

# **Time, Space, and Agency: The Management of History**

Master class with Manuel De Landa, New York

Date: Tuesday May 4, 2004, 1PM – 4PM

Venue: University of Copenhagen

## Content:

The notion of history has undergone profound changes throughout the twentieth century, and "the management of history" has become an increasingly faceted - and increasingly controversial - question. Managing history concerns the ways we deal with the past, the present and the future: How do we construe the role of the past, and how we construct images of past realities? - How do we organise continuities and discontinuities in our relation to the realities handed down to us? - And how do we manage our interventions in the world in which we live in order to make the future?

In *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History*, De Landa instantiates a distinctly material social history with no recourse to ideology, as when coal is treated as a prime agent in early British industrialism. Likewise, in his latest book *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy*, De Landa resituates the question of ontology in the development and recreation of the world in its totality, a question which to a high extent has been subsumed under a postmodern focus on epistemology in various forms: social constructionism, discourse analysis, and system theory.

This Master Class invites participants to question, together with Manuel De Landa, basic notions of time, space, and agency from both a humanistic as well as an organisation theory or sociology perspective, inviting the same courage in transdisciplinarity that De Landa practices. The notion of time opens up onto a scrutiny of the nature of the historical event, the event that takes place in history and the event that makes history. The notion of space opens up unto social processes of branding, categorisation and territorialization. And the question of agency opens up unto the becoming of historical and political subjects with actual and virtual qualities to unfold.

Suggested reading: Manuel De Landa: *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History*, Zone books 1997.