iv[b] Ambiguous Observer

In *The Parasite* Michel Serres argues the ambiguous role of the *observer* within systems: "an observer seated within a system ... overvalues the message and undervalues the noise ... in order to send or receive communications better and to make them circulate in a distinct and workable fashion" (68). There are apparent similarities between these parasitical relations and concepts like *hospitality* and *gift* - as articulated by Derrida (8) which also address the paradoxical nature of exchange and subjectivity. Derrida's notion of the "hote" as simultaneously both host and guest, for example, illustrates the impossibility of sustaining the concept of the host as a controlling subject - on which the principle of altruism is based.

The aliens' is a phonological trajectory, involving an *unfolding of the senses* (Serres, *Senses* 1). And it is precisely the two-sided notion within the concept of Serres' *Parasite* and Derrida's "hote" that interests me. We are (somehow) wired towards intrinsic growth by use of our bodies. We demonstrate ability to extend our socioeconomic, political, and *desire-based actions*, explained by Marshall McLuhan in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*[1], in cognitive manner through an array of prosthesis-like tools. Tools that we create by using the building blocks[2] found in the materials that surround us which are also the fundamental particles of our bodies. By using our material self to utilize these tools we are conducting a performative gesture, one that - if performed more conscious, could help us evolve towards new patterns of cognitive action - or *entanglement* (Barad, *Diffraction*).

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[1] McLuhan uses interchangeably the words medium, media and technology. For McLuhan a medium is "any extension of ourselves", or more broadly, "any new technology"(7). In addition to forms such as newspapers, television and radio, McLuhan includes the light bulb (8-9) cars, speech and language in his definition of "media": all of these, as technologies, mediate our communication; their forms or structures affect how we perceive and understand the world around us. Significantly, the electric light is usually not even regarded as a medium because it has no content. Instead, McLuhan observes that any medium "amplifies or accelerates existing processes", introduces a "change of scale or pace or shape or pattern into human association, affairs, and action", resulting in "psychic, and social consequences" (7, 8-9); this is the real "meaning or message" brought by a medium, a social and psychic message, and it depends solely on the medium itself, regardless of the 'content' emitted by it (7). This is basically the meaning of "the medium is the message". www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Understanding_Media

[2] For all living organisms, four types of organic compounds are essential: carbohydrates,lipids, proteins, nucleic acids. Providing strength and rigidity, cellulose forms the cell walls of plants. Cellulose is the primary constituent of wood, making this organic compound the most abundant one on the surface of the Earth. Although more than 25 types of elements are found in biomolecules, six elements are most common. These are the CHNOPS elements; the letters stand for the chemical abbreviations of carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus, and sulphur. www.wikipedia.org/wiki/CHON

We share DNA with cats, dogs, fish, birds, insects, plants, and stones and can form intense relationships with these entities, often without realising why. [3] Entanglement through reading natural code, opens space to intra-act (Barad, *Meeting*) but also invites experimentation with "CRISPR"[4] gene editing technology, which forces analogue entities into correlation through intervention. As Alva Noë noted earlier, we started out as tellers … the computing machine enhanced this apparent primal need to take account of the *micro* … of the arrangement of genomes and sequences to create well-formed sentences within our bodies: syntax.

[3] www.ensembl.org/info/genome/compara/.The Ensembl project was started in 1999, some years before the draft human genome was completed. Even at that early stage it was clear that manual annotation of 3 billion base pairs of sequence would not be able to offer researchers timely access to the latest data. The goal of Ensembl was therefore to automatically annotate the genome, integrate this annotation with other available biological data and make all this publicly available via the web. Since the website's launch in July 2000, many more genomes have been added to Ensembl and the range of available data has also expanded to include comparative genomics, variation and regulatory data.

[4] Reis, Alex ,Breton Hornblower, Brett Robb George Tzertzinis. New England Biolabs, Inc., 2014 international.neb.com/tools-and-resources/feature-articles/crispr-cas9-and-targeted-genome-editing-a-new-era-in-molecular-biology, Accessed 15 May, 2018.