# *Introduction (11-22)*

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I. Historicized philosophy: emphasis on morphogenesis: all structures are products of processes
  A. Materialist historians: Braudel and McNeill
  B. Historicized science
    1. Classical modern science: reversible time, universal laws
    2. 19th C: introduction of historical processes, but with only one outcome:
      a. Thermodynamics: time's arrow: equilibrium
      b. Evolution: organisms as constructions: fittest design
    3. 20th C: revolutions
      a. Thermodynamics: Prigogine: attractors and bifurcators
      b. Biology: nonlinear dynamics of ecosystems: changing fitness landscapes

II. ATY tries to propose nonlinear social sciences
  A. Arthur Iberall's early attempt:
    1. 3 parameters: settlement; energy consumption; interactions
    2. Gas, liquid, and crystal forms of society
      a. DeLanda's presentation here indicates one of my principal complaints about his work: he ignores DG's notion of anti-production (drawn from Bataille's notion of glorious expenditure). Thus he says that surpluses are only available at State form. This ignores DG's readings of Clastres and political anthropology: the potlatch is a positive mechanism to prevent the State by requiring chief to waste surpluses.
    3. No progress/stages, but exploration of a virtual space of social forms
  B. DL wants to remove metaphor by showing that all matter-energy flows have self-organizing potentials
    1. Solitons or waves
    2. Attractors
    3. Nonlinear combinatorics: creation of novel virtual structures
  C. Description of human behavior: irreducible reference to beliefs and desires
    1. Constrained decisions by place in hierarchy
    2. Unintended collective consequences by virtue of meshworks (markets)

III. New methodology:
  A. Limits of analysis: necessity of taking account of emergent effects (arising from interaction of parts [often nonlinear -- e..g., positive or negative feedback loops], so that analysis into parts and then addition will miss them)
  B. Bottom-up approach: E.g., cellular automata simulations to demonstrate emergence
    1. Do not postulate systematicity until you can show a system-generating process
    2. Treat entities as populations of entities at lower level
      a. DL rejects use of "capitalism" as society-wide or systematic designation, preferring Braudel's restriction of capitalism to anti-market institutions at top level, above markets and material life
      b. This is a huge question, relating to DG as well as Marx: they would I think claim that the tendency of real subsumption (intensification and spread of commodity relations into previous market or subsistence areas) is precisely the tendency to the subjection of all social interactions to a single rule of profit, or in DG terms, axiomatic of decoded flows, and is thus the rendering-systematic of all life as capitalist. That this is a limit, perhaps never to be reached, doesn't prevent systematic effects once past a certain threshold? Thus the heuristic benefits of looking for capitalist relations in previously non-commodified areas, by letting you see beginning trends and predict probable outcomes, outweighs DL's methodological scruples (or so it could be argued?).
      c. By analogy, would we also have to reject "racism" and "patriarchy" as system-level descriptions? There as well we would have to weigh political utility of such descriptions over against methodological scruples.
  C. Rejection of orthodox economics and orthodox sociology
    1. Economics posits individual (atomized) decision maker and thus misses emergent

effects and constraints of institutions: its methodological individualism is okay, but not its ontological individualism

2. Sociology is top-down, positing a whole ("society") that is rather to be explained, and seeing individuals as mere rule-followers ("methodological holism")

3. Neo-institutional economics (North, Vanberg, Williamson)

a. Splits the methodological difference: methodological individualism (of economic individuals) and ontological holism (of ecology of institutions): once alive they react back on the flows that gave birth to them by serving as catalysts, regulators, inhibitors, etc

(1) here again, DL misses a key DG point from AO: that (adult) "individuals" are formed by social processes ("desiring-production"), so economics cannot assume a pre-formed individual, even with bounded rationality and subject to institutional constraints

b. Transaction costs as key

4. ATY attempts to combine neo-institutional economics with complexity theory

IV. Preview of book:

A. Chapter One: "geological" dynamics of European towns (energy intensifications [agriculture, coal, oil], arms races, institutional developments, relation with States, etc) explain eventual Western domination of millennium

1. As we will see, I think he slights the Williams/Blackburn thesis about body political effects of slave trade [money as economic catalyst and sugar/coffee/tea/nicotine as somatic speed]: although DL's methodology is not at fault here, just a matter of emphasis on the inputs to the auto-catalytic loop of the Industrial Revolution

B. Chapter Two: eco-systematic approach: germs, plants, animals, and humans: flows of organic materials: cities as parasites: flows of genes

C. Chapter Three: linguistic materials: dialects and standard languages; pidgins and creoles, media effects

V. DL's ontological monism

A. Geological, biological, linguistic are not stages of perfection: there is some stratification, but there is also interweaving

B. Each layer is animated by the same self-organizing processes (DG: abstract machines)

C. There is a single matter-energy flow undergoing phase transitions; each new layer enriches reservoir of nonlinear dynamics and combinatorics available for generating new structures AND processes