of the hand and the relations between the eye and the hand in his own way, different from Riegl. In addition to the concept of 'the haptic', he takes the concepts of 'the manual [*manuel*]', 'the digital,' 'the optical [*optique*]' and 'the tactile'. Their individual characteristics can be described roughly as follows: the manual means that the hand is liberated from the eye. The digital means that the hand is completely subjected to the eye (for example, Mondrian's paintings are described as "digital"). The optical relates to modes of view like three-dimensional perspective. The tactile, namely a sort of the sense of touch, is different from 'the haptic' and follows 'the haptic'. The visual sense infiltrates into the tactile but doesn't often take a dominant position. It is combined with the optical concept into the "optical-tactile" and used to describe Greek art, as Riegl does. Then the 'haptic' concept is, as this paper has mentioned, used to describe Bacon's paintings and can be considered to mean a mode of seeing "like groping or probing", which is related with the Rieglian concept of "close-up vision". However, as Deleuze himself points out, the 'haptic' concept gets involved not only in the concept of close-up vision, but also in the action of the hand as the manual and the optical concept in colorism.

From the above-mentioned, Bacon's use of color and the action of the hand, especially the manual, should be analyzed in order to develop the Deleuzian 'haptic' concept. It clarifies the difference between Riegl and Deleuze. Moreover, it will lead to clarification of the 'haptic' meaning and Deleuze's theory of sensation. In the next paragraph, the 'haptic' concept will be analyzed through the concepts of color and the action of the hand, and more clarified, compared against Jackson Pollock who is labeled as a "manual" painter in *FB*.

4. Bacon's Technique and the Action of the Hand

Deleuze points out that Bacon's characteristic techniques can be roughly categorized into two types: one is color, as mentioned above. According to Deleuze, color or the concept of color can or should be grasped in two different kinds of relations. One is *relations of value* (rapports de valeur). It is founded on the contrast of black and white that is based on (the concept of) Newtonian optical color. It gives a definition of a tone as either light or dark, rarefied or saturated. The other is *relations of tonality* (rapports de tonalité). It is founded on the idea of the color spectrum, which defines pure tones as either warm or cool. It is based on (the concept of) Goethean physiological color. Spaces that the color relations of tonality produce are defined through the opposition of cool and warm tones, and furthermore, are defined by the expansion-contraction movement that the ceaseless modulation of color brings about. Deleuze points out that this color "is discovered to be the variable relation, the differential relation, on which everything else depends"[19] and mentions it as "the color of colorism and colorists"(e.g. Van Gogh). The color of colorism and colorists composes the sensory function as the 'haptic' sense. It has been abandoned in paintings where the optic or optical organization (e.g. perspective) is dominant. However, Bacon uses it and the sensory function as the 'haptic' sense is retrieved. Therefore, the 'haptic' sensation works for grasping heat and cold as well as "vividness", or for "seizing hold of life". The 'haptic' sensation can't be reduced to a just sense of touch, it can be also considered to grasp the hand of the artist and the act of moving the brush across the canvas.

The hand and its techniques, or Bacon's "action of the hand", is the other of his characteristic techniques as well as "the color of colorists". He throws paint at a canvas and wipes it with a brush, cloth or sponge. This manual technique of Bacon undermines "subordination of the hand to the eye"[20], which means to (try to) paint a model faithfully as we see. Moreover, it brings about chance into his paintings. "He [Bacon] will use the manual marks to make the Figure emerge from the visual image. From start to finish, accident and chance (in this second sense) will have been an act or a choice, a certain type of act or choice. Chance, according to Bacon is inseparable from a possibility of utilization. It is *manipulated chance*, as opposed to *conceived or seen probabilities*"[21]. Furthermore, as to the action of the hand, hazard and accident, Deleuze says the following: "It is in the manipulation, in the reaction of the manual marks on the visual whole, that chance becomes pictorial or is integrated into the act of painting. Hence Bacon's obstinate insistence, despite the incomprehension of his interlocutors, that there is no chance except "manipulated" chance, no accident except a "utilized" accident"[22]. Manipulation or the action of the hand is compared to roulette – a kind of gambling with an immediate win-or-lose outcome. Bacon's action or manual technique has a roulette-like effect (i.e. chance) on the painting. This technique brings about chaos on the canvas. It shatters routine painting, that is to say, painting as epigone or cliché and Bacon brings chance itself into his paintings. His technique of the manual action of the hand breaks cliché down and shows the destructive moment just when the subordination of the painting to the subject according to an original-copy relationship is shattered. However, the "destructive" moment is not negative. Deleuze insists that even if there is a "pure white" canvas

with no image, we can't approach it innocently or naively because institutionalized methods and techniques in many ways have already encroached on us before we come to stand before the canvas. To be creative in a real meaning, we must sweep these clichés, or stereotyped or conventional patterns from ourselves. In this point, Bacon's *gribouillage* sweeps away clichés, shows the creative moment just when chance is brought about in his paintings, and demonstrates the action of the hand grasping the moment.

According to Deleuze, Action Painters or Abstract Expressionists like *Art Informel* or Jackson Pollock have pushed the manual mode or technique forward to its limit. Deleuze describes their paintings not as visual but as manual. To begin with, we should remember he uses the concept of "the manual" for a description or analysis of paintings by Pollock and so on. Indeed, as Deleuze himself mentions, there is "the manual" even in Bacon's paintings. But it is totally different from the sense of the manual in Action Painting. Traces of the manual action of the hand in Action Painting entirely subordinate the hand to the eye and cover the canvas all over. Deleuze calls "the Diagram" things brought by the manual action of the hand of Action Painters and it brings chaos or disorder onto their canvases. That is to say, it is chaos or nebulosity that covers such paintings. Certainly, the Diagram emerges even in Bacon's paintings because of his manual traces, but, in Bacon's paintings, the Diagram is controlled and not only chaos emerges there. Rather, bringing the Diagram without disorder creates new order or rhythm in Bacon's paintings. As Deleuze asserts, it is the biggest difference between Action Painting (described as just "manual") and Bacon (described persistently as 'haptic'). How then, is the Diagram controlled and what controls it? The key concept for that answer is "the framework as flesh or meat". This also relates to the Goethean physiological color. In next paragraph, exploring "the framework as flesh or meat", we will examine how Goethean physiological color relates to it and how it controls the Diagram.

5. "The Framework as Flesh" that Controls the Manual Diagram.

The manual action of the hand brings the creativity of chance into Bacon's paintings but, at the same time, they contain the risk of falling into catastrophe. However, "the framework as flesh or meat" itself gives a certain kind of order to it. It prevents Bacon's paintings from falling into chaos.

In his paintings, Bacon never paints human beings or human bodies that maintain a strong identification with the original, but, as mentioned above, paints Figure(s) fleeing from it. At first, he will paint this/these Figure(s) as "Becoming-Animal". To do so, he breaks down human "visages" because, for him, it is visages that identify objects as certain human beings and belong to human beings. Such visages are broken down by wiping them with a brush and so on and become "the head (la tête)" belonging to "the body (le corps)". Deleuze claims that becoming the head itself is becoming-animal. As Deleuze takes the discussion a step further, he argues that becoming in Bacon's paintings never ends at becoming-animal. Becoming-animal intensifies further and finally, "In place of formal correspondences, what Bacon's painting constitutes is a *zone of indiscernibility or undecidability* between man and animal"[23].

"The body", becoming a zone of indiscernibility, is defined by Deleuze as "The Body

without Organs (*BwO*)” (Le Corps sans Organes, *CsO*). It is like an ovum or egg that is filled with virtuality, changing itself into every part. The concept of *BwO* has the virtuality to differentiate into non-human or non-animal, human or animal. *BwO*, that is, the egg, has the virtuality to differentiate into everything and its virtuality will be exerted only if its soft covering or membrane wraps around it. Its covering is not fixed or stable but plastic as it changes itself. The body becoming a zone of indiscernibility is described as “meat (viande)” and this “meat” itself becomes the membrane in Bacon’s paintings. Though visages break down, as in his portrait of Lucian Freud, we seem to be able to find some sense of Bacon’s intention to paint a model at exactly the same time[24]. However, even in that kind of case, Bacon doesn’t use the method of representing a model as he/she really is. That is, he never paints the contours of a model as something stable or accurately fixes the image of a model onto a canvas. The egg varies according to the gradient of protoplasm inside of it. But its variations will never lead to it breaking through its covering or membrane. If it breaks its membrane, protoplasm will leak out and its virtuality as a “vital impetus” will be lost. In this sense, the fact that Figure(s) in Bacon’s paintings doesn’t present transformation but *deformation* (déformation) can really be understood. Breaking the membrane and scattering its virtuality, transformation leads to dead chaos, which never brings about any becoming. Deformation is absolutely different from transformation. Deformation means that diverse pressures or forces are applied to a membrane without breaking it. It leads to a multitude of “concentration gradients” and an unpredictable evolution happens. By deformation, a membrane becomes distorted, folded and changes. Linked to the deformation of a membrane, the egg warps and becomes a pleat or fold-form and its complexity increases. Then, the contour, which is one of three elements of Bacon’s paintings that Deleuze thinks about, can be considered “framework as flesh”, “contour as flesh”, or “contour as a fold or pleat”.

“The contour as flesh” is fundamentally unstable or wavering. What, then, can stabilize it and make it possible? The answer is the Goethean physiological color. The physiological color based on the color relations of tonality leads to the movement of expansion-contraction. Changing the flesh in infinite ways, this everlasting movement brings the contraction from plane(s) to Figure(s) and the expansion from Figure(s) to plane(s) through rhythms not uniform but various at the same time. It is the moment that the ‘haptic’ sensation grasps. Color behaves like the Sahara. The Sahara changes on a large scale with wind or sudden rainfall. However, it is still the Sahara even though it changes. But each grain of sand that constitutes the Sahara is not the same as the one that constituted the last Sahara, it is carried off by the wind and “happens to meet” other grains different from the ones to which it had been adjacent, and finally this creates “the Sahara”, a system whose structure is impossible to predict at any given moment. “A grain of sand in the Sahara”, or “the adjacent colors based on a spectrum relation” (e.g. in a kaleidoscope), brings infinite variation into Bacon’s paintings. What the ‘haptic’ sense grasps is the moment when a grain of sand in the Sahara happens to meet other grains, which takes the temporal form of the Sahara varying perpetually, and it is the angles of its grains that create the Sahara as “holey space (espace troué)”.

Conclusion

As this paper has examined, Deleuze finds various relations between the hand and the eye. Those relations and his theory of sensation can be explained as follows: there are diverse senses of the hand and the eye. Becoming “molecular states” and keeping their heterogeneity, these senses form a zone of indiscernibility. Combined incessantly with each other at various angles or arranged variously and coupling with external things, these heterogeneous molecules create senses that are expressed by countless relations between the hand and the eye. Then, the division of the internal (senses) and the external (objects) no longer exists, because both elements are folded and unfolded into the other like a pleat. Therefore, the internal becomes the external, the external becomes the internal and they differentiate into various relations between the hand and the eye, which blend into each other. This varying virtual sense itself is ‘haptic’. The ‘haptic’ concept is, as Shinohara points out, the one that shows the relations between the hand and the eye that are not uniform, and the condition or mode of relations between the hand and the eye[25]. It is the concept of the ‘haptic’ that shows Deleuze’s mode of sensation quoted as follows: “there are not sensations of different orders, but different orders of one and the same sensation. It is the nature of sensation to envelop a constitutive difference of level, a plurality of constituting domains”[26].

Moreover, while implying a varying sense, is the ‘haptic’ sense one that grasps chance, going beyond the five discrete senses? The ‘haptic’ concept derives from the Smooth through which the implication of a caress or stroke can be grasped. Although a stroke is the motion of the hand without any purpose and destination, it can be said that it is the “happy” action of the hand that feels warmth of “flesh” by groping or caressing the skin. In addition to such action of the hand, while still thinking about the Rieglian meaning of “close-up vision”, Deleuze merges into the ‘haptic’ concept his own ideas of the Goethean physiological color and various senses of touch different from Riegl. The Goethean physiological color and various senses of touch bring the expansion-contraction movement and above all, revive “the action of the hand” in Bacon’s paintings, which the colorists had grasped. It is not the “mechanical hand”, which works according to a plan and produces standardized products, but the “action of the hand” itself, which leaves itself to a critical impetus of chance[27]. The ‘haptic’ sense is one that grasps the action of the hand and the sense of color, that is, one that grasps the chance of both creation and destruction simultaneously. The ‘haptic’ sensation is one that grasps the moment when the artists leave themselves to chance, or to contingency or the chance of becomings. Therefore, it is the mode of ‘haptic’ sense and sensation that Deleuze presents as his theory of sensation.

Notes

- [1] Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, translated by Daniel W. Smith, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2005. p.163. The citations are transcribed exactly as presented in the original sources.
- [2] For example, Ronald Bogue, “Gilles Deleuze: The Aesthetics of Force”, Pal Patton ed., *Deleuze: A*

Critical Reader, Cambridge, Blackwell, 1996. Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on music, painting and the arts*, New York, London, Routledge, 2003. Though we can find that Bogue mentions the expansion-contraction by color or the relation between the 'haptic' concept and the "Body without Organs", "the action of the hand" and the 'haptic' concept itself that are complementary to them do not seem to be discussed fully. On the other hand, although only briefly, Dana Polan mentions the 'haptic' sense itself. See Dana Polan, "Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation", Constantin V. Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski eds., *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy*, New York, London, Routledge, 1994.

- [3] Motoaki Shinohara, *Toransu-esutetiku*, Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten, 1992. Motoaki Shinohara, *Hyoryu shiko*, Tokyo, Kodansha, 1998.
- [4] "I-kotsu (異交通)" is a term created by Shinohara, which is a mode of communication among four of his modes of communication. It is defined as "the mode of communication that, keeping heterogeneity, creates or intensifies heterogeneity". On Shinohara's four modes of communication, see Shinohara 1992 and Shinohara Motoaki, *Gendai geijutsu no kotsuron*, Tokyo, Maruzen, 2005.
- [5] Focusing on the concept of line that has the function of escaping from formation or organization, Buydens mentions Deleuze's theories of paintings and art (Mireille Buydens, *Sahara : l'esthétique de Gilles Deleuze*, Paris, J. Vrin, 1990).
- [6] For Riegl's reply, see *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1902 Beilage, Nr.92, 93 (Also see the note with an asterisk by Reisch himself in p.32 of *SK*).
- [7] *SK*, p.32 (English pp.24-25).
- [8] *FB*, p.79. Because of our discussion in this essay, the word "aptô" is written this way following Deleuze's example. On the interpretation of *SK* by Deleuze and the difference in the 'haptic' sense between Riegl and Deleuze, see Shinohara 1998, p204. See also note 9 in this paper.
- [9] *FB*, p.79. We should pay attention to the work of Henri Maldiney (Henry Maldiney, *Regard Parole Espace*, Lausanne, l'Ange d'homme, 1973) because Deleuze was introduced to Riegl and his concept of 'the haptic' through it. In Maldiney's work, "haptisch" by Riegl is translated into 'haptique'. See also note 8 in this paper.
- [10] *SK*, pp.32-36 (English pp.24-27). See also Shinohara, *op.cit.*, pp.202-203.
- [11] As Shinohara points out, Riegl himself also mentions that 'the haptic (haptisch)' isn't absorbed thoroughly in the optic (optisch) and that their relation is variable, interacting with each other. See Alois Riegl, *The Group Portraiture of Holland*, (translated by Evelyn M. Kain and David Britt), Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 1999, p.373. See Shinohara, *op.cit.*, p.203.
- [12] The concept of the abstract line is also described as "the northern Gothic line" and developed in *FB*. On the concept of "the northern Gothic line", see Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy* (translated from Germany by Micahel Bullock), Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 1997 (first published in 1908 in Germany as *Abstraktion und Einfühlung*).
- [13] The relation between the Smooth and the Striated is extremely complicated. Implicated in each other, the Smooth and the Striated rapidly change places with each other. However, their change is not symmetrical but asymmetrical. It means that their change always has clinamina, and the Smooth and the Striated vary themselves. That is to say, the change's clinamen brings a new relation between the Smooth and the Striated – complicated relations between the eye and the hand. For example, Deleuze suggests that the developed optical function can constitute a haptic space. See *MP*, p.619 (English p.496). He also critiques Riegl because Riegl takes up only a function of the Striated by the State apparatus and ignores the "intermediary" nomads bringing becomings. He claims that the abstract line is "nomadic" (*MP*, pp.618-620 (English pp.495-496)).
- [14] *FB*, p.79 (English p.99).
- [15] Deleuze clearly separates the concept of Figure(s) from the concept of "figuratif" which has the representational implication. About this matter he refers to Jean-François Lyotard. See *FB*, p.9 and Jean-François Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, Paris, Klincksieck, 1971. Considering concepts of

Figure and libido by Lyotard, Shinohara mentions the relation between them and the concept of body by Deleuze. See Shinohara, *op.cit.*, pp.128-220.

- [16] *FB*, p.11 (English p.8).
- [17] *FB*, p.88 (English p.111).
- [18] *FB*, p.89 (English p.113).
- [19] *FB*, p.89 (English p.112).
- [20] *FB*, p.99 (English p.124).
- [21] *FB*, p.61 (English p.77).
- [22] *FB*, p.61 (English p.78).
- [23] *FB*, pp19-20 (English p.20).
- [24] On visages, concreteness and abstractness of forms in Bacon's paintings, see Norihisa Ohara, "Shozo to Kao no "ugoki"- «Study of Isabel Rawsthorne» by Francis Bacon", Yasuo Kobayashi ed., *Bijutsushi no nanatsu no kao*, Tokyo, Miraisha, 2005.
- [25] Shinohara 1998, p.208.
- [26] *FB*, pp28-29 (English p.30).
- [27] While "peculiar hand practices" are introduced instead of uniform or mechanical effects of the hand, there are some practices of the hand that try to prevent or subvert such "peculiar hand practices" as well. They prevent the action of hand from falling into cliché, bring incessantly bodily "hesitation" into themselves and create a deviation or "unpredictable coupling".

Explanatory notes

Gilles Deleuze

MP; *Mille Plateaux* (avec Guattari), PUF, 1980 (*A Thousand Plateaus Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translated by Brian Massumi, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

FB; *Francis Bacon: Logique de la sensation*, La Différence, 1981 (*Francis Bacon*, translated by Daniel W. Smith, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

Alois Riegl

SK; *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964 (*Late Roman Art Industry*, translated from the original Viennese edition with foreword and annotations by Rolf Winkes, Giorgio Roma, Bretschneider Editore, 1985).

* Referring to English versions of these references, this paper changes terms used in each translations according to the point of this argument.

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