

Steven Shaviro's *Post-Cinematic Affect* is a theory about how media interprets the common world in the early twenty-first century using digital technologies. There is an emergence of a different media regime of the digital as the new cultural dominant medium, surpassing television and cinema from the twentieth century, and becoming ubiquitous in modes of producing and consuming media. With the ubiquity of the Internet, smartphones and personal computers, we are able to access media such as films anywhere at anytime. In addition, these digital technologies have the capacity or the software that allows for capturing and editing images and sounds. Yet the way we consume media has always been the same: we still read and watch through the act of looking. This questions the ontology of digital cinema, which goes against film critic and theorist Andre Bazin's ontology of traditional cinema as a transcription of certain time and place.¹ There is no physicality behind digital cinema like a filmstrip. An image or video is captured by a smartphone or a digital camera is transcribed to binary codes of ones and zeros which generate pixels to produce an image or video. In digital media lies an underlying flexibility which one can make multiple copies of a video, and alter it on software or upload it onto Internet or social media. Someone can download it and repeat the same process. It is this idea that digital media are made of binary code, its manipulation or modulation creates an illusion of generating an infinite amount of wealth from a limited source.²

According to Shaviro, all of which gravitates towards the notion of commodification and capital accumulation.³ In his book, Shaviro said "Films and music videos... are vehicles for generating affect, and for capitalizing upon, or extracting value from, this affect."⁴ If

¹ Andre Bazin, "Ontology of Photographic Image", in *What is Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press,)

² Michael Betancourt, *Critique of Digital Capitalism* (Brooklyn, : punctum books, 2016), 37

³ Steven Shaviro, *Post Cinematic Affect* (United Kingdom: Zero Books, 2010), 138

⁴ Shaviro, 13

post-cinematic works can be sampled and modulated to anything infinitely, post-cinematic works become an ideal commodity as they can produce multiplicities of meaning and affect. One interpretation of a work will simply lead to endless bifurcation. Shaviro explains, “Each perspective only leads us to another perspective, in an infinite regress of network transformations – which is to say, in an infinite series of metamorphoses of capital.”⁵ In short, capital engages itself in a perpetual self-valorization and rejuvenation; it consumes itself as a mode of production. This highlights our world where capital and imagery are increasingly intertwining. The digital binary codes are just interchanging within the sphere of globalized capitalism.

In the final analysis, Shaviro gives a diagnosis of how capital and digital technologies overlap in a process of continual modulation that is the contemporary world system we have. To get out this bubble, Shaviro discusses the idea of “accelerationism” by contemporary theorist and critic Benjamin Noys. Accelerationism is the act of speeding up capitalism to generate radical social change.⁶ As Shaviro said “Their remedy for the malaise of the digital is a further, and more concentrated, dose of the digital.”⁷ The only way out of this contemporary world system is to push media to its extremities in representation so as to aggravate capitalism to the point of collapse. By using media to explore extremities, it maps out or simulates a potential future of resistance in capital and digital media’s eternal self-consumption and production.

⁵ Shaviro, 162

⁶ Benjamin Noys, *The Persistence of the Negative: A Critique of Contemporary Continental Theory*. (Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 4

⁷ Shaviro, 47

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