

DE-OBJECTIFICATION

For Ben Greber

Perhaps no object exists that does not contain its de-objectification. Not necessarily as a dissolution or permanent fragmentation, but as a withdrawal from the objectifying gaze. For the object (ὄψιν ἴσμεν in ancient Greek, *objectum* in Latin) denotes a counterpart to a (perceiving) subject. It stands opposite to, forms an opposition, thus not only establishing itself within the subject-object relation, but also proving itself to be a construct – which, like all constructs, can be disassembled into its components. This disassembly is inherent to it. Rather than being an act that is forced on it from the outside, it is *a priori* part of the object's objectivity. Indeed, seeing does not exclusively mean to synthesize, to assemble, in order to construct objectivity. Seeing also means to analyze, disassemble, fracture and fragment. The total is invisible. Only the disassembling gaze, whose capacity to separate is indefatigable, achieves objectivity. In order to do so, it must be sensitive to the fissures that hold the object-elements together in their difference. Its sensitivity also concerns the quality of contingency of these compositions of the objective world. In many cases the connections between their elements could be different than they are. Indeed, the concept of de-objectification points to the principle of contingency: Things are as they are, but they do not have to be so; the instability or arbitrariness of the world expresses itself in their contingency. It is an ontological index of the fragility of the world of things – that is, of its transformability as well. De-objectification also means the de-realization of the real in favor of a still unknown reality.

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