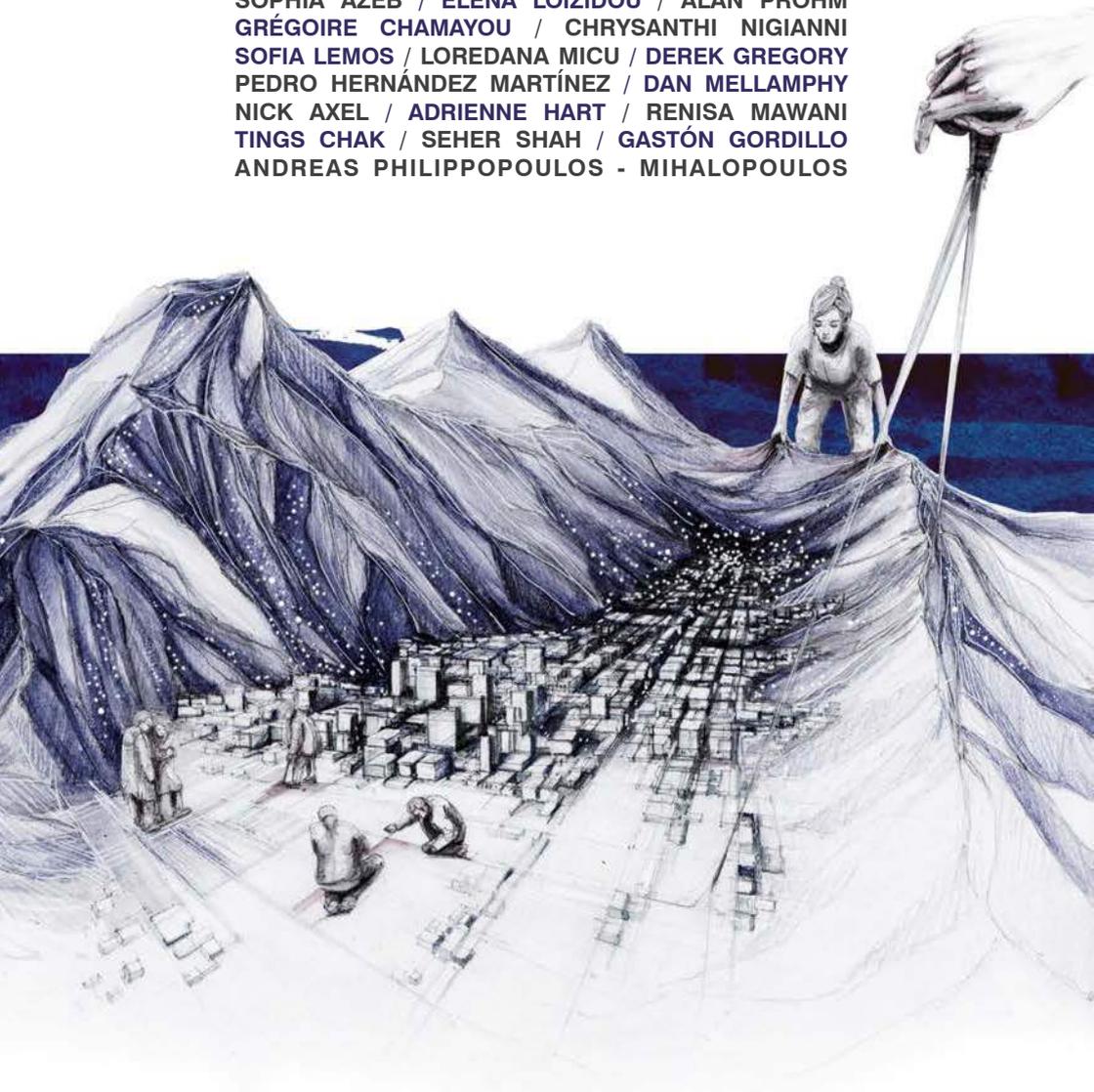


THE FUNAMBULIST PAPERS VOLUME 2

26 GUEST WRITERS ESSAYS FOR THE FUNAMBULIST
CURATED AND EDITED BY LÉOPOLD LAMBERT

HANNA BAUMANN / ALEX SHAMS / ERIN MANNING
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THE FUNAMBULIST PAPERS: VOLUME 02

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**First published in 2015 by
The Funambulist + CTM Documents Initiative
an imprint of punctum books
Brooklyn, New York
<http://punctumbooks.com>**

ISBN-13: 978-0692423240

ISBN-10: 0692423249

Cover artwork specifically created by Loredana Micu (2015).
Cover design by the editor (2015).

This book is the product of many people's work: a very grateful thank you to Eileen Joy, Anna Klosowska, Ed Keller, Hiroko Nakatani, Loredana Micu, Mimi Thi Nguyen, Philippe Theophanidis, Hanna Baumann, Sophia Azeb, Derek Gregory, Stuart Elden, Gastón Gordillo, Pedro Hernández Martínez, Tings Chak, Alex Shams, Sofia Lemos, Grégoire Chamayou, Renisa Mawani, Nick Axel, Sarah Choukah, Alan Prohm, Erin Manning, Adrienne Hart, Joanne Pouzenc, Elena Loizidou, Chrysanthi Nigianni, Ina Karkani, Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, Dan Mellamphy, and Nandita Biswas Mellamphy.

INDEX/

- 0 | **COVER:**
Loredana Micu

- 6 | **INTRODUCTION:**
CORPOREAL POLITICS
Léopold Lambert

- 8 | **PROFILING SURFACES**
Mimi Thi Nguyen

- 14 | **CAUGHT IN THE CLOUD:**
THE BIOPOLITICS OF TEARGAS WARFARE
Philippe Theophanidis

- 24 | **BODIES ON THE LINE:**
**SOMATIC RISK AND PSYCHOGEOGRAPHIES IN URBAN
EXPLORATION AND PALESTINIAN 'INFILTRATION'**
Hanna Baumann

- 31 | **PALESTINE MADE FLESH**
Sophia Azeb

- 36 | **CORPOGRAPHIES:**
MAKING SENSE OF MODERN WAR
Derek Gregory

- 46 | **CHAMAYOU'S MANHUNTS:**
FROM TERRITORY TO SPACE?
Stuart Elden

- 54 | **NAZI ARCHITECTURE AS AFFECTIVE WEAPON**
Gastón Gordillo

- 64 | **BODIES AT SCENE:**
ARCHITECTURE AS FRICTION
Pedro Hernández Martínez

- 71 | **RACIALIZED GEOGRAPHIES AND THE FEAR OF SHIPS**
Tings Chak

- 77 | **URBAN SPACE AND THE PRODUCTION
OF GENDER IN MODERN IRAN**
Alex Shams

- 86 | **NORM, MEASURE OF ALL THINGS**
Sofia Lemos

- 98 | **PATTERNS OF LIFE:**
A VERY SHORT HISTORY OF SCHEMATIC BODIES
Grégoire Chamayou

- 117 | **BEE WORKERS AND
THE EXPANDING EDGES OF CAPITALISM**
Renisa Mawani
- 127 | **WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?**
Nick Axel
- 134 | **OF ASSOCIATED MILIEUS**
Sarah Choukah
- 142 | **~~FJORD~~ AND //DESERT// BODIES
~~LEAKING~~ AND //CONTAINED// BODIES**
Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos
- 148 | **DRESS BECOMES BODY:
FASHIONING THE FORCE OF FORM**
Erin Manning
- 173 | **A SENSING BODY - A NETWORKED MIND**
Adrienne Hart
- 177 | **DREAM OF FLYING - FLYING BODIES**
Elena Loizidou
- 184 | **THE ACT OF WAITING**
Joanne Pouzenc
- 191 | **BODIES IN SYMPATHY FOR JUST ONE NIGHT**
Chrysanthi Nigianni
- 198 | **FRAMING THE WEIRD BODY
IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN CINEMA**
Ina Karkani
- 204 | **BUILDING BODY:
TWO BRIEF TREATMENTS ON LANDING SITE THEORY**
Alan Prohm
- 212 | **A.V.
(ANTHROPOCOSMOGONIC VASTUPURUSHAMANISM)**
Dan Mellamphy
- 224 | **GHOST IN THE SHELL-GAME:
ON THE MÈTIC MODE OF EXISTENCE,
INCEPTION AND INNOCENCE**
Nandita Biswas Mellamphy
- 236 | **PORTFOLIO:
BODY WEIGHT**
Seher Shah

INTRO/

CORPOREAL POLITICS

BY LÉOPOLD LAMBERT

This book is the second volume of texts curated specifically for *The Funambulist* since 2011.¹ The editorial line of this second series of twenty-six essays is dedicated to philosophical and political questions about bodies. This choice is informed by my own interest in the (often violent) relation between the designed environment and bodies. Corporeal politics do not exist in a void of objects, buildings and cities; on the contrary, they operate through the continuous material encounters between living and non-living bodies. Several texts proposed in this volume examine various forms of corporeal violence (racism, gender-based violence, etc.). This examination, however, can only exist in the integration of the designed environment's conditioning of this violence. As Mimi Thi Nguyen argues in the conclusion of this book's first chapter, "the process of attending to the body — unhooded, unveiled, unclothed — cannot be the solution to racism, because that body is always already an abstraction, an effect of law and its violence."²

The designed environment does not merely stop at the perceptible limit of the various objects — whatever their size — that surround our bodies: it includes the atmospheric composition of our bodily condition of "Being-in-the-breathable," as shown by Philippe Theophanidis in the second chapter dedicated to the "biopolitics of teargas warfare."³ This notion of *breathable* strikes us for its resonance with the recent political affirmation about the reality of what it means to be an African American body through Eric Garner's last words before being strangled to death by a New York police officer: "I can't breathe!"⁴ Fifty-five years earlier, Frantz Fanon had described the colonial conditions under the following terms:

There is not occupation of territory, on the one hand, and independence of persons on the other. It is the country as a whole, its history,

1 See Léopold Lambert (ed), *The Funambulist Papers: Volume 1*, Brooklyn: punctum books, 2013.

2 Mimi Thi Nguyen, "Profiling Surfaces," in this volume, 13.

3 Peter Sloterdijk, *Terror from the Air*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009, 47. Philippe Theophanidis, "Caught in the Cloud: The Biopolitics of Teargas Warfare," in this volume, 14-23.

4 Eric Garner was killed by a white NYPD officer in Staten Island on July 17, 2014.

its daily pulsation that are contested, disfigured, in the hope of a final destruction. Under these conditions, the individual's breathing is an observed, an occupied breathing. It is a combat breathing.⁵

This book does not intend to produce a total or a proper knowledge about the body, since such a production never operates without a violence implicit within it. The most literal example of such a correlation can be found in the active participation of doctors in various forms of modern torture, from the Nazi concentration camps to the CIA's so-called "enhanced interrogation" techniques, and including the French colonial doctor in Algeria, also described by Fanon.⁶ This anatomic and biological literality should not however obscure another form of production of knowledge about the body, a less transcendental one: the empirical normative production of social performativities. This present volume attempts to produce knowledge about the *conditions* through which the body is entangled in mechanisms of power, as well as how it is able, by its very materiality, to implement strategies of resistance against various forms of dominant discursive and physical violence.

As already briefly outlined, the critical treatments offered by this book's contributors allow to go much further than the usual (and often blindly obsessive!) arguments developed in my own writings for *The Funambulist*.⁷ Although the readers won't find indications about the disciplinary background of the contributors — the "witty" self-descriptions at the end of the book being preferred to academic resumés — the content of the texts will certainly attest to the broad imaginaries at work throughout this volume. Dialogues between dancers and geographers, between artists and biohackers, between architects and philosophers, and so forth, provide the richness of this volume through difference rather than similarity.

Some of the authors here consider bodies as moving assemblages (Hanna Baumann, Grégoire Chamayou, Adrienne Hart), others as sites of normative violence (Mimi Thi Nguyen, Tings Chak, Alex Shams, Sofia Lemos), others as the (sometimes esoteric) generative source of their material environment (Pedro Hernández Martínez, Alan Prohm, Erin Manning, Dan Mellamphy), and one author even interprets the notion of the body in its non-human characteristics (Renisa Mawani): approaches are as rich as various. For this reason, I would like to formally thank the twenty-seven friends and contributors for having dedicated the time and efforts to their texts presented here. Together, we form a community of ideas that, I hope, will prove useful both for us and for our readers.

5 Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, New York: Grove Press, 1994, 47.

6 See Frantz Fanon, "Medicine and Colonialism," in *A Dying Colonialism*, New York: Grove Press, 1994, 121-146.

7 See the volumes of *The Funambulist Pamphlets* (Brooklyn: punctum books, 2013-2015) to be convinced of it.

PROFILING SURFACES

BY MIMI THI NGUYEN

In June 2010, the *New York Times* published a feature provocatively titled, “The War is Fake, the Clothing Real,” about David Tabbert, a fashion-conscious costumer for a company that clothes play-acting Afghan or Iraqi insurgents and civilians in war games staged for the United States armed forces.¹ “Though Mr. Tabbert, 28, personally prefers G-star denim and concert tees, he was on the hunt for 150 dishdashas, the ankle-length garments worn by men in Iraq and elsewhere in the Arab world. In July, actors will wear them in a simulated Iraqi village, posing as townspeople, clerics and insurgents at a National Guard training ground in the Midwest.” Of his initial hesitation to accept the job, Tabbert notes that while he was not pro-war, “I looked at what we were doing as a positive way to train the soldiers, in light of the fact that they are being deployed anyway.” In educating his eye to create usable profiles, Tabbert studies images on the Internet — “to determine, for example, the exact embroidery on the epaulet of an opposition leader’s military uniform” — and trains others to do the same, thereby teaching soldiers to distinguish between “bad” and “good” Afghans or Iraqis (or et cetera) by their cover.²

Making the criminal or terrorist visible, and educating the eye on how to see and otherwise interpret the signs of his lawlessness — which is also his availability for detaining, and killing — is central to modern state powers of surveillance, reconnaissance, and prediction. In differentiating from the background a possible criminal, or a probable terrorist, the surfaces of the body bear the weight of instruction. Predicting a correspondence between the visible aspects of such surfaces, including tattoos, features, and clothes, and the unseen propensity for criminality in any individual, the profile also divides that which it surveys into actionable categories. Or, as Tabbert says, “It’s teaching the people how to not kill people,” with the unspoken corollary of teaching them also how to kill the right people, whom we might (supposedly, reasonably) suspect from their surfaces.³

1 Sarah Maslin Nir, “The War is Fake, the Clothing Real,” *The New York Times* (June 23, 2010).

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.



Million Hoodie March in New York after the death of Trayvon Martin (March 21, 2012) / Photograph by Tyco

What cover then do clothes provide? Because clothes are both contiguous and not with what they cover — skin, flesh — clothing is a mutable boundary that asserts itself within a field of matter, forcing us to confront the intimacy between bodies and things, and the interface between their amalgam and the environment. In considering these dense interactions, I suggest these three presuppositions. First, clothes are often understood through an indexical relationship to the body who wears them, functioning as clues to their existence in the world. This is the premise of the sartorial profile in the war game or the criminal study, which depends upon the stability of surfaces for its visual reconnaissance. Second, for this reason clothes might provide an alibi for a racial, colonial optics as a surrogate for flesh, where flesh is the overdetermination of metaphysical substance — as the unseen truth of criminality, alienability, or deviancy. Such enlightened discrimination is based on calculations that hinge on the substitution — such as culture, which is often (as war-game training supposes) captured in clothes. But because clothes often act (or are accused of acting) as camouflage or costume to enable false perceptions, including the merging of surfaces into the background, in order not to be seen, clothes also heighten anxieties about epistemic surety. Lastly, then, *do we really know what we know in seeing?*

Locating the apprehension of alienability on clothes does not constitute any sort of departure from racial, colonial optics that target the body as a continuous surface of legible information about capacity and pathology. Profiles that include such surfaces as clothes (as well as tattoos or hair, in the profiling of gangs, and their cover, in the banning of niqab) teach us how to see race both with and without skin as an anchor. Consider the criminalization of sagging pants (especially worn by young black men) in the United States, and some forms of hijab (on Muslim women) in Canada or France, as a public contagion. Because these are liberal states that proclaim themselves champions of equality and freedom, clothes rather than the bodies that they cover are named as those suspicious things that trouble lawful persons who “merely” wish to see and secure something with certainty. For example, while a 2010 French law bans “the concealment of the face in public,” rather than directly prohibiting the wearing of the niqab, the law allows leeway for motorcyclists, fencers, skiers, and carnival-goers, among other non-Muslim exceptions. But President Nicolas Sarkozy himself argued that the law is specific to Muslim veiling, with the presumption that veiling is religious coercion and therefore a rights violation. He and supporters therefore claimed the law is necessary to French secularism. So too did clothes become suspect in Arizona’s draconian immigration law, SB1070, which made it a state misdemeanor to lack immigration documents (and more, to fail to carry such paperwork at all times), compelling police officers to have to determine immigration status via the highly suspect route of “reasonable suspicion.” Discussing this 2010 leg-

isolation, California State Representative Brian Bilbray appeared on a cable news show to defray the accusations of racism with claims that “trained professionals,” presumably criminal profilers and other experts in scientific methods of observation and evaluation, would be able to identify “illegals” by their clothes: “They will look at the kind of dress you wear, there is different type of attire, there is different type of — *right down to the shoes, right down to the clothes.*”⁴ In the language of right down to the shoes, right down to the clothes, some essence of illegality and alienability is found on these surfaces as depths.

Through the abstraction of contiguous surfaces, blurring the distinction between surplus and ontology, surface and essence, the sartorial profile teaches us to project onto racial, colonial others the so-called truth of criminality, deviancy, or lawlessness. In doing so, clothes not only dramatize the materiality of bodies, but also demonstrate that such materiality is itself animated by racial histories of abstraction. That is to say, the story of skin is not depth but more surface.⁵ Constructs of race teach us how to see, as Frantz Fanon observed so well, naming flesh an “epidermal schema” presumed to yield usable knowledge about humanness and its others through a series of abstractions shaping subjectivization from substance.⁶ The liberal disavowal of racism as the foundation for the rule of law thus proliferates such abstractions as alibis — the abstractions that script skin as visible or material evidence of ontological truth transfer to other matter, including clothing, as indices for criminality, or terrorism. If constructs of race and racism, as Ann Laura Stoler argues, do “not necessarily rest on immovable parts but [...] a changing constellation of features and changing weighing of them,” then the strength of racial discourses is in their mobility and mutability, their slide from one surface to another.⁷

But the promise to capture a stable presence in the profile is treacherous, not least because some surfaces are changeable, unreliable. There is no telling whether the signs encoded in an epaulet in the war game, or the blue bandana in the gang profile, correspond to the body it covers. The subject of instruction is classification, but its shadow is camouflage. Camouflage names those strategic practices of blending in such that the one’s presence is untraceable, invisible, or indistinguishable. Clothes are essential to such deceptions in which a body willingly effaces itself to an environment. The irony of the French ban is that the niqab does not offer self-concealment at

4 Brian Bilbray on MSNBC (April 21, 2010).

5 For more on race as a modernist surface, see Anne Anlin Cheng, *Second Skin: Josephine Baker and the Modern Surface*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

6 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, London: Pluto Press, 1969, 112.

7 Ann Laura Stoler, “Racial Histories and their Regimes of Truth,” *Political Power and Social Theory* 11, 1997, 200.

all; with the number of Muslim women who cover their faces hovering less than a hundredth of a percent of the population, to be so covered in public is to stand out and draw attention. Consider instead that famous scene in Gillo Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* (1966), in which women guerillas cast off their hijab and conceal themselves in "European" clothes in order to walk the crowded city streets unnoticed, to plant their bombs. Artist and theorist Hito Steyerl in her video *HOW NOT TO BE SEEN: A Fucking Didactic Educational.MOV* (2013) also instructs the viewer in an adaptive logic of surface in an age of security. In one sequence, second-skin green suits (perhaps most familiar from behind the scenes of CGI-heavy films) enable bodies to move past the surveillance cameras found everywhere in public as no-bodies, no-spaces, registering only the shimmer of their displaced absence in tree-lined suburban malls and desert photo calibration targets for drone warfare. Such cover as clothes might provide confounds because it transforms the available surfaces for reading, extending and transforming the body's boundaries into the world, rendering that body both more dangerous and more vulnerable, depending on their movements. But even as fabric extends a fleshy body's boundaries into the world, that body also emerges and disappears, materializes as a threat and dissipates into shadow.

Some clothes then, perceived to aid invisibility and anonymity (covering the face, eluding the eye), become hypervisible as objects of suspicion in and of themselves, contingent upon environment and proximity to other objects, which can include the bodies that such clothes cover. These contingencies are as Sara Ahmed writes, "an effect of how objects gather to clear a ground, how objects are arranged to create a background."⁸ Consider the New York City subway announcement that "suspicious backpacks and large containers are subject to search," as if suspiciousness were a property of the object, though these objects only *become* suspicious when contiguous with some bodies and not others. The gathering of some objects in a supposedly chance cluster — the large backpack, the black youth, which is no chance at all — thus justifies suspicion to then create a ground for surveillance and policing.

The figuration of the hoodie as a suspicious thing, as another example, demonstrates some of the operations of power that deem some bodies criminally, ontologically other and available for violence. In the 2012 murder of seventeen year-old Trayvon Martin by vigilante George Zimmerman, the hoodie Martin wore became a material witness. Zimmerman claimed that his suspicions were aroused by the "dark hoodie," pulled up against the rain but more to the point, according to the armed vigilante, against respectability, and therefore against rule of law. Racial subjectivization thus emerges through this

⁸ Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2006, 87.

interaction between flesh and fabric. Imbued with animative power, Martin's hoodie not only lends to him the resemblance of criminal behavior and deviant being (because it obscures recognition) but also propels his body physically, expressively, into another realm of possible activity. Implicit in this reading is the suspicion the black body is without the self-possession to "just" wear the hoodie. *The hoodie instead wears him, wields the power to transform him into another, the thug.* Thus did execrable television personality Geraldo Rivera appear on the Fox cable station morning show *Fox & Friends* to argue that parents should denounce the hoodie as a bad influence: "I am urging the parents of black and Latino youngsters particularly to not let their children go out wearing hoodies. *I think the hoodie is as much responsible for Trayvon Martin's death as George Zimmerman was.*"⁹ In this ontological confusion between subject and object, between disclosure and deception, the hoodie scripts some part of the performance of racial optics and its claims to legitimate violence.

Clothes are not merely ornamental; when we subtract them from the surface, we do not otherwise uncover the truth. After Martin's murder, proliferating commentaries worried at the hoodie's nature (is it innocent or dangerous, ineffective or utilitarian, soft or hard?), sometimes to dismiss the hoodie as evidence at all. To insist (as many do, understandably) on seeing Martin's unadorned body, black and murdered, is to insist upon a return to a deeper condition beneath a numbing, noisy distraction that impedes our perception of the stability of the real. But the process of attending to the body — unhooded, unveiled, unclothed — cannot be the solution to racisms, because that body is always already an abstraction, an effect of law and its violence. In profiling surfaces, especially where flesh and fabric are brought together close enough as to be imperceptible, we do not arrive at the truth of an interior. We find instead on such surfaces the optics through which someone is targeted as alienable from others, and the lethal structures that disappear them — unwillingly, devastatingly — from our sight.¹⁰

/// Published on January 2, 2015

9 Media Matters (Staff), Fox's Geraldo Rivera: "I Think the Hoodie Is as Much Responsible for Trayvon Martin's Death as George Zimmerman," on <http://mediamatters.org/blog/2012/03/23/foxs-geraldo-rivera-i-think-the-hoodie-is-as-mu/184418>, 2012 (my emphasis).

10 Some parts of this essay are elaborated upon in Mimi Thi Nguyen, "The Hoodie as Sign, Screen, Expectation, and Force," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, forthcoming Summer 2015.

CAUGHT IN THE CLOUD: THE BIOPOLITICS OF TEAR GAS WARFARE

BY PHILIPPE THEOPHANIDIS

On June 12, 2013, a two-and-a-half minute amateur recording titled “Taksim’de Gaz saldırısının içinde kalan Kadının acı çığlıkları” was uploaded on YouTube. It shows what appears to be a sudden as well as massive tear gas assault being conducted against a large crowd gathered somewhere in the vicinity of Istanbul’s Taksim square, where people have been protesting against the planed demolition of Taksim Gezi Park since May.

This video, however, is striking in a number of ways. The speed at which the gas completely fills the whole area where the large crowd is assembled is astonishing. Forty seconds after the impact of the first cartridges, the sky is not visible anymore: a yellowish and dense smoke fills the entire frame of the image. Then, the camera turns its attention to a young woman nearby.¹ Like the author of the video, she finds herself caught in the chemical cloud, on top of an immobilized bus, apparently unable to flee. The rudimentary respiratory mask she’s wearing over her mouth is clearly unable to protect her adequately in this situation. The incapacitating effects of the gas are dramatically illustrated by the acute distress she quickly finds herself in: the video shows her as she falls on her knees, screaming. The experience must be terrifying. In her precarious position, the only thing she could do to avoid breathing the gas would be not to breathe at all which, in turn, would mean death. As Sloterdijk once observed, her body is coerced into collaborating to its own demise. It has no choice but to interface with the chemical agent filling the atmosphere:²

1 See this video online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_rSIHCT3WRw

2 I am not the only one to have thought of Sloterdijk’s essay on gas warfare in relation to the use of tear gas against civilian populations. A year ago, NAJ Taylor, a doctoral researcher at the University of Queensland, wrote a good opinion piece for Al Jazeera about the increasing use of tear gas by law enforcement agencies: “Teargas: Or, the state as atmo-terrorist” (May 5, 2012). More recently, Jussi Parikka linked Sloterdijk’s essay to the ongoing Turkey protests in a short comment he published in his blog jussiparikka.net: “Breathless” (June 17, 2013). A more elaborated essay using Sloterdijk’s theory of “atmo-terrorism” was proposed by Marijn Nieuwenhuis in a text titled “Terror in the Air



Stills from a video of a tear gas attack by the Istanbul Police (June 2013, see footnote #1)

[...] the air attack of the gas terrorist (Gasterroristen) produces in the attacked the despair of being forced to cooperate in the extermination of their own lives, because they cannot not breathe.³

The following exploratory essay mobilizes two main conceptual frameworks: for the most part, it borrows from Michel Foucault's influential analysis of "biopolitics" and from Sloterdijk's *Spheres* project. The objective is to situate what is happening in the video in the broader perspective of the contemporary conditions of our coexistence. Its argument can be summarized in the following three propositions:

- First, the tear gas attack against the crowd of protestors is, in some ways, exemplary of a contemporary regime of governmentality concerned not only with mere subjects and bodies, but more broadly with the control of biological populations in a living environment. Here, Sloterdijk's analysis of atmospheric warfare clearly intersects with Michel Foucault's environmental biopolitics.
- Second, biopolitics is not strictly reducible to the intention of a sovereign power. Although it may at one point express itself through the institution of a State government, biopower cannot be monopolized nor possessed by a party in particular. It comes from human life in general and exists as a dynamic network of force relations. From this perspective, the video also raises the crucial problem of the conditions in which a form of life or a way of living could resist biopolitics.
- Third, the distress of the young woman dramatically points towards a limit where politics of life turn into politics *over* life. This is illustrative of the paradox of biopolitics already identified by Foucault where, most notably through wars, the political management of life turns into a work of death.

16

By further developing those three propositions it is possible to understand the tear gas attack depicted in the video as a specific kind of biopolitical operation situated in the broader context of modernity's coexistential crisis. In such a perspective, the situation of the young woman caught in a cloud of irritant gas concerns us all. Not so much in the sense that we all share it in a consensual unity, but quite the opposite. It is ours in the aporetic sense that what we share is what Sloterdijk has described as an "acute world war of ways of life."⁴ Living together has become the environment in which the political management of life takes place as the possibility of life's own annihilation.

in Istanbul" which was published online as part of a virtual theme issue of *Society and Space* on "The Events in Turkey" (June 2013): <http://societyandspace.com/2013/06/05/the-events-in-turkey-a-virtual-theme-issue-for-background/>.

³ Peter Sloterdijk, *Terror from the Air*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009, 23.

⁴ Peter Sloterdijk, *Spheres Volume I: Bubbles: Microspherology*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2011, 71.

Living Environment ///

In the video, it is clear that gas cartridges are being indistinctly thrown and/or fired into the crowd. They are not targeted at specific individuals nor, as a matter of fact, at any body in particular.⁵ Instead, the gas released by the cartridges is meant for the atmosphere associated with the space where the crowd is gathered at a certain point in time. It is through the temporary modification of the living environment that some generic characteristics of the human body are targeted for the specific purpose of control. Officially, the tear gas is not meant nor designed to be lethal. Instead, the gas reacts to body's moisture and provokes irritation and burning sensations. It consequently forces the body to seek a more hospitable space and, in the process, to leave the position it is occupying.

Michel Foucault calls "biopolitics" the massifying capture of life by political power.⁶ It is neither sovereignty over subjects, nor discipline over individualized bodies. Instead, biopolitics designate the statistical control of populations through actions on their living environment. In other words, it concerns the control of "human beings insofar as they are a species and their environment."⁷

Subjects and bodies have not been abandoned as the locus of power, but rather integrated in a new form of control, of which the use of tear gas is exemplary. As a continuation of the gas warfare studied by Sloterdijk in *Terror From The Air*, the use of tear gas in the video especially brings attention to the shared quality of our biological living conditions:

With the phenomenon of gas warfare, the fact of the living organism's immersion in a breathable milieu arrives at the level of formal representation, bringing the climatic and atmospheric conditions pertaining to human life to a new level of explication.⁸

Human beings's ability to modify the atmospheric conditions in which they live does not stop with tear gas. The video is a reminder that biopolitics is both a technological and a global affair. It is not because we are all breathing tear gas — we are not — nor because the same tear gas cartridges are being used in Turkey and in Brazil. Rather, it is because of our collective ability to transform the conditions of our living environment at an unprecedented scale. Biopolitics

5 Except of course when the cartridge itself is used as a projectile.

6 Foucault was not the first (nor the last) to elaborate a concept of "biopolitics." For a solid overview of the history of the concept, see Roberto Esposito's *Bíos*, Timothy Campbell (trans), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.

7 Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana (eds), David Macey (trans), New York: Picador, 2003, 245.

8 Sloterdijk, *Terror from the Air*, 23.

includes “the problem of the environment to the extent that it is not a natural environment, that it has been created by the population and therefore has effects on that population.”⁹ This means that human populations are neither strictly situated in Jakob von Uexküll’s *Umwelt* nor exactly in Martin Heidegger’s *In-der-Welt-sein* (Being-in-the-world). Instead, they inhabit an intermediate, constructed space which is precisely the object of Sloterdijk’s “spherology.” This space is neither as determined (closed) as the “environment” of animals, nor as indeterminate (open) as *Dasein*’s world.¹⁰

The problem of managing those intermediate environments is notoriously illustrated by the contemporary debates surrounding the increase in greenhouse gas production. Smog-saturated skies, like those sometimes seen over Singapore and Beijing, show the limits of control where actions on the environment create undesirable side effects. From this perspective, the tear gas attack seen in the video is the spectacularly visible expression of a much larger problem.

Power ///

Whereas disciplinary technologies could in some circumstances be assigned to a well defined sovereign power, biological technologies of control are not necessarily centralized in any form of “state,” “government,” or “system.” Foucault was quite clear about his definition of “power”:

By power, I do not mean “Power” as a group of institutions and mechanisms that ensure the subservience of the citizens of a given state. [...] Finally, I do not have in mind a general system of domination exerted by one group over another, a system whose effects, through successive derivations, pervade the entire social body. The analysis, made in terms of power, must not assume that sovereignty of the state, the form of the law, or the over-all unity of a domination are given at the outset; rather, they are only the terminal forms power takes.¹¹

This does not mean that the action of the Turkish government should not be scrutinized. There is in fact such a thing as a “State control of the biological,” as Foucault once put it. One has only to think about laws regarding stem cell research, abortion and birth control — China’s one-child policy being a striking example of the latter. The politically strategic decisions of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip

9 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 245.

10 For the relationship between Sloterdijk’s “spheres” and the concepts of environment and world, see Peter Sloterdijk, *La Domestication de l’être*, Paris: Mille et une nuit, 2000, 42-43, as well as “Foreword to the Theory of Spheres,” in Melik Ohanian and Jean-Christophe Royoux (eds), *Cosmograms*, New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2005, 223-240.

11 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol I: An Introduction*, Robert Hurley (trans), New York: Pantheon Books, 1978, 92.

Erdogan certainly have a role to play in the tear gas attack captured by the amateur video described in the opening of this essay.

However, what Foucault is saying in regard to biopolitics and bio-power is that power is not a circumscribed predicate one could assign to a single individual or a class of individuals.¹² Nor is it a substance that one group could appropriate to the detriment of another group. “More power to the people” is a slogan not quite in line with Foucault’s theories. Within a biopolitical paradigm, “[p]ower is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere.”¹³ This distributed “network of power relations” forms “transitory points of resistance.”¹⁴ In Turkey, for example, localized tactics of climatization emerged in response to the strategy of tear gas warfare. What is important, it seems, is to be aware of the ways by which those fluxes of resistance are susceptible to institutional capture:

And it is undoubtedly the strategic codification of these points of resistance that makes a revolution possible, somewhat similar to the way in which the state relies on the institutional integration of power relationships.¹⁵

Giorgio Agamben — who prolonged Foucault’s efforts in new directions — has shown how the very institution of human rights is precisely what allows for the political management of human life in the first place:

Declarations of rights represent the originary figure of the inscription of natural life in the juridico-political order of the nation-state. The same bare life that in the *ancien régime* was politically neutral and belonged to God as creaturely life and in the classical world was (at least apparently) clearly distinguished as *zōē* from political life (*bios*) now fully enters into the structure of the state and even becomes the earthly foundation of the state’s legitimacy and sovereignty.¹⁶

From this perspective, human rights belong to the genealogical background that eventually allowed for the emergence of tear gas warfare as a specific kind of biopolitical operation. In such a context, it is all the more important to keep thinking different forms of collec-

12 From Foucault’s perspective, it would seem appropriate to understand biopolitics as stabilized forms of governmentality (institutions, apparatuses, etc.), whereas biopower is the underlying “multiplicity of force relations” immanent to life upon which those stabilized forms emerge. For more, see also Maurizio Lazzarato, “From Biopower to Biopolitics,” *PLI* 13, 2002, 99-113.

13 Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 93.

14 *Ibid.*, 96.

15 *Ibid.*, 96 (my emphasis).

16 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Daniel Heller-Roazen (trans), Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998, 75.

tive life, aside from the institutional forms already provided by the massifying power of biopolitics. This opens up new lines of thought which are not based on “binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled,” or of “massive binary division.”¹⁷ Examples of such efforts can be found in Giorgio Agamben’s deployment of “whatever singularities” and Jean-Luc Nancy’s attempt to think the “singular plural.”¹⁸ Both authors are engaged in an attempt to think new political forms of life — for which they both use the term “community” — through dynamics of (force) relations rather than through predetermined sets of fixed properties or values.

War ///

One could argue that the gas attack shown in the video does not qualify as “warfare” since it shows the use of tear gas by law enforcement against civilians. It is true that while the military use of chemical weapons has been subjected to various international prohibitions since the Hague Conventions, the domestic use of tear gas for law enforcement purposes remains legal. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considers “tear gas” to be a “riot control agent”: instead of a “chemical weapon” it is referred to as a “chemical compound.”

However, it could be argued that the term “warfare” in particular, and the category of war in general, nevertheless apply to what is happening in Turkey. They also apply, in fact, to similar events happening elsewhere, even when tear gas or military-style operations are not involved. There are several reasons for this, both practical and theoretical.

In August 2012, the independent organization Physicians for Human Rights issued a report titled “Weaponizing Tear Gas” about the “unprecedented use” of the control agent during the Bahraini uprising of spring 2011. The report clearly suggests that tear gas — to which PHR refers to as a “toxic chemical agent” — can be used as a weapon. Furthermore, the deputy prime minister of Turkey has threatened to deploy military forces in cities. If the army was indeed deployed against the civilian population, the conflict could very well qualify as a civil war. In fact, the threat alone is enough to link this conflict with the increasing extension of war zones inside the civilian sphere. Meanwhile, authorities in Brazil have announced the deployment of the National Public Security Force (*Força Nacional de Segurança Pública*). The NPSF is composed of men from the Brazilian Military Police. The very qualification of a police force responsible for public order as

17 Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 94-96.

18 Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, Michael Hardt (trans), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003; Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*, Robert Richardson (trans), Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

being “military” in nature could be seen as another indication of the indifferentiation between public civil and military spheres.

Civilian conflicts are not a new phenomenon. Their history can be traced back to the Greek *stasis* which designated a violent confrontation between the civil members of a given *polis* (or city-state). In contemporary times however, globalization has increasingly folded the external into the internal: the traditional distinction between the domain of war — which used to take place at a macro level, in-between states (or state nations) — and the civilian sphere has been blurred. The turn towards what has been called a “global civil war” has intensified since 2001, when the launch of the so-called “war on terror” effectively extended the theatre of military operations to the entire world.

It is one of the strengths of Foucault’s analysis to show how, in present times, the politics of life are paradoxically always susceptible to being transformed into works of death. This situation has become possible because politics and war are but different strategies of coding the power of biopolitics: strategies where one is “always liable to switch into the other.”¹⁹ The most deadly conflicts of the last century have been carried in the name of safeguarding the integrity of life: the life of a population, a nation, a community:

Wars are not longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital.²⁰

Furthermore, the events represented in the amateur video I wrote about earlier are far from being exceptional or, rather, they appear to be exceptionally familiar. I won’t be the first to recall Walter Benjamin’s comment to the effect that “the ‘emergency situation’ in which we live is the rule.” Civilian populations all around the world have been increasingly involved in incidents of extreme violence (although one needs to distinguish between an increase in the events themselves and an increase in media exposure). Wars, it could be argued, are now experienced at the micro level of various public and private spaces, whether they take the form of bombings, of targeted assassinations, of mass murders, of explosive riots or of uprisings. Since I started writing this text, and while the conflict in Turkey was still ongoing, massive protests have also erupted both in Brazil and Egypt.

In the first volume of his Spheres trilogy, Sloterdijk describes this situation as a “war of foams”:

19 Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 93.

20 Ibid., 137.

The guiding morphological principle of the polyspheric world we inhabit is no longer the orb, but rather foam. [...] In foam worlds, the individual bubbles are not absorbed into a single, integrative hyper-orb, as in the metaphysical conception of the world, but rather drawn together to form irregular hills. [...] What is currently being confusedly proclaimed in all the media as the globalization of the world is, in morphological terms, the universalized war of foams.²¹

As soon as the protests started in Turkey, at the end of last May, efforts were made to unify them with previous social movements such as the Occupy movement and the Arab Spring. It is true that while each of those events are still being characterized locally, they do certainly profit, to a certain extent, from a global momentum.

However, one cannot deny that what is shared globally, aside from what could be called a “longing for belonging,” is also a mode of being-together dramatically characterized by violence. The hypothesis according to which the very desire for togetherness fuels to some extent those conflicts is certainly something worthy of further consideration. For the moment, it will suffice to note there may be a conceptual continuity between the ways in which Foucault, Sloterdijk, Nancy and others think of contemporary forms of political life through confrontations and wars.

A Valley of Tears ///

Renaissance humanism provided humanity with a position of superiority, not quite alongside God, but well above the earth: “in the middle of the world,” as Pico della Mirandola writes in his *Discourse on the Dignity of Man*. Modernity is often interpreted as the moment when this privileged position was lost, when human beings were thrown back among the entities they used to contemplate from above. This transformation comes with the realization that human life is not absolutely exceptional, but on the contrary that it is deeply embedded in a specific bio-technological environment which is both shaped by our very existence and shared with other species. The critical conditions of this “ecotechnological enframing,” as Jean-Luc Nancy once called it, have become strikingly visible on a daily basis.²²

What Foucault’s analysis of biopolitics has shown, among many other things, is that the operations to control and organize life do not happen in another realm, in the high tower of a dark castle. Instead, the network of power management trying for better or worse to provide life with an adequate form coincides all around the world with life itself: it is *us*, as a human community. Instead of being *in* the

²¹ Sloterdijk, *Spheres Volume I*, 71.

²² Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Creation of the World or Globalization*, François Raffoul and David Pettigrew (trans), Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007, 94.

middle of the world, we find ourselves to be the very *milieu* in which biopolitics take place. The aporia of our situation, as we have seen, becomes clear: not unlike the young woman caught in a cloud of tear gas, the very conditions for the existence of a “we” — *i.e.* coexistence — seem to imply its demise.

/// Published on August 26, 2013

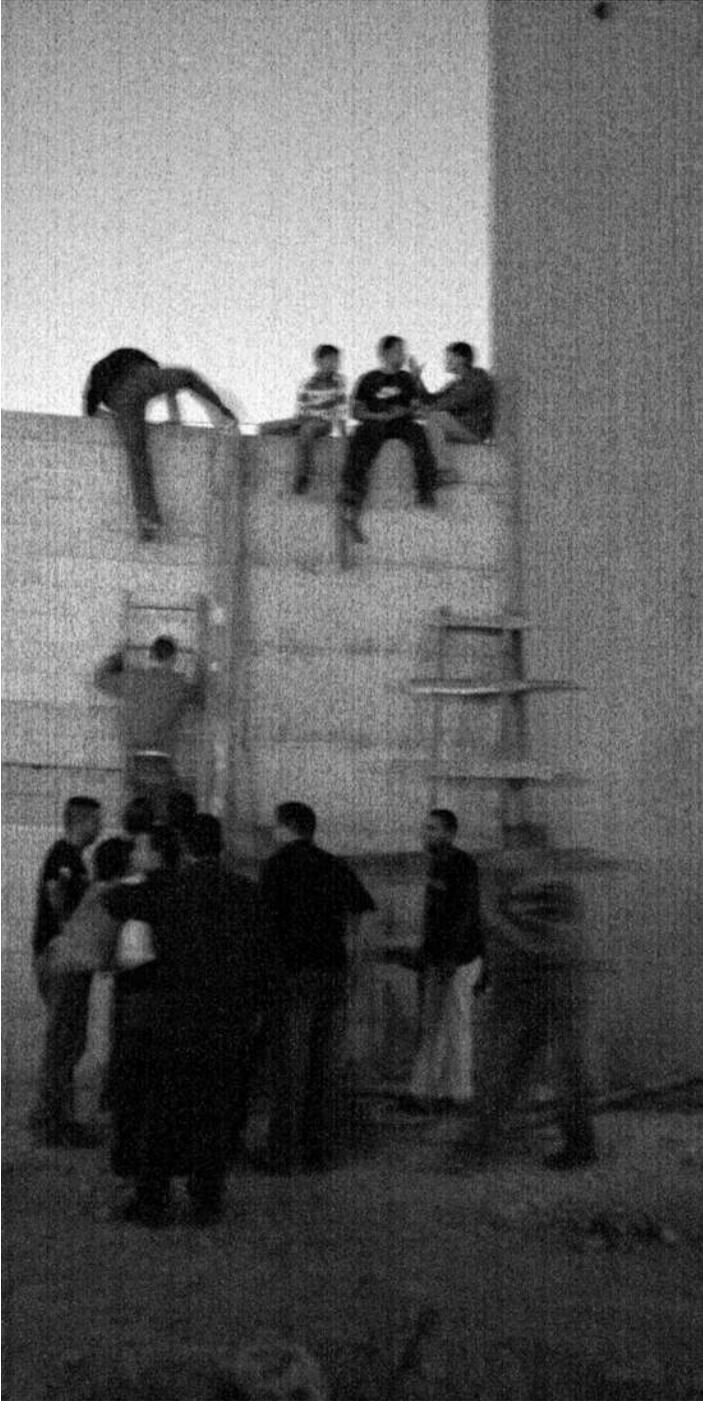
BODIES ON THE LINE: SOMATIC RISK AND PSYCHOGEOGRAPHIES IN URBAN EXPLORATION AND PALESTINIAN ‘INFILTRATION’

BY HANNA BAUMANN

Balbuk had been born on Huirison Island at the Causeway, and from there a straight track had led to the place where she had once gathered jilgies and vegetable food with the women, in the swamp where Perth railway station now stands. Through fences and over them, Balbuk took the straight path to the end. When a house was built in the way, she broke its fence-palings with her digging stick and charged up the steps and through the rooms.¹

Balbuk, an aboriginal woman in Stephen Muecke's fictocritical travelogue *No Road (Bitumen all the Way)*, is a trespasser, a destroyer of private property. She is also merely maintaining her routine, doing what she has always done and asserting her relationship with the land irrespective of changing ownership rights and newly-built obstacles. In a similar manner, the two types of infiltrators I discuss here also defy access restrictions in order to claim a space that has been taken away from them. Taking as my starting point the 2013 documentary *Infiltrators* by Palestinian artist Khaled Jarrar, I juxtapose practices and discourses of Palestinians who enter Jerusalem without a permit with those of Urban Exploration (Urb-Ex). Urb-Ex, engaged in predominantly by elites in the cities of the global North, involves the recreational physical exploration of derelict and abandoned locations in the city, but also of exclusive securitised spaces. The practice has become highly visible due to spectacular actions that generated numerous media reports, but also thanks to self-promotional films and blogs. (Incidentally, a low-budget action film also titled *Infiltrators* about urban explorers was released in 2014). While the physical acts involved in these two types of infiltration are similar,

¹ Stephen Muecke, *No Road: Bitumen all the Way*, Freemantle: Freemantle Arts Centre Press, 1977, 116.



Still from *Infiltrators* by Khalid Jarrar (2013)

the meanings attached to them differ in many, albeit not all, areas. This is an attempt, then, to link descriptions of somatic experience involved in 'infiltration' with the psychogeographies they produce, which are in turn also produced by them.

Academics writing on Urb-Ex — including geographer Bradley Garrett, an avid practitioner of Urb-Ex himself — have been criticized for failing to interrogate the various level of privilege at play in the practice.² Mott and Roberts (rightfully) take issue with the assertion that, apart from those engaging in Urb-Ex, everyone has “stopped exploring.”³ In fact, encounters with homeless people documented by Urb-Exers show that supposedly abandoned spaces are not unchartered territory, waiting only to be discovered with abseiling equipment and an expensive camera. Instead they function as safe spaces for other types of trespassers, who seek to escape the surveillance apparatus of the city.

If Urb-Exers have not sufficiently acknowledged that they do not have a monopoly on trespassing within the cities of the global North, they also have failed to see the relationship of their activities to infiltration taking place on different scales. Indeed, millions of 'illegal' or undocumented migrants would most likely disagree that the world has stopped exploring. Both Urb-Ex and migration across international borders involve overcoming a high-tech security apparatus in order to make use of spaces designed for the Other, and both entail gaining access to exclusive neoliberal spaces — be they high-rise buildings like London's Shard or zones of economic privilege such as the EU.

Like many migrants, Palestinians are without citizenship rights or territorial sovereignty. Palestinian topography is defined by severely restricted movement, making it a particularly rich terrain for infiltration. Due to the ubiquity of ever-changing boundaries both around and inside the Palestinian territories, any form of movement becomes a transgression, any use of space for daily activities is interpreted as an expansive outward-movement, and the breach of boundaries becomes an integral part of going about one's everyday life.⁴ The 'infiltrators' shown entering Jerusalem from the West Bank in Jarrar's film represent a cross-section of society. We don't only see labourers entering Jerusalem to make a living, but also older women wishing to pray at al-Aqsa mosque, middle-aged men who laugh at their

2 Bradley L. Garrett, *Explore Everything: Place-Hacking the City*, London: Verso, 2013.

3 Carrie Mott and Susan M. Roberts, "Not Everyone Has (the) Balls: Urban Exploration and the Persistence of Masculinist Geography," *Antipode* 46:1, 2014, 236.

4 Ariel Handel, "Where, Where to, and When in the Occupied Territories: An Introduction to the Geography of Disaster," in Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni and Sari Hanafi (eds), *The Power of Inclusive Exclusion. Anatomy of Israeli Rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*, New York: Zone Books, 2009, 216.

in own ineptitude in attempting to climb the Israeli Wall separating East Jerusalem from the West Bank, as well as a baby being carried through a tunnel. A young boy shoves dozens of loaves of ka'ek bread through a drainage hole in the Wall, refusing to allow *normal* life — and everyday desires such as fresh bread from Jerusalem — to be interrupted by a massive piece of physical infrastructure. The rather casual, sometimes dilettantish, approach to trespassing seen in *Infiltrators* mirrors the recreational character of Urb-Ex in certain ways, but it masks a vastly higher level of physical risk. While Urb-Exers may spend a night in jail (and wear this as a badge of honour), Palestinians crossing the *de-facto* border without a permit risk — and, we are told, sometimes lose — their lives. Because they take place within structurally vastly different contexts, the somatic experiences they involve and the spaces in which they take place are conceptualised differently.

The Tactics of Smoothing Striated Space ///

The city, according to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, is the “striated space *par excellence*” — and this striation is only exacerbated if the city is bifurcated by various kinds of borders.⁵ Urb-Exers work within, not against this system of constraint. If it weren't for access restrictions, and the potential legal repercussions of entering securitised spaces, the act of infiltration would lose much of its thrill. Garrett describes Urb-Ex as a form of “place-hacking” because, next to the physical feats required in trespassing on spaces that are off bounds, it involves the cerebral activity of identifying the weak spots in their striation — undermining the system while working within the grid of its logic.

Palestinians similarly use their intimate knowledge of the Israeli security apparatus to make use of gaps in the system, but their infiltration serves to smooth out the striated spaces through which they move.⁶ Not merely evading state control by avoiding soldiers and circumventing checkpoints, Palestinians are seen forging rhizomatic new paths by driving off the road and moving on foot through the landscape. By moving outside of the formal road system, and thus the parameters controlled by Israeli security services, they can more freely act outside the purview of the state. They utilise information networks to keep track of the ever-changing security landscape, and constantly update tactics to reflect the current closure of roads, staffing of checkpoints, or army patrols. *Infiltrators* shows Palestinians scaling the Wall with the help of ladders, passing through drainage

5 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Brian Massumi (trans), London: Continuum, 1987, 481.

6 Nurhan Abujidi, “Surveillance and Spatial Flows in the Occupied Palestinian Territories,” in Elia Zureik, David Lyon and Yasmeen Abu-Laban (eds), *Surveillance and Control in Israel/Palestine: Population, Territory and Power*, London: Routledge, 2010.

tunnels underneath the Wall, cutting through wire fences, evading and running from security personnel — physical acts not at all unlike those involved in Urb-Ex, yet with vastly different meanings.

Somatic Experiences and Psychogeographies ///

Infiltration is not merely about evading state control, it is also about taking back an area no longer under one's control. Garrett describes Urb-Ex as a rebellion against the feeling that “the city is built for others and we may look at it but we may not touch it.”⁷ This desire to establish more direct contact with the city and experience its inner workings first hand is a natural consequence of contemporary urban planning, if we are to follow Richard Sennett's argument that “the stretched-out geography of the modern city, in concert with modern technologies for desensitizing the human body” have weakened the tactile sense.⁸ What Garrett calls “edgework” — actively seeking out dangerous activities in the spaces of exploration — leads to tangible, real experiences.⁹ The thrill of illegality and physical danger appear to bring about a heightened state of psychological awareness: what Garrett terms the “meld” is a feeling that comes about when Urb-Exers perceive their personal body to merge with the social body of their group of explorers, but also with the urban body as a whole.

Urban explorers thus appear to achieve a feeling of oneness with the city, or, one might argue, even a sense of ownership over it. Documentation of the feats seems to constitute a major motivation for Urb-Ex, and photography is seen as a means to achieve an intimate connection with places. Another aspect of reaching this state of mind is to “inscribe yourself into the place” (by posting stickers in hard-to-reach locations or rubbing objects with one's “salival DNA”), the desire for which, Garrett writes, “becomes unbearable.”¹⁰

As opposed to Urb-Exers, who see overcoming obstacles to infiltrate off-limits spaces as a way to become one with the city, for Palestinians moving through securitised spaces, the physical strains and dangers to which they are exposed serve as a constant reminder of their exclusion from Jerusalem. Lack of detection is of the highest importance for Palestinians, and documentation of their tactics would endanger them. This is not to say, however, that *Infiltrators* do not

7 Bradley L. Garrett, *Place Hacking: Tales of Urban Exploration*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2012, 259.

8 Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization*, New York: Norton, 1994.

9 Garrett argues this is in part because these experiences are not mediated by consumer society of spectacle, when in fact they are highly spectacular and marketable themselves.

10 Bradley L. Garrett, *Explore Everything: Place-Hacking the City*, London: Verso, 2013, 52.

recount their achievements with a certain degree of bravado. Retelling episodes of risks taken and dangers survived serves both as a way of sharing information about constantly evolving circumstances and as a means to regain a sense of agency in a process involving asymmetrical power relations. The risk may therefore heighten the meaning of the act. The smugglers in Jarrar's film proudly keep track of the number of individuals they have helped across the Wall. They appear to conceptualise this as a national duty rather than a way to make money. In fact, one smuggler is proud enough of his work that he provides his real phone number in case viewers want to call to thank him.

Not only the language of conquest reflects the masculinist approach inherent in *Urb-Ex*; the practice also grants authority to certain types of bodies, as Mott and Roberts argue, in particular those "performing an able-bodied, heteronormative and typically white masculinity."¹¹ The physical challenges Palestinians face in scaling the Israeli Wall also privilege certain bodies, but because this transgressive form of mobility is imbued with rhetoric of national resistance, it also allows traditionally less mobile bodies more freedom to move. In framing movement across Israeli-imposed lines as resistance, women can at times also increase their mobility, challenging patriarchal forms of control.¹² We see a fashionable young woman scaling the Wall with the help of a smuggler to attend a concert in Jerusalem, not to visit a dying relative or to ensure her family's economic survival. Her motivations are pleasure and leisure, not survival, but the risk she is taking is potentially lethal.

The insistence on a Palestinian right to accessing Jerusalem becomes especially clear in such cases in which 'infiltration' takes place for casual reasons, or no reason at all. Palestinians enter the city without a permit, taking an enormous risk, in order to merely assert their presence. Both *Urb-Exers* and Palestinians entering Jerusalem 'illegally' seek to (temporarily) appropriate space controlled by the Other, and subvert it, even if doing so clandestinely. Yet the Palestinians shown in Jarrar's film do not only exercise their right to the city — this city — but enact an alternative geography. Like Balbuk, the aboriginal woman pacing through a new spatial reality she does not accept, they disavow the meaning imposed by the concrete barrier, they refuse to heed to the physical obstacle it poses. While *Urb-Exers'* conquests hinge on the sense of transgression, Palestinians entering Jerusalem without a permit do not need the border — they neither accept that their act should be one of trespassing, nor do they legitimise the Wall by adhering to the restriction it imposes. They may have to engage with its physical reality by developing tactics to

11 Mott and Roberts, "Not Everyone Has (the) Balls," 234.

12 Sophie Richter-Devroe, "Palestinian Women's Everyday Resistance: Between Normality and Normalisation," *Journal of International Women's Studies* 12, 2009, 32-46.

overcome it, but they refuse its symbolic demarcation, smoothing out its striation instead. In not acknowledging the occupier's geography, they embody a psychogeography in which Jerusalem remains an integral part of Palestine.

Creating Thirdspace at the Edges of the City ///

In Urb-Ex, the edge (of buildings as well as the limits of the body's capabilities) plays an essential role in freeing the autonomous subject from society's constraints and underpinning his experience of conquering the city. Borders, and especially walled borders are constitutive of the nation-state.¹³ For Palestinians, who do not have a state and who did not chose the border signified by the Wall, the undermining of this imposed boundary may act as a constitutive movement (and moment). The border zones at the edges of Jerusalem, which are permeated by acts of infiltration on a daily basis, act as a kind of thirdspace between here and there in the sense of Bhabha: These "in-between" spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood — singular or communal — that initiate new signs of identity and innovative sites of collaborations in the act of defining the idea of society itself.¹⁴

If we understand thirdspace not merely as a space for hybridising cultural identity, but also for the marginalised to renegotiate power relations and act as spatial agents, it may be that the in-between spaces at the seam zones, the grey areas of legality, jurisdiction and ownership are the spaces in which Palestinians can affect the spatial power configuration.¹⁵ The act of infiltration, and the disregard for the (border)line it displays by putting bodies on the line and exposing them to potential physical harm, reshapes the territory itself, if only momentarily.

13 Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*, New York: Zone Books, 2010.

14 Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, New York: Routledge, 1994.

15 See Edward Soja, *Thirdspace. Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.

PALESTINE MADE FLESH

BY SOPHIA AZEB

In a 1998 opinion piece for Egyptian weekly *Al Ahram*, Edward Said memorably skewered Yasser Arafat's intention to issue his second declaration of Palestinian statehood within a year. Said wrote, "I say [statehood] with some irony because, at first glance, the notion of declaring a state for a second time (Algiers, November 1998 was the first) must strike the untutored spectator as inherently funny, since in both instances, except for about 60 per cent of Gaza, there is very little land for this state."¹ Indeed, Arafat's poorly thought out decrees for statehood never succeeded, resulting instead in the expected Israeli backlash against Palestinians living under occupation and within the Israeli state. But as Said went on to criticise the most obvious flaws of the illusive 'statehood' Arafat strove for, he made quite a profound assertion: "If by declaring that what, in effect, is a theoretical abridgement of true statehood is the first step towards the realization of actual statehood, then one might as well hope to extract sunlight from a cucumber on the basis of the sun having entered the cucumber in the first place. This is an example not of serious, but of magical thought, something we have no need of now."² Lover of poetry and music though he was, Edward Said seriously devalues the radical potential of imagination in his article. Specifically, he slights the role that imagination plays in creating and sustaining a truly autonomous Palestinian nation. A nation with no land but also no borders; a nation with no military but also no war, and a nation with no recognition based on the destructive logics of empire. This is all to say, a nation that is lived without restrictions through the innovative and agile practice of imagining *otherwise*. This brief essay's exploration of imagining an 'other' way to recognize Palestine pays its respects to Edward Said's dogged pursuit of liberation, but remembers that Edward Said, like millions of other Palestinians, lived, and died, *elsewhere*.

31

"I was born a Black woman / and now / I am become a Palestinian," African American poet June Jordan asserted after the 1982 massacre in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, positioning herself

1 Edward Said, "A real state means real work," *Al Ahram* 397 (October 1998), 1-7. Reprinted on palestinechronicle.com (November 28, 2012).

2 Ibid.



Map of the Levant by Léopold Lambert (2014)

within a proclamation of the existence of her fellow Palestinians.³ If June Jordan is Palestinian, if she, in fact, becomes Palestine, then does Palestine exist outside of the nation-state? Might Palestine exist within the very bodies that exceed the confines of statehood, of discernable cartographic recognition? Statelessness as a result of imperialism, exploitation, and forced displacement is unbearable and often unknowable, in any of its historic manifestations. But is the nation-state that the PLO twice declared, Mahmoud Abbas's Palestinian Authority won relative approval of from the United Nations, and several European states have voted to 'recognize' in 2014 a solution? The dilemma of statelessness is real, but the "solution" — a state — risks cementing the outcome of Palestinian liberation within the very structures that first orchestrated its subjugation. When has the nation-state functioned as a tool of liberation? When has the nation-state escaped the confines of its origins in enslavement, imperialism, exile, and settler colonialism? The nation-state of borders and laws, that entity which classifies and determines what citizenship and belonging to the nation means... that nation-state is conquest and the root of occupation itself. We must not seek Palestine The State — we must instead continue to envision Palestine The Nation, the cultural nation, the people nation, the borderless, limitless imaginary of a nation. We are stateless, but we are certainly not uprooted or unlimbed. A fantasy? Wholeheartedly. A 'magical thought' that our intellectual forefather Edward Said might find frustratingly idealistic, or even absurd. But in absurdity we may trouble the normative expectations of state-based liberation (aping the West's epistemological and political structures, which have structured our own oppression and our own complicities in the oppression of others — there are always others), and with our very bodies we remain Palestinian. The Palestinians of a Palestine that was never recognized as Palestine but remains, always, a practice of Palestine. The whole globe may hold Palestine, may be peoples coming together in June Jordan's living room to build their homes as real and sustaining as the flesh that allows us to move, touch, and feel.

The political importance of our bodies (cultural, social, corporeal, and ephemeral) to colonized peoples, especially for those whose bodies function in exile, is fundamental to our understanding of how Palestine is practiced outside of the limitations of the nation-state and the politics of utterable recognition it demands. Though Palestinians under occupation, in refugee camps, and in the diaspora are absented from Western epistemologies ("a land without a people for a people without a land" being the common refrain), their own way of being and knowing poses a radical threat to the tenuous logics of Zionism.⁴ This is particularly intriguing in the case of the refugee — a figure

3 June Jordan, "Moving towards Home," in *Living Room*, New York: Thunder's Mouth Press Inc, 1985, 132.

4 Beshara B. Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine: Writing Palestinians into History," in Ilan Pappé (ed), *The Israel/Palestine Question*, London: Routledge, 1999, 13.

theorised as constituting a great threat to the power of the state by Giorgio Agamben, who argues that the refugee's very existence contests the state's role of sovereign over life: they manage to live without the state, in essence.⁵ In Achille Mbembe's parallel estimation, the refugee is a political body within war, thus an act of absolute state power.⁶ In the case of Palestinians, both assertions might be considered equally full of imaginative utility: Palestinian refugees continue to exercise their existence by *being* without a (Palestinian) state, even while being subject to the (Israeli) state. Palestinians resist the finality of the loss of a homeland by practicing their existence through the very human material coloured by this loss. In essence, the bodies of Palestinians and their relations in exile act as an *exercise of existence* — bodies unrecognizable and unacknowledged as life forms by their oppressors but unable to be detached from themselves or their own self-knowing.⁷

Hailing from the destroyed village of Al-Birwa, the poet Mahmoud Darwish is firm on the tangibility of Palestine from within and elsewhere:

My homeland is neither a bundle of tales,
Nor is it only a memory.
This land is the skin veiling my bones,
And my heart
Vibrates over its grass like a bee.⁸

Darwish anthropomorphizes the land from which he has been exiled from, molding from it a human form — “the skin veiling my bones” — and thus inhabiting its significance in spite of Israeli occupation and Palestinian dispossession. Darwish can no more hope to peel the skin off his bones and live than any other human — he *is* Palestine. Palestine shapes, creates, and forms him. This is a manifesto of Palestinian existence. If we wear the homeland as our skin, do we need a nation-state to live?

In another instance, spoken word poet and Palestinian-American Suheir Hammad embodies Palestine through the language offered by June Jordan decades past. In the pages of *Born Palestinian, Born Black*, she maintains, “Home is within me. I carry everyone and everything I am with me wherever I go. Use my history as the road in front

5 Giorgio Agamben, *Means Without End: Notes on Politics*, Cesare Casarino and Vincenzo Binetti (trans) Minnesota: University of Minneapolis Press, 2000, 19.

6 Achille Mbembe, “Necropolitics,” *Public Culture* 15:1 (2003), 34.

7 Mbembe identifies a potentially autonomous “spirit” within the reductive ‘othering’ of African life by non-Africans in *On The Postcolony*, noting it’s potential in the following line: “This ‘life world’ is not the only field where individuals’ existence unfolds in practice; it is where they exercise existence — that is, live their lives out and confront the very forms of their death.” Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, 15.

8 Khalid A. Sulaiman, *Palestine and Modern Arab Poetry*, London: Zed Books, 1984, 199.

of me, the land beneath me.”⁹ The land she walks upon is not static or tethered to an unyielding map; neither is it a nostalgic, timeless place. The Palestine Hammad calls home within her is *phalasteen*:

We call back to the *phalasteen*
Of folks songs and village dances
The *phalasteen* of martyrs and their mothers
The *phalasteen* bulldozed over in beirut
Whose mouth was jammed silent
With food stamps in brooklyn.¹⁰

Phalasteen in “Blood Stitched Time” is in Beirut, in Brooklyn, and in the physical violence, beauty, and pain inherent in oppression and resistance. If *phalasteen* is martyrs, folk songs, poverty, bulldozers, and silenced mouths, then where is it not? This the Palestine that is the whole world — Hammad speaks to a global condition of colonial violence that exists in *phalasteen*, the place she calls back to and the place within her, and in the United States, the place where her words are formed and delivered.

To understand statehood as it exists in the Western imaginary is merely a structuralised form of violence, an entity that mediates life and death, is to understand that conceptualising freedom from the state must engage a radical departure from the state-based logics that govern our terms for liberation. Palestinians yearn for their historic place — the borders long imagined and inhabited and restructured from within and without — and call it a “homeland.” The yearning is real, and is valid, but a homeland exists anywhere the people do — and Palestinian people are everywhere, in all bodies. Perhaps the defining feature of occupation and dispossession for Palestinians and their kin is having been denied the ability to occupy space in land, in place, and in memory. The practice of memory is so often (as Said’s terse response to Arafat’s poorly planned statehood proclamation demonstrates) to reflect on what was, what should have been, and what might still be. Thus creating an alternate futurity, for Palestinians, is to remember imaginatively. Displaced from the land, from recognition, and from their own memories, Palestinians are also displaced from linear modes of history and existence. We have, therefore, exactly the ingredients required to imagine a non-linear, placeless *freedom* — one well beyond the confines of a nation-state. It is a freedom we imagine, every day, by existing for and within ourselves, in these bodies born of Palestine.

9 Suheir Hammad, Preface to *Born Palestinian, Born Black*, Brooklyn: UpSet, 2010, 11.

10 Suheir Hammad, “Blood Stitched Time,” in *Born Palestinian, Born Black*, 25.

CORPOGRAPHIES: MAKING SENSE OF MODERN WAR

BY DEREK GREGORY

The work I ended up doing on the region and its wars [...] is rooted, as human geography should be, in an embodiment of the conflict.

Val McDermid¹

In his seminal account of the production of space Henri Lefebvre argued that the triumph of abstract space involved a relentless privileging of visualization, an aggressive inscription of “phallic brutality,” and a repression, even a “crushing” of the human body. For Lefebvre, significantly, this “space of calculations” first emerged in the years surrounding the First World War, and although he did not address it in any detail, modern war clearly exemplifies these transformations: an intensifying reliance on an optical-cartographic imaginary, an excessive capacity for spectacular, masculinized violence, and an exorbitant violation of the human body.² But if we take Neil Smith’s injunctions about the (co-)production of nature seriously, the dialectic of modern war reveals a second narrative, in which what Lefebvre called “the practico-sensory realm,” comes to the fore. For in order to survive ground troops had to invest in modes of apprehension that extended far beyond the visual; they remained not only vectors of military violence but also among its victims; and their bodies have to be comprehended as intensely physiological and affective organisms.³

If the modern trajectories of the production of space and the production of nature coincided in the figure of the body — Walter Benjamin’s “tiny, fragile human body” locked since the First World War (so he said) “in a field of force of destructive torrents and explosions” — then, their coincidence in that butchered landscape abruptly recon-

1 Val McDermid, *The Skeleton Road*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2014.

2 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Donald Nicholson-Smith (trans), Oxford: Blackwell, 1991. For an elaboration of these claims, see Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1994, 382-95.

3 Neil Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1984. I develop this argument in “The Natures of War,” forthcoming (draft available on geographicalimaginations.com).



Stills from *Diary of an Unknown Soldier* by Peter Watkins (1959)

figured the human sensorium.⁴ The conventional boundaries between 'culture' and 'nature' were persistently breached and, when Erich Remarque wrote that on the Western Front "our hands are earth, our bodies clay and our eyes pools of rain," he foreshadowed similarly transgressive experiences elsewhere.⁵ As much as they struggled to detach and distance themselves from what increasingly seemed to be a malevolent nature — registered in the multiple versions of the claim that 'nature' was their real enemy — soldiers were haunted by the hallucinatory fear that they were being not only degraded but devoured by it: even absorbed into it. The boundaries were ruptured from both sides, by the intrusive presence and explosive violence of militaries that turned Edmund Blunden's verdant valley into "Nature's slimy wound with spikes of blackened bone," and by the obdurate and resistant forces of an inhuman nature — the deadly 'liveliness' of rain and mud and microbes — to produce a commingled, entangled and militarized nature.⁶ This explains why the soldiers' senses were thrown out of place, why they registered the taste of mud, the smell of flesh, the touch of sound. The Enlightenment had disciplined the senses, and established what it was permissible to see, to hear, to *touch*, to *taste* or to *smell* and what it was possible to know from their apprehensions, but these divisions were unbuttoned and their epistemologies undone by the intensities of the battlefield.

It is that epistemological sense that I seek to sharpen here. The offensives of the First World War were planned within a cartographic imaginary. For military violence to be unleashed on such a scale, how could it have been otherwise? The war was, as Paul K. Saint-Amour reminds us, an intensely optical war that relied, above all, on aerial reconnaissance as the source of geospatial intelligence. Observations and photographs were projected onto the geometric order of the map, which was animated by the mechanical cadence of the military timetable.⁷ The result was a remarkably abstract space in exactly Lefebvre's sense of the term, and yet for the infantry its contours had to be known and navigated through a different, complementary and even confounding imaginary that I call a *corpography*. This was war made flesh, a way of apprehending the battle space through the body as an acutely physical field in which the senses of sound, smell and touch were increasingly privileged in the construction of a profoundly haptic or somatic geography.⁸

4 Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller: Observations on the Works of Nikolai Leskov," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, Hannah Arendt (ed), New York: Schocken, 2007, 83-109, 84.

5 Erich Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, New York: Random House, 2013, 209.

6 Edmund Blunden, *Undertones of War*, London: Penguin, 2010, 107.

7 Paul Saint-Amour, "Modernist Reconnaissance," *Modernism/Modernity* 10:2, 2003, 349-80.

8 Derek Gregory, "Gabriel's Map: Cartography and *corpography* in Modern War," in Peter Meusburger and Derek Gregory (eds), *Geographies of Knowledge and Power*, New York/L

Put like that, the observation is hardly original; you can find intimations of all this in classics like Eric Leed's *No Man's Land*, and once you start digging into the accounts left by soldiers you find supporting evidence on page after page.⁹ But I emphasize the epistemological because this constituted more than a different way of *experiencing* war: it was also a different way of *knowing, ordering and navigating* the space of military violence. These knowledges were situated and embodied — 'local,' even — but they were also transmissible and mobile. On the Western Front, *corpographies* were an instinctive, jarring, visceral response to military violence. As one stretcher-bearer put it:

When sound is translated into a blow on the nape of the neck, and light into a flash so bright that it actually scorches the skin, when feeling is lost in one disintegrating jar of every nerve and fibre [...] the mind, at such moments, is like a compass when the needle has been jolted from its pivot.¹⁰

Corpographies were also improvisational, learned accommodations to military violence. This was not so much a re-setting of the compass, as the stretcher-bearer put it, as the formation of a different bodily instrument altogether. Alex Volmar provides a helpful gloss:

New arrivals to the front had not only had to leave behind their home and daily life, but also the practices of perception and orientation to which they were accustomed. With entry into the danger zone of battle, the auditory perception of peacetime yields to a [...] radicalized psychological experience — a shift that the *Gestalt* psychologist, Kurt Lewin, attempted to articulate with the term "warscape": for the psychological subject, objects lost most of their peacetime characteristics during wartime because they were henceforth evaluated from a

Springer, 2015. I thought I'd made the word up, but Joseph Pugliese's *State Violence and the Execution of Law* (New York: Routledge, 2013, 86) uses "geocorpographies" to designate "the violent enmeshment of the flesh and blood of the body within the geopolitics of war and empire," which obviously complements my own project. I have since discovered that the term has a longer history and multiple meanings that intersect, in various ways, with what I am trying to work out. Perhaps not surprisingly, it also serves as a medical term: "cranio-corpography" is a procedure devised by Claus-Frenzen Claussen in 1968 to capture in a visual trace the longitudinal and lateral movements of a patient's body in order to detect and calibrate disorders of the "equilibrium function." More recently, *corpography* has also been used by dance theorists and practitioners, including Francesca Cataldi and Sebastian Prantl to describe a critical, creative practice: a "dance of things," in which the body is thoroughly immersed, as a "land.body.scape," as Prantl puts it. Meanwhile, Allan Parsons has proposed a "psycho-corpography" — explicitly not a psychogeography — as a way of "tracing the experience of living-a-body." Elsewhere, Alex Chase attends to specific bodies-in-the-world, those of cultural 'figures' (Artaud, Bataille, Foucault, Genet, Jarman and Mishima among them), that resist normalization — hence emphatically 'queer' bodies — and which figure bodies as events. "I hope to develop a methodology of 'corpography,'" he says, "which would write between biography and textual analysis, material lived bodies and fictional work, life and representation, in order to work through other queer concepts such as temporality, space, and ethics."

9 Eric Leed, *No Man's Land: Combat and Identity in World War I*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

10 "A Corporal," *Field Ambulance Sketches*, London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1919, 21.

perspective of extreme pragmatism and exclusively in terms of their fitness for war. [...]

In place of day-to-day auditory perception, which tended to be passive and unconscious, active listening techniques came to the fore: practices of sound analysis, which might be described as an “auscultation” of the acoustic warscape — the method physicians use to listen to their patients by the help of a stethoscope. In these processes, the question was no longer how the noises as such were structured (i.e. what they sounded like), but rather what they meant, and what consequences they would bring with them for the listeners in the trenches. The training of the ear was based on radically increased attentiveness. The subject thrust to the front thus comprised the focal point of an auditory space in which locating and diagnostic listening practices became vital to survival.¹¹

To render this in even more vivid terms, here is “Ex-Private X,” A.M. Burrage:

We know by the singing of a shell when it is going to drop near us, when it is politic to duck and when one may treat the sound with contempt. We are becoming soldiers. We know the calibres of the shells which are sent over in search of us. The brute that explodes with a crash like that of much crockery being broken, and afterwards makes a ‘cheering’ noise like the distant echoes of a football match, is a five-point-nine. The very sudden brute that you don’t hear until it has passed you, and rushes with the hiss of escaping steam, is a whizz-bang... The funny little chap who goes tonk-phew-bong is a little high-velocity shell which doesn’t do much harm... The thing which, without warning, suddenly utters a hissing sneeze behind us is one of our own trench-mortars. The dull bump which follows, and comes from the middle distance out in front, tells us that the ammunition is “dud.” The German shell which arrives with the sound of a woman with a hare-lip trying to whistle, and makes very little sound when it bursts, almost certainly contains gas.

We know when to ignore machine-gun and rifle bullets and when to take an interest in them. A steady phew-phew-phew means that they are not dangerously near. When on the other hand we get a sensation of whips being slashed in our ears we know that it is time to seek the embrace of Mother Earth.¹²

As Burrage’s last sentence shows, *corpographies* were at once recognitions of a devastated landscape — even an “anti-landscape” that seemed to deny all sense — and reaffirmations of an intimate, intensely sensible bond with the earth¹³:

11 Axel Volmar, “In Storms of Steel’: the Soundscape of World War I,” in Daniel Marat (ed), *Sounds of Modern History: Auditory Cultures in 19th and 20th-Century Europe*, Oxford: Berghahn, 2014, 227-255. See also Kurt Lewin’s topological phenomenology of the battlefield, “Kriegslandschaft” (1917), translated by Jonathan Blower as “Landscape of War,” in *Art in Translation* 1:2, 2009, 199-209.

12 A.M. Burrage, *War Is War*, London: Pen and Sword, 2010, 78.

13 Becca Weir, “Degrees in Nothingness’: Battlefield Topography in the First World War,”

To no man does the earth mean so much as to the soldier. When he presses himself down upon her, long and powerfully, when he buries his face and his limbs deep in her from the fear of death by shell-fire, then she is his only friend, his brother, his mother; he stifles his terror and his cries in her silence and her security.¹⁴

And *corpographies* were not only a means through which militarized subjects accommodated themselves to the warscape — providing a repertoire of survival of sorts — but also a way of resisting at least some its impositions and affirming, in the midst of what so many of them insisted was “murder not war,” there was nevertheless what Santanu Das calls a “tactile tenderness” between men:

This must be seen as a celebration of life, of young men huddled against long winter nights, rotting corpses, and falling shells. [...] Physical contact was a transmission of the wonderful assurance of being alive, and more sex-specific eroticism, though concomitant, was subsidiary. In a world of visual squalor, little gestures closing a dead comrade’s eyes, wiping his brow, or holding him in one’s arms were felt as acts of supreme beauty that made life worth living.¹⁵

A hundred years later, I have no doubt that much the same is true in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. “To understand Afghanistan,” one *Bundeswehr* officer insisted, “you have to see, hear, smell and taste it.”¹⁶ My interest in *corpography* is therefore part of my refusal to acquiesce to the thoroughly disingenuous de-corporealization of today’s “virtuous war,” which, all too often, is made to seem distant and digital: a hyper-optical war waged on screens rather than in ruined towns and ravaged fields.¹⁷

In fleshing out these ideas I have been indebted to a stream of work on the body in human geography. Most of it has been remarkably silent about war, even though Kirsten Simonsen once wrote about “the body as battlefield,” but it is now difficult for me to read her elegant essay without peopling it with bodies in khaki, blue or field grey tramping towards the front-line trenches, clambering over the top, or crawling from shell-hole to shell-hole in *No Man’s Land*.¹⁸ That is

Critical Quarterly 49:4, 2007, 40-55.

14 Erich Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, 43.

15 Santanu Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 118.

16 Marion Naeser-Lather, “‘Smelling Fire’: Sensory Experiences of German Soldiers in Afghanistan,” paper presented to the conference “Sensing War,” London, June 2014.

17 The classic critique is James Der Derian’s *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network*, London: Routledge, 2001. Der Derian attributes the gap between the virtual and the virtuous to the rise of the M-I-M-E network, but I sometimes think it might be more accurate to think of a “military-academic-industrial-media” network whose acronym is equally telling. See also Christopher Coker, *The Future of War: The Re-Enchantment of War in the Twenty-First Century*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004.

18 Kirsten Simonsen, “In Quest of a New Humanism: Embodiment, Experience and Phe-

partly down to the suggestiveness of her prose, but it's also the result of my debt to the work of Das, Ken MacLeish and Kevin McSorley, which directly addresses the corporeality of military violence.¹⁹

Like these three authors, I have treated *corpographies* in relation to the soldier's body, but as the (in)distinctions between combatant and civilian multiply and as I begin to work on medical evacuation from war zones I have started to think about the knowledges that sustain civilians caught up in military and paramilitary violence too. Some of them are undoubtedly cartographic — formal and informal maps of shelters, camps, checkpoints and roadblocks — and some of them rely on visual markers of territory: barriers and wires, posters and graffiti. Today much of this information is shared by social media (as the battle space has become both digital and physical), but it remains within a broadly cartography imaginary. It may seem abstract as representation, but once mapping is understood as a performative practice, then this too can become intensely corporeal.²⁰

Indeed, much of this knowledge is also, as it has always been, *corpographic*. Peter Adey once wrote about what he called “the private life of an air raid,” drawing on the files of *Mass Observation* during the Second World War to sketch a geography of “stillness” even as the urban landscape was being violently “un-made”²¹:

Stillness in this sense denotes apprehending and anticipating spaces and events in ways that sees the body enveloped within the movement of the environment around it; bobbing along intensities that course their way through it; positioned towards pasts and futures that make themselves felt, and becoming capable of intense forms of experience and thought.

This was a corpo-reality, and one in which — as he emphasised — sound played a vital role: “Waves of sound disrupted fragile tempers as they passed through the waiting bodies in the physical language of tensed muscles and gritted teeth.”²²

But, as he also concedes, this was also a “not-so private” life — there was also a social life under the bombs — and we need to think about

nomenclology as Critical Geography,” *Progress in Human Geography* 37:1, 2013, 10-26.

19 Santanu Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008; Ken MacLeish, *Making War at Fort Hood: Life and Uncertainty in a Military Community*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013; Kevin McSorley (ed), *War and the Body: Militarisation, Practice and Experience*, London: Routledge, 2013.

20 Rob Kitchin and Martin Dodge, “Rethinking Maps,” *Progress in Human Geography* 31, 2007, 331-344.

21 Peter Adey, “Holding Still: the Private Life of an Air Raid,” *M/C Journal* 12:1, 2009, and “The Private Life of an Air Raid: Mobility, Stillness, Affect,” in David Bissell and Gillian Fuller (eds), *Stillness in a Mobile World*, London: Routledge, 2011, 127-138.

22 *Ibid.*

how these experiences were shared by and with other bodies. These apprehensions of military violence, then as now, were not only modalities of being but also modes of knowing: as Elizabeth Dauphinée suggests, in a different but closely related context, “pain is not an invisible interior geography,” but rather “a mode of knowing [in] the world — of knowing and making known.”²³ During an air raid these knowledges could be shared by talking with others — the common currency of comfort and despair, advice and rumor — but they also arose from making cognitive sense of physical sensations: the hissing and roaring of the bombs, the suction and compression from the blast, the stench of ruptured gas mains or sewage pipes.

Those who inhabited the marchlands between the military and civilian, like air raid wardens, developed an intricate understanding of the choreography of an air raid in which they became attuned to the interplay between light signatures and what John Strachey called the “individual notes” of the anti-aircraft batteries:

First came the flash from behind the slightly bombed mass of Cooper’s Garage buildings. Then five or six seconds later the quick wink of the shell bursts, well up into the sky. These sights were followed, in order, by their appropriate sounds. First the roll of the gun discharges, the up-whistle of the shells, and then the light crack, crack of the shell bursts. Flash, wink, boom, whistle, crack in that order, over an dover again.²⁴

But for those crouched in cellars and shelters, Steven Connor argued that air raids involved a “grotesquely widened bifurcation of visuality and hearing,” in which the optical visual production of a target contrasts with “the absolute deprivation of sight for the victims of the air raid on the ground, compelled as they are to rely on hearing to give them information about the incoming bombs.” Those crouching beneath the bombs have “to learn new skills of orientating themselves in this deadly auditory field without clear coordinates or dimensions but in which the tiniest variation in pitch and timbre can mean obliteration.”²⁵ What then can you know — and how can you know — when your world contracts to a room, a cellar, the space under the bed? When you can’t go near a window in case it shatters and your body is sliced by the splinters? When all you have to go on, all you can trust, are your ears parsing the noise or your fingers scrabbling at the rubble?

23 Elizabeth Dauphinée, “The Politics of the Body in Pain,” in *Security Dialogue* 38:2, 2007, 139-55.

24 John Strachey, *Digging for Mrs Miller: Some Experiences of an Air-Raid Warden* in London: New York: Random House, 1941, 45.

25 Steven Connor, “The Modern Auditory,” in Roy Porter (ed), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, London: Routledge, 1996, 210. On the visual economy of targeting see Derek Gregory, “Doors into Nowhere: Dead Cities and the Natural History of Destruction,” in Peter Meusburger, Michael Heffernan and Edgar Wunder (eds), *Cultural Memories*, Heidelberg: Springer, 2011, 249-286.

Here too none of this is confined to the past, and so I start to think about the “thanatosonics” of Israel’s air strikes on Gaza.²⁶ Sound continues to function as sensory assault; here is Mohammed Omer earlier this year:

At just 3 months old, my son Omar cries, swaddled in his crib. It’s dark. The electricity and water are out. My wife frantically tries to comfort him, shield him and assure him as tears stream down her face. This night Omar’s lullaby is Israel’s rendition of Wagner’s *Ride of the Valkyries*, with F-16s forming the ground-pounding percussion, Hellfire missiles leading the winds and drones representing the string section. All around us crashing bombs from Israeli gunships and ground-based mortars complete the symphony, their sound as distinct as the infamous Wagner tubas. [...] Above, the ever-present thwup-thwup of hovering Apache helicopters rock Omar’s cradle through vibration. Warning sirens pierce the night — another incoming missile from an Israeli warship.²⁷

And yet, as before, sound can also be a source of knowledge. Here is Wasseem el Sarraj, writing during Israel’s previous assault on Gaza in November 2012:

In our house we have become military experts, specializing in the sounds of Israeli and Palestinian weapons. We can distinguish with ease the sound of Apaches, F-16 missiles, drones, and the Fajr rockets used by Hamas. When Israeli ships shell the coast, it’s a distinct and repetitive thud, marked by a one-second delay between the launch and the impact. The F-16s swoop in like they are tearing open the sky, lock onto their target and with devastating precision destroy entire apartment blocks. Drones: in Gaza, they are called zananas, meaning a bee’s buzz. They are the incessant, irritating creatures. They are not always the harbingers of destruction; instead they remain omnipresent, like patrolling prison guards. Fajr rockets are absolutely terrifying because they sound like incoming rockets. You hear them rarely in Gaza City and thus we often confuse them for low-flying F-16s. It all creates a terrifying soundscape, and at night we lie in our beds hoping that the bombs do not drop on our houses, that glass does not shatter onto our children’s beds. Sometimes, we move from room to room in an attempt to feel some sense of safety. The reality is that there is no escape, neither inside the house nor from the confines of Gaza.²⁸

The last haunting sentences are a stark reminder that knowledge, cartographic or corpographic, is no guarantee of safety. Military violence is always more than a mark on a map or a trace on a screen,

26 The term is J. Martin Daughtry’s. See his “Thanatosonics: Ontologies of Acoustic Violence,” *Social Text* 32:2, 2014, 25-51, where he develops the concept in relation to the Iraq war.

27 Mohammed Omer, “Report from Gaza: When My Son Screams,” *The Nation* (July 15, 2014).

28 Wasseem el Sarraj, “The Sounds in Gaza City,” *The New Yorker* (November 19, 2012).

and the ability to re-cognise its more-than-optical dimensions can be a vital means of navigating the wastelands of war. As in the past, so today rescue from the rubble often involves a heightened sense of sound and smell, and survival is often immeasurably enhanced by the reassuring touch of another's body. And these fleshy affordances — which you can find in accounts of air raids from Guernica to Gaza — are also a powerful locus for critique. For if we are to 'make sense' of war we need to recover the multiple bodily senses through which the brutalities and erasures of military violence are registered.

/// Published on December 16, 2014

CHAMAYOU'S *MANHUNTS*: FROM TERRITORY TO SPACE?

BY STUART ELDEN

This brief article discusses Grégoire Chamayou's *Manhunts*, a powerful account of human inhumanity, the tracking down and killing of other humans. As he says in his second paragraph:

To write the history of manhunts is to write one fragment of a long history of violence on the part of the dominant. It is also to write a history of the technologies of predation indispensable for the establishment and reproduction of relationships of domination.¹

Chamayou is insistent that his focus is not on a metaphor, but on “concrete historical phenomena in which human beings were tracked down, captured, or killed in accord with the forms of the hunt.”²

The main problem has to do with the fact that the hunter and the hunted do not belong to different species. Since the distinction between the predator and his prey is not inscribed in nature, the hunting relationship is always susceptible to a reversal of positions. Prey sometimes band together to become hunters in their turn. The history of a power is also the history of the struggles to overthrow it.³

His examples are wide-ranging, from Ancient Greece to the Bible, from exile to slavery to colonialism, and to zombies. The book is strikingly illustrated and has plenty of powerful examples. It proceeds in a non-systematic manner, and is suggestive rather than comprehensive in its cases and references. Nonetheless it is a striking and original analysis.

1 Grégoire Chamayou, *Manhunts: A Philosophical History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, 1. On *Manhunts*, see also Jean Bérard, “Predatory Power,” *Books and Ideas* (3 June 2011), and on Chamayou's work generally, Kieran Aarons, “Cartographies of Capture,” *Theory & Event*, 16:2, 2013.

2 Chamayou, *Manhunts*, 1.

3 *Ibid.*, 3.



Royal Air Force Nimrod XV230 named after the biblical character of Nimrod / Photograph by Afat Paul Scholes (2008)

Chamayou is inspired by some of Foucault's claims, especially the contrast Foucault draws between mechanisms of exile and exclusion and incarceration and inclusion. As Chamayou notes, Foucault describes this in *History of Madness* as "the great confinement," (*le grand renfermement*), but it also figures in his contrasting analyses of medicine.⁴ In lectures delivered in 1974 in Rio Foucault contrasts the exile of the leper and the partitioning and quarantine of the plague town — a comparison he would reuse in his Collège de France lecture course *The Abnormals* and in the "Panopticism" chapter of *Discipline and Punish*.⁵ However Chamayou also distances himself from elements of Foucault's work. One striking example is when he suggests that Foucault's notion of pastoral power, the power of the shepherd over his flock, should be seen as working in opposition to another figure, the hunter of men.⁶ If Abraham is the iconic figure of pastoral power, Nimrod is the parallel for what he calls "cynegetic power."⁷ Nimrod was Noah's great-grandson and acclaimed as a mighty hunter. He was also, in some traditions, King of Babylon and thus the ruler of Babel.

In Chamayou's summary, Foucault's pastoral power is "exercised over a multiplicity in movement (a flock); it is fundamentally beneficent (caring for the flock), and it individualizes its subjects (knowing each member of the flock individually)." It is thus "a mobile, beneficent, and individualising power."⁸ Chamayou suggests that "cynegetic power is opposed term for term by this triple characterization."⁹ Instead of leading the flock, the hunter follows to seize; it is a territorial power, but one that fluctuates between the fixed space of the city and the exterior, a power that is "not limited in its predatory extent by any external boundary. It is exercised, from a territory of accumulation, on the resources of an indefinite exteriority."¹⁰ Chamayou therefore distinguishes between territory, which he understands as fixed, bordered and to an extent immobile, from a wider "space of capture." This leads him to the first contrast: "Thus, whereas pastoral power guides and accompanies a multiplicity in movement, cynegetic power extends itself, on the basis of a territory of accumulation, over a space of capture."¹¹

4 Ibid., 80. See Michel Foucault, *History of Madness*, Jean Khalfa (ed), Jonathan Murphy and Jean Khalfa (trans), London: Routledge, 2006.

5 Michel Foucault, "The Birth of Social Medicine," in James D. Faubion (ed), *Power: Essential Work Volume 3*, London: Penguin, 2001, 134-156; *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France 1974-75*, Valerio Marchetti and Antenello Salomini (eds), Graham Burchell (trans), New York: Picador, 2003; *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Alan Sheridan (trans), London: Penguin, 1979.

6 Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-78*, London: Palgrave, 2009.

7 Chamayou, *Manhunts*, 14-15.

8 Ibid., 15.

9 Ibid., 15.

10 Ibid., 15-16.

11 Ibid., 16.

Chamayou sees modern developments to have caused “a rupture with respect to the old principle of territorial sovereignty that maintains that everything that is *on* the territory *belongs to* the territory, given that residing on the territory no longer suffices to be completely subject, *de facto*, to the law that applies to it.”¹² But this “old principle of territorial sovereignty” is not, actually, all that old. While elements of its can be traced back through the history of political thought, the bringing together of these different elements as a notion of “territorial sovereignty” is really only as old as the seventeenth century. The idea that the king was an emperor in his kingdom, *i.e.* that he has no superior in temporal power, is late medieval; but that the boundaries of that kingdom were known and fixed is much later. Indeed, attempts to fix boundaries of states was one of the major international projects of the first half of the twentieth century; really only being enshrined in legal order in the Charter of the United Nations in the principle of territorial integrity. In a note Chamayou suggests that

The medieval principle of territorial sovereignty was expressed in the formula *quidquid est in territorio est de territorio*. This maxim meant that the sovereign reigned over the whole territory and over everything in it. The principle was then interpreted freely, making it the principle of protecting refugees: “*Qui est in territorio est de territorio*. The foreigner being subject to the laws of the country where he resides, he must also enjoy the protection and advantages of these same laws.” Ivan Golovin, *Esprit de l'économie politique* (Paris: Didot, 1843), p. 382. See also Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 280.¹³

The reference is frustrating, because Golovin's book ends on page 368 in the copy of the 1843 edition I have seen; but the reference to Arendt certainly reinforces Chamayou's point. Arendt is discussing the right of asylum being abolished.

Its long and sacred history dates back to the very beginnings of regulated political life. Since ancient times it has protected both the refugee and the land of refuge from situations in which people were forced to become outlaws through circumstances beyond their control. It was the only modern remnant of the medieval principle that *quidquid est in territorio est de territorio*, for in all other cases the modern state tended to protect its citizens beyond its own borders and to make sure, by means of reciprocal treaties, that they remained subject to the laws of their own country.¹⁴

The principle does seem to suggest that whoever is within the territory is subject to the territory, though the question of whether those rights extend outside the territory — and, necessarily today, into other territories — is of course open to question. However, Arendt is wrong to date this to the medieval period; and Chamayou is wrong to follow

12 Ibid., 138.

13 Ibid., 180-181, footnote 13.

14 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, San Diego: Harvest, 1968, 280.

her. That the principle is expressed in Latin does not make it medieval, much less Roman. Indeed, the classical Roman thinkers very rarely used the word *territorium*, which tended to apply to agricultural lands surrounding a city; and those that did — land surveyors and lawyers — saw the *territorium* as land of quite small extent, part of the overall *imperium*, rather than defining its spatial extent. There was certainly not the exclusive relation between territory and sovereignty that we have today. Only in the reappropriation of Roman law in the later part of the fourteenth century did *territorium* and jurisdiction become tied together; and this had little impact on political theory until seventeenth century debates in the Holy Roman Empire about the distinction between majesty and sovereignty. The best discussion of the (modern) principle I have found is in Jennings and Watts's volume on peace in *Oppenheim's International Law*:

According to the maxim *quidquid est in territorio est etiam de territorio*, all individuals and all property within the territory of a state are under its dominion and sway, and foreign individuals and property fall at once under the territorial authority of a state when they cross its frontiers.¹⁵

This comes in a discussion of “the territorial authority of a state over everything within its territory ... ;” suggesting that sovereignty needs to be understood “as comprising the power of a state to exercise supreme authority over all persons and things within its territory, [thus] sovereignty involves *territorial* authority (*dominium, territorial sovereignty*).”¹⁶ Yet while this is certainly the case in the late modern period, earlier times did not hold to these rigid, bounded definitions. I have discussed these historical lineages at length in *The Birth of Territory*.¹⁷ The implications for Chamayou's argument are not profound, in that they do not invalidate his claim that something significant is changing. But they do suggest that the situation being unravelled was never as secure or long-standing as might be implied.

The second and third contrast is easier to grasp: “pastoral power is fundamentally beneficent, cynegetic power is essentially predatory;” and while pastoral power is individualising, “cynegetic power, although it proceeds by division, does so with a view to accumulation ... Cynegetic power accumulates; it does not individualise.”¹⁸ The third, though, becomes more complicated when we bring it into relation with the first.

What emerges with the story of Nimrod is a forgotten continent of Western political thought. If Foucault could say that beginning with

¹⁵ Sir Robert Jennings and Sir Arthur Watts (eds), *Oppenheim's International Law Volume 1 Peace. Introduction and Part 1*, London: Longman, 1996, 384.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 382-384.

¹⁷ Stuart Elden, *The Birth of Territory*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

¹⁸ Chamayou, *Manhunts*, 16-17.

the rise of Hebrew, and then Christian, pastoralism, politics has been largely considered a matter of the sheepfold, we can add that it was also, though in accord with a parallel and opposed genealogy, a matter of hunting.¹⁹

Chamayou's book provides a sketch-map of this "forgotten continent," a chart that others can use to explore more fully. In that way it works like Giorgio Agamben's writings, or, indeed, those of Foucault himself in the governmentality lectures from which Chamayou takes the notion of pastoral power.²⁰

In a 2011 commentary for *Radical Philosophy*, Chamayou connected the arguments he had made in that book with contemporary politics in a much more explicit way.²¹ He suggests that the doctrine of the manhunt is a break with previous ways of conventional warfare, "which rests on the concept of fronts, linear battles, and face-to-face opposition."²² We might challenge that description of conventional warfare, which is long out-dated and has not accurately described US military policy for several decades, but Chamayou's point is worth pursuing. Chamayou contrasts the new developments with Clausewitz's classic understandings (he is a French translator of Clausewitz).²³ The point is that in conventional war both sides want to achieve the same thing — victory. In cynegetic war one side wants to locate, capture and kill; the other to evade, to hide, to escape. The hunter cannot respect sovereign boundaries, as these are "among the greatest allies" of a fugitive.²⁴ Accordingly, "the hunter's power has no regard for borders. It allows itself the right of universal trespassing, in defiance of territorial integrity of sovereign states."²⁵ In a nod to Daniel Heller-Roazen's genealogy of piracy, Chamayou suggests that to do this fully would require a resuscitation of "the archaic

19 Ibid., 18.

20 Such as Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Daniel Heller-Roazen (trans), Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998, and *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government*, Lorenzo Chiesa and Matteo Mandarini (trans), Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011. This is one of the ways I have engaged with Foucault's governmentality lectures, suggesting that while what Foucault says explicitly on territory is misleading, he is nonetheless extremely helpful in thinking about territory. See Stuart Elden, "How Should We Do the History of Territory?" *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 1:1, 2013, 5-20; and "Governmentality, Calculation, Territory," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 25:3, 2007, 562-80.

21 Grégoire Chamayou, "The Manhunt Doctrine," *Radical Philosophy* 169, 2011, 2-6.

22 Ibid., 2.

23 Carl von Clausewitz, *Principes fondamentaux de stratégie militaire*, Grégoire Chamayou (trans), Paris: Mille et Une Nuits, 2006. He has also translated some of Marx's historical writings.

24 Chamayou, "The Manhunt Doctrine," 3, citing Steven Marks, Thomas Meer and Matthew Nilson, *Manhunting: A Methodology for Finding Persons of National Interest*, thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey CA, June 2005, 28.

25 Chamayou, "The Manhunt Doctrine," 3.

category of common enemies of humanity.”²⁶ Accordingly, much of the ‘war on terror’ is “more like a vast campaign of extrajudicial executions: a strategy of targeted assassinations, of lethal manhunts, which make up the ‘rogue’ and unilateral counterpart to the manhunts carried out under the aegis of international criminal justice.”²⁷

Again, we might want to challenge the idea of conventional war being about both sides achieving the same thing. In the modern era, for example, some wars are fought to gain territory, with the other side seeking to preserve it. Victory may be the aim for both, but it might mean different things — gaining versus not losing, accumulating versus preserving. But the opposition between locating, capturing and killing and evading, hiding, escaping may still be helpful. It is clear what the analysis is leading towards. For Chamayou, “the drone is the emblem of contemporary cynegetic war. It is the mechanical, flying and robotic heir of the dog of war. It creates to perfection the ideal of asymmetry: to be able to kill without being able to be killed; to be able to see without being seen. To become absolutely invulnerable while the other is placed in a state of absolute vulnerability. Predator, Global Hawk, Reaper — birds of prey and angels of death, drones bear their names well. Only death can kill without ever dying itself. Facing such an enemy, there is no way out.”²⁸ These arguments are considerably developed in his 2013 study *Théorie du drone*.²⁹ In that book, Chamayou provides a “genealogy of the predator” as part of his overall analysis.³⁰ In general terms I am most interested in the background to his study:

I will begin with this question: where does the drone come from? What is its tactical and technological genealogy? What are, following from this, its fundamental characteristics?³¹

But politically, this analysis is especially interesting in terms of linking the argument made about political space and territory in *Manhunts*.

Chamayou’s framework makes sense of some of the issues I have been trying to think about in terms of territory, or more specifically, the fracturing on the legal notion of territorial integrity. Territorial integrity is mentioned by Chamayou when he suggests the hunter has “no regard for borders,” and claims “the right of universal trespassing, in defiance of territorial integrity of sovereign states.”³² What is interest-

26 *Ibid.*, 3; Daniel Heller-Roazen, *The Enemy of All: Piracy and the Law of Nations*, Zone Books, New York, 2009.

27 Chamayou, “The Manhunt Doctrine,” 3.

28 *Ibid.*, 4.

29 Grégoire Chamayou, *Théorie du drone*, Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2013. On *Théorie du drone*, it is well worth reading Derek Gregory’s excellent series of posts at his blog geographicalimagination.com

30 Chamayou, *Manhunts*, 30.

31 *Ibid.*, 18.

32 Chamayou, “The Manhunt Doctrine,” 3.

ing about Chamayou's use of the term here is that he detaches it from *changing* the borders of states, *changing* the territory, but links it to the temporary *violation* of those borders or territorial sovereignty. Territorial integrity crucially comprises at least these two, distinct, elements: that a state is sovereign within its territory, within clearly demarcated borders — *territorial sovereignty*; and that those borders, that territory, is fixed — *territorial preservation*. These two elements have distinct historical lineages, which come together in the twentieth century. When territorial integrity is invoked today it is often used simply to refer to territorial preservation. Tony Blair, for example, frequently made an explicit point of invoking the importance of preserving the territorial integrity of states he was about to bomb or invade. He could only have meant this in the sense of preserving the existing territorial settlement; hardly in the sense of respecting territorial sovereignty.

This is part of a wider pattern, in that today, there is a concerted attempt by dominant states and the United Nations to preserve existing territorial settlements as much as possible — the breakup of empires along lines of existing borders, such as the application of the principle of *uti possidetis* in the African continent; the fracturing of Yugoslavia and the USSR along the lines, broadly, of their constituent republics; and so on. South Sudan and Kosovo are the two most recent exceptions, but they are in a short list of breaks from the general principle since the end of the Second World War.

The occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, long after the Taliban or Saddam Hussein were deposed, were, at least in part, to try to prevent a fracturing of the territory of these states. Yet, at the same time, and often in the very same places, the sovereignty of states within their borders has come increasingly under pressure. This can be for treatment of civilian populations, pursuit of 'weapons of mass destruction' or harbouring terrorist groups. The extension of the arguments made for the first — so-called humanitarian intervention — to the second and third characterised the US-led "war on terror," even though other dominant states have appropriated the logic and language. I tried to make sense of these questions in my 2009 book *Terror and Territory*, and to trace the historical lineages in *The Birth of Territory*. Chamayou's argument — along with that of Derek Gregory in his forthcoming *The Everywhere War* — helps to make sense of how the US claims this right to intervene, by force, drone or 'humanitarian intervention' in places all over the world, while at the same time trying to preserve existing territorial settlements, and, of course, rigidly reinforcing its own borders and territorial sovereignty.³³

33 Stuart Elden, *Terror and Territory: The Spatial Extent of Sovereignty*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

47/

NAZI ARCHITECTURE AS AFFECTIVE WEAPON

BY GASTÓN GORDILLO

One of Adolf Hitler's most cherished dreams was to build the largest monument ever created. With the guidance of "the chief architect of the Reich," Albert Speer, he planned to remake Berlin around what he saw as the future core of the Germanic empire: the People's Hall (Volkshalle), a dome that was to be 290 meters (950 feet) high and able to accommodate 180,000 people. Hitler was so "obsessed" with his gigantic dome, Speer wrote, that he was "deeply irked" when he learned that the Soviet Union had begun constructing an even larger building in Moscow: the Palace of the Soviets. This palace was to be 495 meters (1,624 feet) high and was to be crowned with a huge statue of Lenin. Hitler was furious, for he felt "cheated of the glory of building the tallest monumental structure in the world." When Hitler ordered the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, Speer realized that "Moscow's rival building" had preyed on Hitler's mind "more than he had been willing to admit." As the German armies advanced toward Moscow, Hitler said: "Now this will be the end of their building once and for all."¹

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Speer's memoir *Inside the Third Reich*, published in 1969 after he served a twenty-year sentence for his role in the Nazi hierarchy, often reads like a self-critical, melancholic confession haunted by guilt. This self-criticism is politically shallow, for Speer is notably silent about the genocide of the European Jews (which he claimed he was unaware of at his trial in Nuremberg) and about his own use of slave labor as Minister of Armaments (a topic he touches upon only in passing). The text is nonetheless an extraordinary document about the core of the Nazi machinery and about Hitler's bodily, spatial, and architectural sensibilities. The book reveals, in particular, that Hitler viewed in monumental architecture a way of creating in the body a disarming state of awe. He was convinced that monumental buildings were powerful weapons, and assumed that political supremacy depended, as his desire to crush the Palace of the Soviets illustrates, on erecting structures that would dazzle and intimidate multitudes,

¹ Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997, 155.



Welthauptstadt Germania by Albert Speer (1937-1943)

inhibiting their bodily disposition to act critically and assertively. Efforts to cultivate reverence through monumental buildings have certainly existed for millennia. But Speer's account reveals the political intricacies of the affective dimensions of monumentality, and the fact that these live in one of the most distinctive affective weapons of capitalism: skyscrapers.

Speer shows that architecture was central to the Nazi project. Furthermore, he demonstrates that architecture was Hitler's one true passion in life, the only topic that made him joyful, cheerful, and exuberant. Hitler would regularly exclaim, "How much I would have loved to be an architect!" Hitler's architectural projects went back to the 1920s, when he drew sketches of the Berlin he would rebuild as the capital of a Germanic empire so powerful that its monuments would eclipse in size and splendor those of Rome. In *Mein Kampf*, he in fact complained that the architecture of German cities lacked monumentality and grandeur. When Hitler met Speer, he was dazzled by how the latter proposed to give material form to his spatial megalomania. The son of a respected architect, Speer became not only "the chief architect" of the Reich but also one of the most trusted members of Hitler's inner circle, and eventually the Minister of Armaments of the Reich until the fall of Berlin. Hitler expressed a quasi-religious devotion for Speer, whom he admired as the most brilliant architect who had ever lived. As an aide to Hitler once told Speer, "Do you know who you are? You're Hitler's unrequited love!"²

For Hitler and Speer, architecture was not simply the art of giving form to space; it was the art of creating power through monumental spatial forms. Critical architects such as Eyal Weizman and Léopold Lambert have shown how the manipulation of spatial forms has profound political implications in the control of mobility and visibility and in the deployment of violence.³ The "Wall of Separation" and the myriad checkpoints built by Israel on Palestinian land (brilliantly examined by Weizman and Lambert) are primary examples of this militarization of architecture. This is why Lambert argues that these are weaponized forms of architecture. Walls and other architectural striations are nonetheless weaponized in a distinctive way, as apparatuses of *kinetic* capture: that is, as material assemblages that control and channel the movement of bodies in space. The control of mobility via the architectural capture of mobility was certainly central to the spatiality of Nazi Germany, as the confinement of the European Jews within walled ghettos and death camps illustrates. Hitler and Speer, however, were intellectually disinterested in this type of weaponized architecture, which they relegated to lesser functionaries. They were

2 Ibid., 133.

3 See Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, London: Verso, 2007, and Léopold Lambert, *Weaponized Architecture: The Impossibility of Innocence*, Barcelona: Dpr-Barcelona, 2012.

interested, rather, in an architecture weaponized as an apparatus of 'affective' capture designed to create what geographer Ben Anderson calls affective atmospheres: spatial environments that exert pre-discursive, not-fully conscious pressures on the body.⁴ All architectural forms create affective atmospheres in addition to organizing movement and my distinction between apparatuses of kinetic and affective capture is purely heuristic, and not meant to create a dichotomy or typology. Yet what Speer reveals in *Inside the Third Reich* is that the main purpose of Hitler's monumental architecture was to inculcate affective intensities on the bodies contemplating it, capturing their gaze and attention.

The key principle of this affective atmosphere was sheer size. Under the motto "always the biggest," Hitler wanted to build at a scale previously unseen in the history of empires. As Hitler put it to Speer's wife, "Your husband is going to erect buildings for me such as have not been created for four thousand years."⁵ Speer admitted that this challenge of messianic proportions "intoxicated" him. In 1936, he published a piece entitled *The Führer's Buildings* in which he hailed Hitler's "brilliance" for conceiving buildings of such a scale that they would last "for eternity." Taking this principle to heart, Speer engaged on a race to surpass the monumental architecture of prior and rival empires. "I found Hitler's excitement rising whenever I could show him that at least in size we had 'beaten' the other great buildings of history."⁶

For Hitler and Speer, Nazi Germany's main architectonic competitors were the Roman, French, and U.S. empires. The People's Hall ("the greatest assembly hall in the world ever conceived up to that time" and defined by "dimensions of an inflationary sort") was intended to surpass not only the Roman Pantheon (its inspiration) but also the capitol in Washington DC, which "would have been contained many times in such a mass." The Nuremberg stadium was to surpass the Circus Maximus in Rome and be able to accommodate 400,000 spectators.⁷ In Hamburg, a massive skyscraper would compete with the Empire State Building in New York. The new railroad station of Berlin was designed to surpass New York's Grand Central Station and Berlin's Arch of Triumph would have been much bigger than the one commissioned by Napoleon in Paris. Berlin's main boulevard was to be longer and grander than the Parisian boulevards. Speer explains that "the idea" behind his architecture was straightforward: that people "would be overwhelmed, or rather stunned, by the urban

4 Ben Anderson, "Affective Atmospheres," *Emotion, Space and Society* 2, 2009, 77-81.

5 Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 58.

6 *Ibid.*, 69.

7 *Ibid.*, 68.

scene and thus the power of the Reich.”⁸ The idea, in short, was to inculcate in the body what Spinoza called negative affects: that is, affects that decrease the body’s capacity for action by overwhelming it, stunning it, numbing it, making it malleable and, in short, politically passive.

This principle was embodied in one of Speer’s first major projects: the Nuremberg parade grounds built for the 1934 Nazi Party Congress, immortalized by Leni Riefenstahl’s propaganda film *Triumph of the Will*. The monumentality of the classicist architecture of the stadium designed by Speer was inseparable from the militarized discipline of the thousands of troops and Nazi cadres portrayed in the film, forming a solid, geometrical bodily assemblage united in its allegiance to The Fuhrer. If there’s a political ontology inculcated by the affective atmosphere of this architectonic setting it is that of Being-as-One: one people, one nation, one Reich, which Hitler highlighted in his speech in that place, appealing to the “unity” and “obedience” of the German people.

Hitler’s and Speer’s attempt to reach transcendence through monumentality reached such levels that they sought to numb the body even if those buildings were in ruins. The ruins of the Roman empire, which Hitler admired as “imperishable symbols of power,” became the inspiration of what Speer articulated as his “theory of ruins.” His “theory” was that the buildings of the new Berlin should be made of stone and brick (rather than steel and concrete) so that “in a thousand years” their ruins would look imposing, like those of Rome. Hitler, in particular, assumed that Nazi power would endure in those ruins because of their fetish power to continue being an apparatus of affective capture. “Hitler liked to say that the purpose of his building was to transmit its time and its spirit to posterity. Ultimately, all that remained to remind men of the great epochs of history was their monumental architecture, he would philosophize.”⁹

These architectonic fantasies had a notable spatial core: a thirty-meter long, three-dimensional model of the new, monumentalized Berlin that was represented in extreme detail and was dominated by The People’s Hall, the boulevard, and the Arch of Triumph. This miniature “model city” was “Hitler’s favorite project.” Hitler would spend hours observing the details of the model from many different angles, bowing down “to take measure of the different effect.” He wanted to feel how those buildings would affect, for instance, “a traveler emerging from the south station.” He was trying to feel in his own body, in sum, the affective atmosphere that would be created by his architecture once it was built. “These were the rare times when he relinquished his usual stiffness. In no other situation, did I see him so lively, so

8 Ibid., 134-135.

9 Ibid., 55.

spontaneous, so relaxed.”¹⁰ Obsessed with architecture as an affective weapon, Hitler was oblivious to urban spatiality. “His passion for building for eternity left him without a spark of interest in traffic arrangement, residential areas, and parks.”¹¹ Speer was also blind to living spaces, he admitted in retrospect, and noted that his designs were “lifeless and regimented” and lacked “a sense of proportion.”¹² When he showed the model city to his father, he was taken aback when the latter (also an architect) simply said, “You’ve all gone completely crazy.”¹³

The works for the radical refashioning of Berlin began in 1937 but were halted when the war began in September 1939. When in June 1940 Nazi Germany defeated France, Hitler and Speer promptly visited Paris, which together with Rome was the other city they sought to surpass. Hitler admired Haussmann and his aggressive remaking of Paris in the mid-1800s, which had created the city as a bourgeois spectacle (“He regarded Haussmann as the greatest city planner in history, but hoped that I would surpass him”).¹⁴ They stayed in Paris for only three hours, but visited most of its famous monuments. Hitler wanted to immerse himself in the atmosphere created by Paris’ architecture, and he said, visibly moved, “It was the dream of my life to be permitted to see Paris. I cannot say how happy I am to have that dream fulfilled today.” Paris affected Hitler at a deeper level; it reawakened his passion for a monumentalized Berlin. The same evening he told Speer, “Draw up a decree in my name ordering full-scale resumption of work on the Berlin buildings. [...] Wasn’t Paris beautiful? But Berlin must be made far more beautiful.” His order was to proceed with the construction plans “with maximum urgency.”¹⁵

Speer was perplexed by the order, given its huge cost amid an ongoing war on multiple fronts. Hitler dismissed these concerns; he was only worried about the potentially negative impact on German public opinion, so the decree was to be kept secret and the works were to be “camouflaged” under other rubrics. Why Hitler’s “urgency”? The way he worded the decree is revealing. Hitler wrote: “I regard the accomplishment of these supremely vital constructive tasks for the Reich as the greatest step in the preservation of our victory.” Accordingly, the decree was officially named: “Decree for the preservation of our victory.”¹⁶ For Hitler, in other words, the main way to ‘safeguard’ the military victories of 1939-1940 was through the construction of

10 Ibid., 133.

11 Ibid., 77-79.

12 Ibid., 134.

13 Ibid., 133.

14 Ibid., 75.

15 Ibid., 173.

16 Ibid., 173.

imposing buildings. Monumental architecture was for him the most powerful and decisive of all weapons, supremely vital, in fact, to military victory. This is also why Hitler sought to destroy the monumental architecture of his enemies: not only the Palace of the Soviets in Moscow but also the skyscrapers of New York City. As Speer reveals in his second memoirs, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries* (1976), Hitler ordered the development of long-range bombers that could reach New York and destroy its famed skyscrapers, which he saw as key to the global power and prestige of the United States. The program to build these bombers was eventually cancelled, but Speer noted that Hitler fantasized about turning the skyscrapers of New York “into gigantic, burning torches.”¹⁷

When Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, Stalin interrupted the construction of the Palace of the Soviets and ordered that its steel frames were used to build fortifications and other defenses (construction never resumed). Hitler, in contrast, insisted on continuing with the works in Berlin, which by then employed 35,000 workers. In July 1941, a month into the Russian campaign, Speer failed to convince Hitler to stop construction. “He would not hear of any restrictions and refused to divert the material and labor for his private buildings to war industries anymore.” In September 1941, when the advance in Russia was stalling, “Hitler ordered sizable increases in our contracts for granite purchases from Sweden, Norway, and Finland for my big Berlin and Nuremberg buildings.” On November 29, 1941, Hitler dismissed once again Speer’s concerns, and said bluntly, “I am not going to let the war keep me from accomplishing my plans.”

By early December, the German army was facing a catastrophe in Russia due to the winter weather and the destruction of railroad lines. Speer told Hitler that most of the workers employed in Berlin should be urgently assigned to repair railroads in Russia. “Incredibly, it was two weeks before Hitler could bring himself to authorize this. On December 27, 1941, he at last issued the order.”¹⁸ Hitler’s prolonged refusal to divert manpower and resources from the massive buildings in Berlin confirms that he indeed saw them as the powerful fetishes that would “preserve” his early victories. Ironically, this obsession undermined German military might in the early months of the Russian campaign and may have contributed to its long-term defeat. If there was a body enthralled by the atmospheres created by monumental architecture it was that of Hitler himself. By May 1945, Berlin and Nazi Germany had been reduced to rubble.

The affective weaponization of monumental architecture by Nazi Germany is an extreme example of a spatial paradigm that is as old as

17 Albert Speer, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, Tokyo: Ishi Press, 2010, 87.

18 Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 185.

empires. Speer's and Hitler's monumentality certainly has historically specific and distinctively fascist elements, such as its imitation of Roman and Greek classicism, its explicit celebration of state power, and its particularly delusional, fetishized megalomania. Yet many of its core architectural and affective principles live on in the present. This surfaces in one notable passage in which Speer sought to white-wash Nazi monumentality by referring to the monumentality of the present. After admitting the "chronic megalomania" of his architecture, he wrote that his designs "are not so excessive by present-day standards" when skyscrapers and public buildings all over the world have reached 'similar proportions.' Perhaps it was less their size than the way they violated the human scale that made them abnormal."¹⁹ Speer appealed to a western audience's familiarity with skyscrapers as normalized features of the modern world to retroactively present fascist megalomania as "not so excessive." But in doing so, he actually brought to light that fascist megalomania is comparable to corporate forms of monumentality, and that both can be seen as equally "excessive" apparatuses of affective capture. When Speer argued that the "abnormality" of Nazi architecture was not its "size" but the way it "violated the human scale," one can easily turn his play of words around and show that current monumentality is equally "abnormal" in its "violation" of "the human scale." Isn't the defining goal of monumentality to dwarf "the human scale" and present the body as 'miniscule?' Haven't skyscrapers surpassed in scale and "excess" anything Speer ever dreamed of?

Speer admits that Nazi monumentality was a "nouveau rich architecture of prestige" based on "pure spectacle" and "the urge to demonstrate one's strength."²⁰ He could as well be referring to the skyscrapers that currently define the skyline of New York, Shanghai, or Dubai. Hitler's obsession to build "bigger" than other empires is easy to pathologize as the delusions of a "madman." But the competitive zeal to build "bigger" has become a planetary phenomenon. That the tallest skyscrapers in the world are currently in the Persian Gulf and Asia simply replicates what the United States did in the early 1900s when it emerged as an imperial power: "the urge to demonstrate one's strength." The architectural face of the authoritarian capitalism of the twenty-first century is embodied in skyscrapers like the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, which at 830 meters (2,722 feet) high seeks to dazzle the bodies contemplating it from the ground while, at the same time, erasing that its phallic structure was built by a quasi-enslaved labor force.

Bruno Latour and other object-oriented ontologists would probably explain the power of monumental buildings to affect the body as resulting from their existence as huge objects (or, in Latour's words,

19 Ibid., 138 (my emphasis).

20 Ibid., 136-69.

as actants with agency).²¹ But affective atmospheres are not the outcome of objects alone; they are also a function of the disposition of bodies to be affected by them in a particular way. Not all human bodies, needless to say, are dazzled by monumental architecture and affectively captured by its presence. Huge buildings are certainly more readily noticed, but throughout history many people have disregarded the mandate to be intimidated by their scale. Hitler's veneration of Roman ruins as transcendental emblems of power, for instance, overlooked that for over a thousand years people in Rome disregarded those ruins as unimpressive piles of rubble, to be readily recycled as construction materials or used as pasture fields.

A notable example of the subversion of the awe-inducing atmosphere cultivated by monumentality took place in the Paris World Fair of 1937. It was there that the monumental architecture of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union competed with each other at close range, for their pavilions faced each other. The Soviet design consisted of two huge human figures standing on a pedestal and charging ahead, as if about to overran the Nazi building. Speer designed the German pavilion, and wrote that he was able to see in Paris a secret sketch of the Soviet monument "striding triumphantly toward the German pavilion." He decided to erect an enormous counter-monument: a solid, cubic mass "which seemed to be checking this onslaught." The monument was crowned with an eagle with a swastika in its claws looking on the Soviet sculpture from above, therefore asserting its superiority. Both buildings won the fair's "gold medal."²² This "tie" symbolized that Nazi and Soviet architects were committed to similar forms of monumentality, designed to impress. The fact that the bourgeois monumentality of the Eiffel Tower stood a few hundred meters behind, as an equally assertive emblem of power, also reveals that despite their ideological differences all these different monuments were designed as affective weapons intended to create a bodily state of respect.

This is why the true spatial confrontation at the Paris World Fair lay elsewhere, opposing these monuments to the small pavilion of the Spanish Republic, which was then going through a dramatic revolution and civil war. The Spanish pavilion was made up of a modest, two-story building that housed a painting whose affective power was to outlive that of the German and Soviet monuments: the *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso, which was commissioned for the fair. Capturing the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica by German warplanes fighting for Franco against the Spanish Republic, Picasso's painting drew multitudes as an emblem of the destruction and suffering created by war and fascism. The atmosphere of fragmentation, mul-

21 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

22 Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 81.

tiplicity, bodily rupture, and negativity created by Picasso stood in opposition to the fantasy of wholeness and totality embodied by the Nazi and Soviet monuments. Whereas the German and Soviet pavilions exuded transcendence, the pavilion of the Spanish Republic exuded the immanence of rubble.

As I argue in *Rubble*, those who cherish monumentality are inherently hostile to rubble, for they are terrified of rubble's voiding of positive space.²³ Hitler's and Speer's celebration of grand "ruins," it is worth noting, made them feel contempt for (and fear of) "mere rubble." If monumental architecture stands for Being-as-One (The People's Hall, The Palace of the Soviets, The Empire State Building, the Burj Khalifa), rubble stands for the opposite: the pure multiplicity of being and therefore, following Badiou's ontology, the figure of the void. The Guernica's affective power during the 1937 World Fair was its capacity to immerse the observer in a visual void that was as unsettling as it was generative. Its generative negativity revealed that the huge structures standing nearby were modern-day totems, monuments to hubris built to deflect the destruction that was constitutive of their materiality and that the destiny of all buildings, irrespective of their size, is to be reduced to the assertive nothingness of rubble.

/// Published on February 2, 2014

²³ Gastón Gordillo, *Rubble: The Afterlife of Destruction*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2014.

37/

BODIES AT SCENE: ARCHITECTURE AS FRICTION

BY PEDRO HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍNEZ

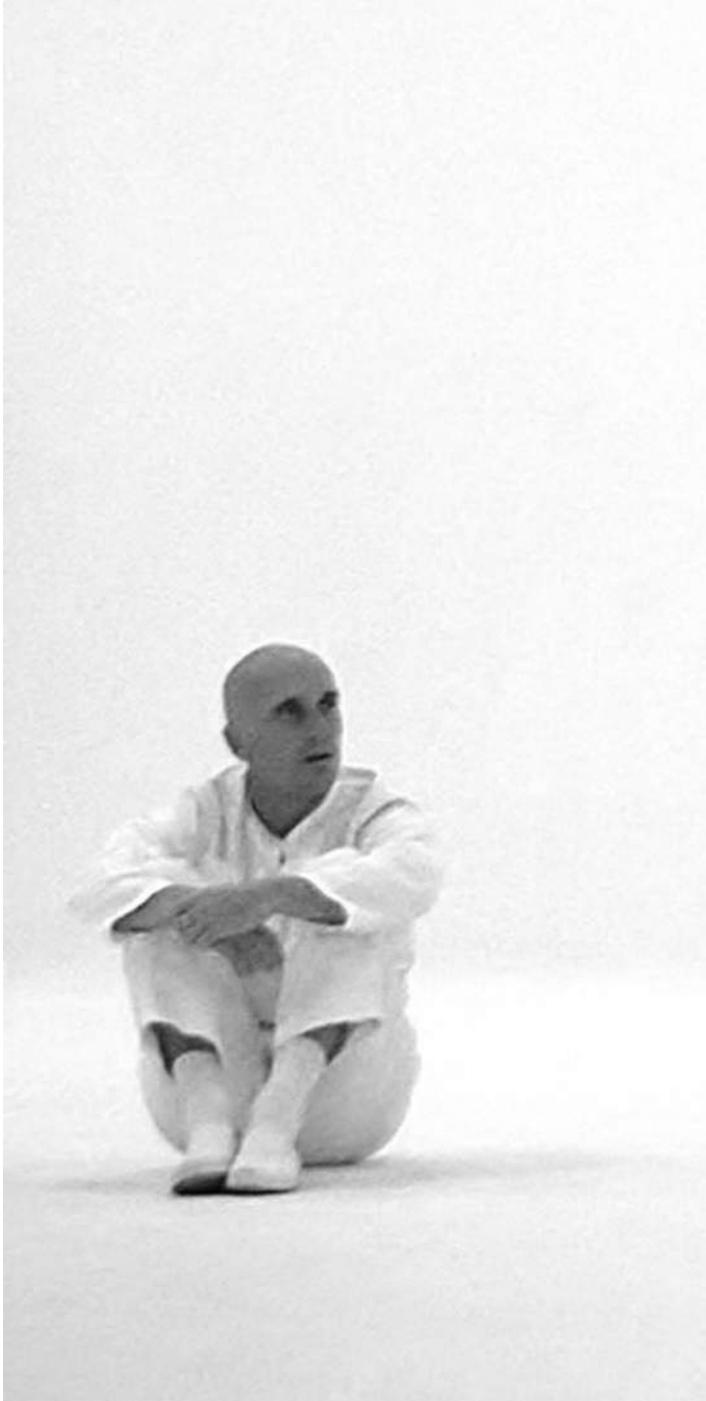
Act I: Dematerialize the Architectural Object ///

One of the ways to understand architecture, usually the first about which we hear when we begin to study at the university, is to see it as a displayed object. This definition leads to an architecture that is equivalent to a habitable sculpture rather than one which aims to realize certain requirements. Le Corbusier's quote in which he defined architecture as "volumes brought together in light" help to clarify and exemplify this issue. In this essay, I am not interested in focusing on this idea, but instead, I will explain several different ways to dissolve the conception of architecture as an object.

One way to overcome this primary condition is to understand architecture as a second skin or an element that establishes relationships between the body and the habitat. Architecture is an apparatus to look and build connections with the outside. Therefore, firstly, architecture is used to maximize certain links while refusing others. In this case, the design acquires a presence over the body of the inhabitant. Architecture surrounds it, limits it and restricts its connection with the environment; exposing the inseparability of architecture and its violence over the body.

Another way of dematerializing architecture would be characterized by the conversion of the architecture into an ethereal element, habitat or surroundings, subsequently emphasizing the bodies that go through it as the main characters of the space. Architecture is dissolved into atmospheres or climates in which the users can freely circulate in every direction, wandering into the cloud-like space, without lineal restrictions from a building which neither strangles nor narrows one's perception to the established limits, enabling one to get lost and relate to other bodies. At this point, architecture paradoxically achieves a holistic presence, completely involving the inhabitant bodies.

For example, the film *THX 1138* (1971) by George Lucas, shows a place without architecture nor form, where bodies float in a white and homogeneous space. However, his apparently free constitution turns



Still from *THX 1138* by George Lucas (1971)

negative and we finally discover that the space limits the bodies from liberating themselves from the infinite interior. They inhabit a prison. Violence and subjugation over the body become present again. Any architecture, despite its invisibility or blurring, is no different than a prison once it becomes repressive of bodies.

The last point relative to dematerializing the object is thinking architecture as another body with which we can interact. In that case, the relationship with architecture is established through friction, the shock and the encounter. Perec said that to live was “to pass from one space to another, while doing your very best not to bump into yourself.”¹ However, I think that to live is the opposite. Life is friction with the other bodies. And these bodies can be persons, furniture or buildings; it does not matter. Architecture could represent this idea of life, and as such would be defined by the friction, by the action of the body in front of and in relation to another body. This dyad action-body (inseparable elements) would build and give meaning to the space. This architecture defined by action and friction makes up an inevitable crash between two parts. It generates a constant rubbing between the body (people) and the architectural space. As stated by Bernard Tschumi: “What must be first determined is whether this relation between action and space is symmetrical — opposing two camps (people versus space) that affect one another in a comparable way — or asymmetrical, a relation in which one camp, whether space or people, clearly dominates the other.”² The architect, or someone who works with architecture, could follow the philosophy explained by Léopold Lambert and be a funambulist who walks on the line between parts, or (s)he could choose and position themselves within one of them.

Act II: Architecture as Violence: 5+1 Actions over the Architectural Body ///

At this point, the transition from the architecture of the object to the action-body generates a tension between the parts and, by extension, makes violence appear. In the rest of this essay I won't undertake a balancing act, and instead I will explore the possibility that one dominates over another one.

Architecture is aggressive against the territory, against the material, which it violates, handles, strengthens, twists; it is violent against existing forms, against existing types and modes. All foundational architecture is based on violence and has inside not so much construction but also inseparably destruction. There is a way of understanding architecture [...] as a vehicle of peace, as a vehicle of mediation, when in fact the whole architectonic operation is an imposition or a settlement that involves violence.³

1 Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, New York: Penguin, 2008.

2 Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996.

3 Igansi De Solà-Morales in the TV Show *Soy Cámara*, El programa del CCCB : La ciudad desde el balcón by RTVE.

These words by Ignasi de Solà-Morales show us how even the most basic production of architecture is based on violence. I would like to focus my attention on two concepts described in the text. The quote demonstrates how this production could be described in terms of action and friction over matter, ground, landscape, territory, environment or people. Action/friction strengthens and twists them. Another concept is that architecture is an imposition or a settlement. Both ideas are related with what I described before: Architecture can dominate the body, surrounding it and making it prisoner (with different levels of freedom). Architecture subjugates its inhabitant and their mobility, making possible certain connections and denying others, which it can do using visible or invisible matter. Thus, architecture forces the body to submit to its authority. In fact, architecture has been used to control the body throughout history. Prisons, hospitals, asylums, schools, etc. are just some examples of standardizing and regulating bodies. The same operation can be observed in geopolitical borders or how circulation is directed in airports or shopping centers. Architectural design encloses a specific ideology that guarantees the control of space and the body and limits, and curiously, any unwanted friction.

But, what happens when the body dominates the architecture? If the previous examples avoid friction, now we have violence and friction over the (architectonic) matter; two bodies which crash head on. Responding to this question, my final project while studying at the University of Alicante two years ago has proved useful. To think about the violence of bodies over architecture I didn't use any references to the architectural world. Instead of this I used several artistic practices developed in the second half of the 20th century which have a lot in common with architecture, such as the works of Lara Almarcegui, Robert Smithson, Gordon Matta-Clark, Rachel Whiteread and Pilar Quinteros. These practices call attention to the opportunities and virulence of some material transformation processes that work without the design of forms and their political control of the actions that take place in their built environments. All these artists rethink and reformulate the original object's design by acting directly upon it. They create new relations between the body and the building. Thus, they show us how the violent act of the body on architecture becomes a legitimate and immediate act to face up to the initial impositions generated by the architecture through frictional actions that alter and rebuild it. It generates new relations and connections, negating the conception of architecture as something finished. As a result of this previous investigation, I determined five different operative capacities with which we can face the architectural body. I will now explain them according to the different degrees of conservation in which the acts leave the original architectural body. Thus, the extremes range from complete protection of the building to its erasure and replacement. In between, we have three other actions that build an architecture that is no longer, but whose presence remains — between preservation and disappearance of the original body.



CURE:

These actions aim for the maximum conservation of the original body, restoring their deterioration over time. They are usually delicate. We could think them as if we were taking care of someone who is sick. This conservation is not only to preserve materials and structures but also memories. Everything changes so that everything continues to be the same.



TRANSPLANTATION:

A new body is within the original architectural body. Essentially, this type of action involves an estrangement. It creates an unexpected landscape within the architecture that should not be there. These actions produce a new materiality and spatiality, as well as modify their previous function to adapt to new necessities.



EXTIRPATION:

When we open an incision, a cut, hollow or remove a wall, we generate a new relationship within the space. It is a simple act, but it causes new readings. With these actions, the classic dichotomies “in-out” or “yours-mine” can be perverted and redefined. A direct and violent action, seemingly simple, challenges the closed condition of architecture.



TRANSFIGURATION:

The architecture, from the tectonic standpoint is made of materials that are modified, assembled and manipulated to create the intervention. It could happen to the architecture (as a body) in this state of destruction that does not allow for its continued use, but, can some materials be reused and reassembled to have a second life?



MOLTING:

The imposition of a new dynamic economic, social, landscape denies the architecture's preexistence to the point that it is seen as a negative aspect that should be removed and destroyed in its entirety. This is therefore the most violent action since such a form of disintegration means the complete erasure of the previous presence.

From these five points, it is necessary to add one more that we have not yet previously considered. They are actions that have been denominated “injuries,” or “death,” associated with a terrorist act that aims, above all, for the total destruction of the architecture with the maximum infliction of pain. They are destructive actions that solely

intend to destabilize the environment by using strategic violence. This action, which is originally a timely destruction, opens the possibility of other matters to enter as shockwaves: the appearance of fear (which as a topic should be explored and theoretically dealt with in other more extensive forms).

Act III: Architectural Intervention as Political Protest ///

If architectural design lacks neutrality, neither can these actions be defined as impartial. All of the actions described are ways of imposing in space (or on space), as evident in situations of geopolitical conflict. Photographs by Miki Kratsman of the Israeli-Palestine conflict are exemplary in this regard, as they show how the exercise of demolishing Palestinian houses creates a state of ruin which forbids adequately living in the place. Paradoxically, the large mechanical excavators have been left in the places they destroyed to become an agent for re-construction, bringing us back again to the new site as was established by Solá-Morales above. Another distinct case that can be seen is the (lack of) legislation on the coast of Spain, explained by Daniel Fernández Pascual's *Funambulist Paper*.⁴ The conflict there shows two basic postures: those who want to preserve their property on the coast, and the State which seeks to recuperate the public ground for the enjoyment of all. The owners of the houses, by employing strategies of Curing, try to return dignity to their houses that have suffered wear by the hard environmental conditions. On the other hand, the State tries to demolish the houses that are built on the occupied terrain. These actions, which are apparently straightforward, reflect the reality of two totally distinct ways of exercising politics, which in certain urban areas occurs on both private and public ground in the search for a total submission of nature.

Action, as the production of friction, seeks to establish a specific politics on the architectural object — the reconfiguration of edifices to adapt them to another political reality, which, by directly colliding with others, often results in the increase of conflict and the making-visible of this inherent friction. In this regard, to live is not to avoid collision and conflict, which architecture seems to claim, but to potentiate and develop the questioning of the models we are accustomed to and to bring them to their limit. Between an architecture which intends to establish order and an action that acts politically upon that architecture itself the ground is prepared for making new forms of life possible.

Action constitutes itself as a friction and with this affords the potential for disagreement, and in this way, design is a tool to rethink the political. For that, friction is necessary.

/// Published on November 15, 2013

⁴ Daniel Fernández Pascual, "The Clear-Blurry Line," *The Funambulist Papers: Volume 1*, Brooklyn: puctum books, 2013, 15-19.

RACIALIZED GEOGRAPHIES AND THE FEAR OF SHIPS

BY TINGS CHAK

Monday, August 12, 2013
Toronto

It was during rush hour when two hundred white-identified individuals in a forty-foot wood-framed boat descended onto the streets of Toronto. The people were dressed in white t-shirts and the boat was wrapped in canvas painted red and blue. Together they crossed Queen Street West and occupied four lanes of traffic in one of the busiest commercial districts of the city. The ship ‘docked’ outside of the flagship store of the Hudson Bay Company — a former fur-trading corporation that was once the de facto colonial ruler of the region.¹ Unlike any other mass action I had been to, the crowd seemed to take over the intersection effortlessly. During the fifteen minutes that they held the site, there was no police intimidation, no harassment from onlookers, and only mild frustration from the ebbing crowds.

This street occupation was called *Mass Arrival*, an art intervention staged by a collective of migrant women of color, of which I was privileged to be a part. As the name might suggest, this project was a critical response to the “mass arrival” of migrants aboard ships in Canada and an examination of the national fear induced by their arrival. The intervention, moreover, aimed to interrogate the myth of Whiteness in the construction of Canadian identity, and how that myth gets disrupted and unsettled by the arrival of ships, specifically those carrying migrants of color.² Perhaps because Canada’s mostly uninhabited and unguarded landmass is bordered by three oceans, the image of the ship holds particular weight in the national social imaginary. Here are some of my reflections, through unpacking the experiences of this intervention, on the notion of Whiteness in national belonging, the imagined body of the Canadian state, and

1 Hudson Bay Company remains one of the only companies that has operated continuously into the present.

2 I have chosen to capitalize White, Black, and Brown to highlight the fact that racialization is a process by which difference is constructed (categorized into “races”) to justify domination over and violence inflicted on a grouping of people.



Mass Arrival / Photograph by Tings Chak (2013)

public space as sites of border production used to control, regulate, and police migrant bodies of color.

Mass Arrival was held on the third anniversary of the arrival of the *MV Sun Sea* on the coast of British Columbia. Denied entry into Canada, the 492 Tamil passengers on board were immediately incarcerated — men, women, and children included. They were called terrorists, human smugglers, queue jumpers, illegals, and bogus refugees. They were greeted with signs that read, “Tigers don’t unpack, send them back!” A flurry of racist hysteria enveloped the country, reminiscent of a century earlier when the *Komagata Maru* steamship carrying 376 migrants from Indian Punjab was denied entry into British Columbia. After being held incommunicado for two months aboard the *Komagata Maru*, the migrants were forcibly deported on the basis of the exclusionary “continuous journey” laws.³ Many of the passengers were sent back to imprisonment and some to their deaths.

Boats arriving on the shores of Canada (colonized Turtle Island) is not a new phenomenon. Historically, every non-Indigenous person on these lands has (or their ancestors have) arrived as a migrant on a boat. This includes all White settlers whose long history of arriving by sea dates back from the first colonial ships to the Great Migration of the 19th century.⁴ Likewise, White refugees have been celebrated as heroes and brave survivors in Canadian history books, entrenching the idea of Canada as the generous land of immigrants. A case in point is the *SS Walnut*, which arrived in Nova Scotia in 1948 with 347 Estonian refugees on board. Immigration officials welcomed them without hesitation, saying, “You came to a good country. There is room for you here.” Therefore, the fear of the “mass arrival” that threatens the integrity of state borders and national identity is not so much a fear of migrants or ships but is the fear of ships carrying the wrong kinds of migrants.

Just as the *SS Walnut* was welcomed onto Canadian shores, the *Mass Arrival* ship carrying the hundreds of White participants was welcomed on the streets of Toronto — it did not disrupt, offend, nor cross the accepted thresholds of how and by whom our public space gets used. This “occupation” revealed to me the fact that ownership over one’s own body in public space is a privilege, not a right. At the most basic level, the White (cisgender male) body is the frame of

3 Under the continuous journey laws, migrants arriving by boat were only be admitted if they travelled directly from their country of origin to Canada. These laws were the basis for refusing entry to the *Komagata Maru*, which set sail from Hong Kong rather than directly from India. The “Safe Third Country Agreement” introduced in 2004 is alarmingly reminiscent of these archaic, racist laws.

4 Contrary to popular belief that we are presently experiencing unprecedented immigration to the global North, the largest wave of immigration was during the second half of the 19th century, carrying boatloads of European settlers who were welcomed with “free” (stolen) land.

reference for public space that regulates the appropriate shape, size, skin tone, and movement of the bodies that inhabit it. This is further reinforced by social, cultural, and physical constraints; from the scale of the doorways and the height of steps to popular representations of what civic life ought to look like. It comes as no surprise then that while 200 White people participating in a public art project is permitted and even celebrated, a gathering of a few dozen people of color may be cause for suspicion. And this is because Whiteness is not marked and does not need to be feared. Whiteness has a place in our public spaces and on our streets. Whiteness belongs here.

- 1492: Columbus “discovers” the New World aboard the *Santa Clara*.
- 1492: The number of Tamil migrants aboard the *MV Sun Sea*, denied entry and detained.

More than a coincidence of numbers, these two intersecting events — one we revere and one we revile — form the basis of Canada’s national creation story as a place founded by and for White European settlers. This national myth has been produced and reproduced, from the *Chinese Head Tax and the Exclusion Act*, which barred Chinese immigration once the labor of the railway workers had been fully exploited, to today’s *Temporary Foreign Worker Programs*, which ensure that while migrants of color are good enough to work here they are not good enough to stay.⁵ And though the bones of our ancestors may lay scattered across the land as a result of generations of stolen labor, people of color remain othered, always arriving and never belonging. The *MV Sun Sea* is but one testament to the myth of the White body — the body-politic of the state — that forever fears the penetration and contamination by Black and Brown bodies.

The body of the state is perceived to be a vulnerable one — its extremities are unprotected and its skin is soft and porous. The necessary fortification of its borders means that, at the same time, borders become imprinted onto the bodies of people of color. The exclusion and fear associated with migrants — inscribed into our very skin — become habituated and reinforced to ensure that migrants remain marginalized; bounded, bordered, and safely out of sight. If bodies are the objects of state regulation, then public space is a key tool. Beyond externalized ports of entry, borders are internalized through the policing of each other and of ourselves. Urban checkpoints are not abstract spaces but are found in every public space — the library, the school, the public square, the streets. Each of these sites determines where, how, and on whose bodies enforcement rituals

⁵ The *Chinese Immigration Act*, now known as the *Chinese Exclusion Act*, first took the form of a Head Tax, a \$50 levy on all Chinese migrants entering Canada after 1895, when the Canadian Pacific Railway was completed and the thousands of migrant workers were no longer needed. This was increased to \$500 by 1903, followed by a subsequent ban of virtually all Chinese migration in 1923. Families were separated for two decades until the Act was repealed in 1947.

are performed on a daily basis, through state policing, profiling, harassment, and the distribution of services, healthy food, affordable housing, and so on. The *Mass Arrival* street intervention was one attempt to highlight the privilege of Whiteness in our public spaces and the ways in which racialized bodies act as sites of bordering. Beyond this action, these racialized rituals are met with everyday resistance. There are always ways to slip through each checkpoint and there are seams at every border. Every time a non-status woman tries to enroll her child at a school and every time an undocumented man accesses a food bank, it is a challenge to immigration regimes. Simply inhabiting public space as migrants can be an act of resistance against state borders.

On February 21, 2013, the City of Toronto became Canada's first "Sanctuary City," which means that all residents, regardless of immigration status, can access municipal services without fear of detention and deportation. This movement was built from the ground up through decades of organizing work involving different campaigns, direct actions, case support, mass mobilization, and popular education among migrant communities and social service providers. Led by migrants directly affected, the strategy was to take back public spaces and build "sanctuary" (or solidarity) zones in our communities, beginning with schools, food banks, shelters, and health clinics. Creating solidarity zones at service sites is one step towards dismantling state imposed borders, improving the material realities of migrants living undocumented, and unravelling the myth of Whiteness in belonging. In claiming public spaces in our communities we are slowly unravelling this national birthing story that forces hyphenated identities onto people of color, whose subjectivity is always bracketed, never considered whole. In supporting land defense struggles, and with every blockade, we are dismantling the myth that invisibilizes the history of genocide and ongoing dispossession of Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island. In demanding status for all, we are challenging the myth that justifies the commodification and exploitation of human labor, illegalizes migrants, and marks people of color as displaceable, detainable, and deportable.

It is said that prior to their departure, many of the *Komagata Maru* passengers were held in sanctuary in a *Sikh Gurdwara* in Hong Kong, the place where I was born. There, they prayed together before setting sail on their seven-week journey across the Pacific. For me, discovering this historical footnote speaks to how intertwined the struggles against colonization, displacement, and borders are. One hundred years after the migrants aboard the *Komagata Maru* were barred from entering a White-only Canada, I take inspiration from its legacy in the struggle against an exclusionary, exploitative, and racist immigration system. Resistance looks different and takes on myriad forms, from demanding access to a library to crossing a

border and to occupying the streets in forty-foot boat. Through honoring migrants and celebrating our bodies, we continue to challenge the integrity of borders imposed by the Canadian state and resist the myth of Whiteness upon which it was built. Whatever happens, our bodies are not to blame. The myth is unravelling because it has to for our very survival.

Mother tiptoes through the days,
guarding everything she holds dear,
to evade detection, to remain unseen,
to relinquish her political body,
for a provisional place in this world.
As she says,
"If there's one thing we are good at, it's mimicry."
A way to eat, move, and sleep,
a way to revere, destroy, and dream.
I ask her if we are getting any closer.
Racialized geographies, are not just lines in the sands
but are daily performances her body does not forget.
They are sites, they take shape,
they speak the where and how,
and on whose bodies violence is felt.
She is the sexualized, denied and detained.
Her body is not hers,
no bleach nor shrouds to shun the sun
can fulfill the desire of her body to be unmarked.
She is not getting any closer.
She no longer spits on the ground,
shouts to be heard, squats when she's tired
even if her body knows best.
She no longer talks when she's eating,
eats when she's talking, or eats from the earth.
She no longer pees in the park, sleeps in the park,
intuits and walks undisciplined in the park.
Out of place, and in her place,
she performs these enforcement rituals,
she knows that she is not any closer.
What is taken can never be returned whole,
a way to feel the sting of a pinch,
to bare our arms and welcome the sun,
to find wholeness on this land.
Let us undo, unravel, unlearn, and untame,
take refuge in and through and with all living bodies,
sully this body in order to love our own.
Then we might know a world in which she no longer
tiptoes through her days.

URBAN SPACE AND THE PRODUCTION OF GENDER IN MODERN IRAN

BY ALEX SHAMS

What does an Islamic urban space look like? This question has dogged intellectuals and authorities in Muslim-majority lands for centuries, but in recent decades has acquired a renewed sense of urgency amid the emergence of modernizing Islamist political movements. These groups have not only articulated new visions of the public sphere, mass politics, and economy, they have also increasingly found themselves in positions of authority to shape the cities, regions, and lands in which they work. As these groups have found themselves in control, the revolutionary mandate (and widespread protest slogan) to imagine a politics “neither East nor West, but Islamic” has taken on new meanings, forcing leaders long focused narrowly on legal or constitutional change to recognize the more diffuse and institutional nature of power, and how much the production of space is a part of it.

This process has, of course, not been universal nor necessarily parallel among Islamist political movements, and it is just as nonsensical today to speak of a unified approach to Islamic urban planning as it is to speak of a unified Islamic politics. But, at the same time, approaches to urban planning are developing whose features highlight the often-contradictory assumptions and understandings of citizenship that prevail among Islamist actors. Particularly in countries where modernizing Islamic movements have become institutionalized and bureaucratic, ideological logics have coalesced — as in any other bureaucratic apparatus of control — and tendencies have asserted themselves.

No case provides a better example of this than Iran, where explicitly revolutionary, modernizing approaches to producing Islamic space have emerged in the four decades since the Revolution. In this short essay, I will discuss some of the changes that have occurred in Iranian urban space in the 20th century with a particular focus on their gendered implications, before briefly introducing two dominant approaches to public space in contemporary Iran.



In the streets of Tehran / Photograph by Mina Rafiee (2015)

The Iranian Revolution of 1978-9 is often imagined in terms of a binary secular/religious distinction, positioning that which came before (secularism) against that which came after (religious fervor) in order to explain the rise of Khomeini and the ensuing establishment of the Islamic Republic. This explanation, proffered both by supporters of the Revolution as well as its detractors, obscures however far more than it explains. One of the key arenas in which we see the complex legacies of both the “secular” Pahlavi regime and the “religious” Islamic Republic is gender politics and the public sphere.

Since the Revolution, Iranian urban fabric has been reshaped to both reflect and produce ideals of modern Islamic citizenship as understood by various political actors including the central government, the municipality, and other authorities. These changes can be seen most markedly in the capital, Tehran, a metropolitan area of around 14 million that has emerged as a laboratory for the rest of the country in urban planning. The city has been marked by a wholesale reconstitution and realignment of the public space along a gender binary model, such that many public institutions are segregated in some way and the morality police regulate spaces that lack a physical architecture of gender dichotomization (like parks and streets). Paradoxically, this realignment of space has actually facilitated the movement of women in the city, particularly those from religious backgrounds who previously hesitated or were prevented from entering the secular, mixed public sphere.

Prior to the Revolution, the creation and institutionalization of an explicitly secular modern public sphere under the Pahlavi dynasty in many ways reinforced traditional limitations on women’s access to the public sphere while simultaneously constricting the private sphere. The average urban household in 1900 was a large, extended family living together in a communal dwelling in the densely-populated neighborhoods of winding streets that characterized Iranian cities historically. In this context, women traditionally spent much of their time together or in the alleys between homes that were a kind of semi-private space.¹ But urban reforms beginning in the 1870s, modeled to a great extent on Haussmanian reforms in Paris, introduced long, broad boulevards and set the stage for the development of Iranian cities until the present.²

These reforms were followed by a series of culturally Westernizing regulations in the 1930s, including clothing restrictions that banned the veil and imposed Western dress on men. There are many sto-

1 Leila Soltani, et al., “The quarter: An effective pattern for satisfying women’s sense of place in the city of Isfahan,” *Cities* 30, 2013, 161-174. Pamela Karimi, “Women, Gender, and Urban Built Environments in Iran,” in Suad Joseph (ed), *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures* Volume IV, Leiden: Brill, 2006, 28-29.

2 Ali Madanipour, *Tehran: The Making of a Metropolis*, Chichester: Wiley, 1998.

ries, for example, of women who were banned by their families from leaving the home after the hijab ban in the 1930s (as well as the 100,000s of Iranians who emigrated), while anecdotal evidence suggests many women also stopped leaving the home of their own will in order to avoid being stripped in the streets, as police had been ordered to do to offenders. Although the hijab ban was eventually reversed, it continued to be enforced in more subtle ways for decades — through dress codes and informal discrimination, for example.³ The ban also set a precedent of government authority over clothing and specifically over women's bodies, irrespective of the women's own wishes or those of her family.

Spatially, during this period Iranian women increasingly found themselves living in smaller and smaller apartments without extended family networks. While for some a wholesale acceptance of the Shah's idealized form of modern gender norms by themselves and/or their communities allowed access to education, work, and opportunities more broadly, for the vast majority of conservative Iranian families, the imposition of the secular public sphere created a world beyond the door (or beyond the alleyway) that was scarcely recognizable.⁴ Unsurprisingly, then, while a small number of Iranian women managed to benefit from the changes supposedly enacted in their favor, for the vast majority these reforms were hardly liberatory.⁵

The imposition of gender segregation and the "Islamization" of the Iranian public sphere more widely, however, dramatically overturned the trends of the century prior. First and foremost, as a popular revolution, the leaders that came to power in 1979-80 had a widespread public mandate that was validated through the mass support from both genders manifested during the Revolution. New leaders — principally Imam Khomeini — looked favorably upon women's participation in the struggle, particularly during the heady days of the revolt when every protester counted.⁶

The physical presence of women's bodies in the streets translated into a growing recognition of women's integral right to take part in the political process. As Iranian historian Minoo Moallem has noted, while the ideal woman of the Pahlavi era was defined as secular and modern by her visual availability to the male eye, Revolutionary fem-

3 Masserat Amirebrahimi, "Conquering Enclosed Public Spaces," *Cities* 23:6, 2006, 55-61.

4 Janet Afary, *Sexual Politics in Modern Iran*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

5 For a more extensive discussion of gender politics in Iran in the 19th century, see Minoo Moallem, *Between Warrior Brother and Veiled Sister: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Politics of Patriarchy in Iran*, Berkeley: University of California, 2005.

6 Roksana Bahramitash, "Revolution, Islamization, and Women's Employment in Iran," in *Brown Journal of World Affairs* IX:2, 2003, 229-241.

inity defined itself as veiled and publicly homosocial.⁷ This inversion of the Pahlavi narrative of unidirectional Western modernity as embodied by women's dress was often articulated through the donning of the hijab as sign of protest, including by many women who did not otherwise cover their hair.

Despite initial hesitations, leaders began to articulate a vision of Islamic governance that institutionalized women's rights, and traditional patriarchal restrictions within the family — often articulated in Islamic idiom — began losing their potency. As women who had taken part in the revolution began asserting their rights within an Islamic framework to protest, study, and work with government support — including an important literacy campaign targeting women across the country — massive changes and shifts in power ensued within the family structure.⁸ For conservative families, the imposition of gender segregation in particular was a reassurance that it many ways opened the doors to millions of women to education and work opportunities, and produced a dramatically novel understanding of women's relationship to public space that was far more expansive. Whereas in 1979, less than 1 percent of women finished university and around 12 percent were in the workplace — around one-third of whom were underage child carpet weavers — less than 40 years later about 55 percent finished university, a rate higher than in the United States. Statistics suggest that the percentage of women in the workplace, meanwhile, has increased significantly, and possibly tripled.⁹

This is not to suggest that work and school are absolute indicators of some idealized notion of "liberation," as Roksana Bahramitash has noted, a least part of the rise in women's employment can be directly tied to the imposition of neoliberalizing reforms in the 1990s.¹⁰ But at the same time, the incredibly rapid "normalization" of women's presence in the public sphere can hardly be ignored, nor can it be separated from the ideological and spatial transformations of the Revolutionary period.

The Islamization of public space in Iran can be understood as a collapsing of the public and private spheres. The enforcement of rules of morality in public space, for example, was a virtual extension of the

7 Moallem, *Between Warrior Brother and Veiled Sister*, 77.

8 Golnar Mehran, "Social Implications of Literacy in Iran" in *Comparative Education Review* 36:2, 1992, 207.

9 Jennifer Olmsted, "Gender and Globalization," in Roksana Bahramitash and Hadi Salehi (eds), *Islamism and the Political Economy of Women's Employment in Iran*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011.

10 Roksana Bahramitash, "Market Fundamentalism versus Religious Fundamentalism: Women's Employment in Iran," in *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies* 13:1, 2004, 33-46.

family's control of individuals' bodies in the public sphere. It follows that if families feel that the public sphere maintains such control over individuals, however, objections to women's presence and participation in that sphere lack merit. Indeed, during a series of about two dozen interviews I conducted in Tehran in 2011-2012 with women who were the first women in their family to attend university and did so in the 1980s and early 1990s, I found that more than half cited such changes as being among the main reasons they felt they had been able to receive educations compared to prior generations of women in their families.

The enforcement of hijab in public space was linked to the introduction of an Islamic concept, the *mahram/namahram* distinction — in regulation. This distinction delineates a gendered line between women as well as male members of the immediate family on one hand, and unknown men on the other. Thus women were legally mandated to cover their hair and bodies, and men their bodies but not their hair, in public in order to ensure this distinction, while in the private sphere it did not apply unless *namahram* were present. This distinction not only applied to clothing/visibility but also to relationships themselves, as unrelated women and men interacting in the public sphere became liable to questioning and fines. This physical delineation of homosociality in the public sphere is predicated on a heterosexualizing gaze, whereby the state's enforcers see all heterosocial relations as already fraught with the potential for heterosexuality. It is this fear — of heterosocial temptation, of desire, and of adultery — that inspires the police's zeal for maintain public homosociality as normative, i.e., that relationships in public take place primarily between members of the same gender.

It is important to note that the urban component of the Islamization policies in Iran was extremely brutal as well, particular for those who did not fit into normative understandings of proper binary gender and sexuality roles. The sex work district of Tehran was one of the first to be targeted and was burned down by committees early on in the Revolution, while the thriving cruising culture that dominated the streets around the neighborhood — which were famously host to a large number of young male sex workers as well as cabarets catering to all forms of pleasures — was shut down as well.¹¹ The compulsory enforcement of the hijab, meanwhile, was and is an obvious violation of the rights of millions of women who chose not to wear hijab, many of whom have vigorously contested the ban. Although in this piece I have not focused on these aspects of the Islamization of public

11 Minoou Moallem, *Between Warrior Brother and Veiled Sister: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Politics of Patriarchy in Iran*, Berkeley: University of California, 2005, 74-75. Afshaneh Najmabadi, "Reading Transsexuality in "Gay" Tehran (around 1979)," in Susan Stryker and Aren Aizura (eds), *The Transgender Studies Reader Volume 2*, New York: Routledge, 2013.

space, I discuss them here briefly in order to assure the reader that I recognize them. But it is the other story of Iran's Islamization process in the early 1980s — the millions of women who for the first time in history managed to secure access to the public sphere — that is rarely discussed, and thus the one I have dwelled on here.

Thus far, I have discussed those changes in the urban structure which occurred during the Revolution and immediately following in order to highlight the relationship of ideology to urban space and reflect upon their consequences, the majority of which were quite unforeseen and unpredictable, even by those carrying them out. Since that time, however, distinct understandings of urban space have emerged amid the institutionalization and the bureaucratization of the Revolution. I briefly explore two primary approaches that have developed, as well as the tensions that characterize their relationship.

The period directly following the Revolution is often considered the moment of Revolutionary excess, when the private sphere not only took over the public sphere in terms of moral and bodily regulation by the state, but also when this conceptualization of the private sphere invaded the sacred space of the home as well. Home raids on parties, for example, became commonplace, amid a widespread belief that the Islamization of space and of self needed to occur in all sectors of society. At the same time, it is impossible to separate this approach to urban space from the overall wartime era.

The fervor of the Revolution was interrupted only a year after it began by the Iraqi invasion of Iran's southwest, bringing eight years of war, chaos, and misery to citizens of both states. Thousands of refugees flocked to Iran's major cities, and completely unchecked urban expansion — fed by illusory promises of free housing to all migrants — brought Tehran's population in 1991 to 7 million, one million of whom had come in the last five years alone.¹² The construction and repair of urban spaces, like parks and other public institutions, nearly collapsed during this period, primarily for lack of resources but also justified ideologically in terms of the necessity of a somber atmosphere during war time. The changes to urban space I described above, particularly in terms of Islamization as well as gender segregation, continued throughout the 1980s, although by the end of the decade and the beginning of the 1990s they began to definitively lose their monopoly.

In the 1990s, however, a different vision of Iranian space emerged, along with the process of reconstruction that began after the war came to a close in 1988. This vision was most exemplified by the policies of Tehran's mayor Gholamhossein Karbaschi.¹³ His approach to

¹² Ali Madanipour, *Tehran: The Making of a Metropolis*, Chichester: Wiley, 1998, 89.

¹³ Fariba Adelkhah, *Being Modern in Iran*, New York: Columbia University Press in as-

urban planning shifted focus to the nurturing of a public sphere that was at once Islamic but also institutionalized the growing presence of women in public space. Although his reforms did not explicitly target women, their effects were deeply gendered. He is primarily noted for the mass greening of Tehran that began under his rule, as authorities began taking over vacant lots across the city and building parks, no matter how big or small, in every neighborhood of the city.

These parks became the launching pad for the creation of a wide variety of public spaces, such as cultural centers, libraries, and other educational institutions that increasingly began to serve as “third places” for women, who found themselves actively participating in public life but still informally restricted from traditionally male sites of leisure like cafes (although mixed-gender cafes catering to the middle class exploded during this period, equivalents for the working class did not). A survey in the mid-2000s, for example, found that 65 percent of users of Tehran cultural centers were women, while informal surveys of parks show high rates of female usage as well.¹⁴ Pocket parks helped recreate the communal spaces of shared dwellings that most Iranians lived in before the almost hegemonic spread of apartments geared toward nuclear families, thus domesticating local public spaces. The rapid growth of the Tehran metro as well as the development of Bus Rapid Transit lines, meanwhile, fostered transit-oriented development and also improved access for those without access to automobiles, who were again more likely to be women and/or working class.

Karbaschi’s approach imagined citizens of the Islamic Republic as an ungendered composite, and he saw his role as fostering participation and access to public space. This was quite different from the dominant approach to planning in the 1980s, which saw Iranians through the lens of the gender binary and imagined mixed public space to be fraught with the potential for heterosexual interaction. This focus on the fear and threat of heterosexuality had the effect of encouraging homosociality (relationships between members of the same gender) as normative, while also promoting the extended family as the ideal site of leisure. Today, these approaches exist in a state of recurring tension in Iran, as the Karbaschi approach to planning has become dominant within the bureaucracy of Iranian cities while the morality police — who are under the control of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance — continue to police public space in accordance with the approach developed in the 1980s.

To close, I will end with an anecdote from a park that highlights the uneasy coexistence of these two approaches. The local municipalities within Tehran regularly organize concerts and other gatherings in

sociation with the Centre d’études et de recherches internationales, 2000.

14 Kaveh Ehsani, “Municipal Matters: The Urbanization of Consciousness and Political Change in Tehran,” in *Middle East Report* 212 (Fall 1999), 22-27.

local public parks (built during the Karbaschi era), particularly during the summer. Attending one such gathering on a summer evening a few years ago, I saw a crowd of around 100 people composed primarily of families sitting on plastic chairs as children danced in front of them beside the stage, where a singer used an electronic keyboard to play “folk music” from different regions of Iran. Dozens of spectators gathered around the area to watch, while further afield sat mixed groups of young people sitting in the grass, crowds of elderly resting on benches, and occasional groups of Afghan workers in the furthest corners of the park.

The spectators standing began occasionally swaying, many in an effort to entice their children to join those dancing around in front, and the male singer leading the display walked a fine line between happily enjoining children to come to the front while occasionally and quickly reminding parents that they should be seated. The specter of mixed-gender dancing, particularly given the groups of teenagers about, haunted the performance. Members of the crowd recognized the fine line between a municipality-sponsored performance that celebrated “national culture” and sought not to recognize any gendered divisions in the crowd and the very real existence of morality police, who in the whole spectacle saw the potential for cruising, mixing, and heterosexuality more broadly.

That day no morality police decided to wander the park to take a look. A few nights later, however, while I was sitting with a female cousin at a later hour, they stopped by. This time they checked IDs, asking questions, and scared the mixed groups of teenagers and the male Afghan workers from the corners of the park, where a few needles also lay scattered. The tensions between these differently gendered approaches to crafting Islamic public space — to say nothing of the class and national anxieties shared by the morality police and middle class Iranians vis-a-vis the presence of Afghan workers in the park — play out every day and every night in Tehran parks.

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NORM, MEASURE OF ALL THINGS

BY SOFIA LEMOS

Architectural practice and theoretical discourse has considered Ernst Neufert's canonical *Architects' Data* (1936) as a product of the search for an optimal built environment based on accounts of a single normative body. In light of the increasing pervasiveness of bespoke biometric solutions and its applications in architecture and design, this essay seeks to offer a different genealogy of the entanglement between architecture standards and statistical methods of measuring the social body. This essay draws a speculative history from the point when modern architecture ceases to account for, to become accountable for normalizing that body.

Norms, have long inhabited the architect's toolset. Pertaining to the carpenter's square or rule *norma* is first codified in the early nineteenth century as 'standard, pattern, model' as evidence of its common usage. Whereas the vernacular use of the noun 'norm' had to do with geometry, with 'right angles' and perpendicular lines, its adjectival derivation 'normal' is defined in 1828 in the Oxford English Dictionary as 'constituting, conforming to, not deviating or differ from, the common type or standard.' The emergence of the adjectival form of the noun is the first historical clue that suggests a symbolic shift that happened throughout the eighteenth century from the language of geometry to that of biological matter.

Clinical medicine and its codification of the physical body stand as the pivotal discipline that takes a set practices and discourses that rendered issues of nationality, gender, race, etc. as operable themes towards sovereign ends. 'Normal' as we understand it today, *i.e.* a healthy being not impaired in any way, is reflective of this period and its attendant discourse about the body. Normality or the condition of being normal, at 'right angles,' surfaces in 1849 in close coincidence with its etymological counterparts; 'abnormal' and 'abnormality' first enter the Oxford English Dictionary under the definition of 'deviating from the rule,' in 1835 and 1854, respectively. Throughout the second half of the 1800s the antonyms placidly transitioned from its disciplinary abstract definitions rooted in science and statistics to public con-

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sciousness. Notoriously, in France, where the morphological trajectory from medical jargon to the public forum is older and most clear, scholars in comparative literature have noted that three generations of French novelists Balzac, Flaubert, and Proust problematized 'normality' to epitomize what they believed was the inherent morality of a disintegrating society in which the deviation was subsumed within the norm.¹

From the language of geometry and, thus, of declarative statements, norms became relevant to medical discourse as prescriptions. This ontological shift in what norms are in the 1800s can be thought as the product of the concurrence of two distinct historical forces: on the one hand, the synthesis between the disciplines of anatomy and clinical medicine that was brought about by the advent of new diagnostic techniques; and, on the other hand, the adoption of Pierre-Simon Laplace's (1749-1827) probabilistic study of random errors by statistics alongside other sciences of measurement. The entanglement of medical and statistical discourse defined the architect's toolset by concurrently rendering the norm as instrument of all-encompassing action and unflinching inquiry.

From Nature's Caprice to Taxonomy ///

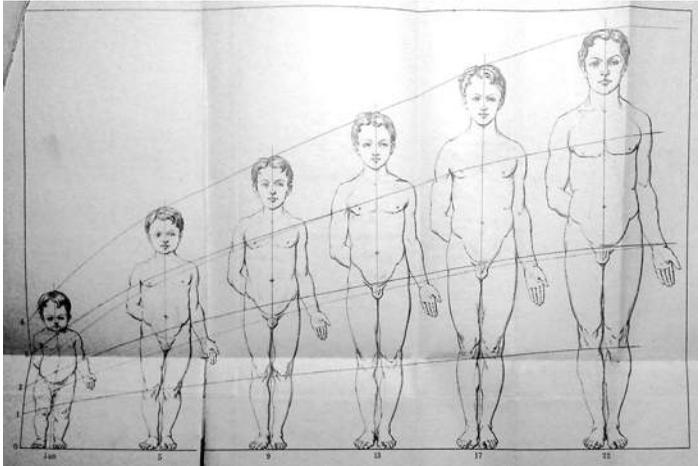
The emergence of modern clinical medicine, and of the anatomico-pathological model of medical episteme upon which it was predicated, was a particular product of the French medical practice in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, as Michel Foucault demonstrated in *Birth of the Clinic*.² The birth of the clinic heralded the transformation of the hospital as a site of 'hospitality' for those in need of shelter to a complex space of production: research, training and treatment became part of the same enterprise designed to cater to increasingly large numbers of patients. Concurrently, this shift is accompanied by the emergence of a 'clinical gaze' that abstracts individual patients into mere objects of study, and coincides with the substitution of classical scientific determinism with the science of probabilities and variation.

Previous to the nineteenth century, physicians classified diseases based on the observation of the pre-conditional symptoms known at the time. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, technological advances enabled the reconfiguration of disease knowledge, which effectively transformed the existing approaches to anatomy. Auscultation, an ancient technology of relying on sound to trace inner changes in the body was modernized and refined by René Laennec (1781-1826) who connected the sounds of the internal organs to

1 Harry Levin, *Contexts of Criticism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957, 110-130.

2 Michel Foucault, *Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, A.M. Sheridan Smith (trans), New York: Pantheon Books, 1973.

specific pathological states and changes in the thorax. The advent of a new instrument of diagnosis, the stethoscope (1816) signified the potentiality of a more accurate analysis prior to the failure of the organism and consequent dissection. Laennec's name figures in the historical monographs of the time as having transformed the nomenclature of disease from a subjective description of symptoms to be associated with anatomical terminology.



Tables Of Human Development by Adolphe Quetelet (1870)
New York Academy of Medicine Library

As ailments became identified as anatomical correlations, dissections and anatomy classes became progressively more essential to the physicians' training in order to investigate the 'how' of corporeality.³ Notably, prior to the dissemination of the stethoscope, physicians practiced what in medical history is termed 'bedside medicine,' whereas anatomists would regularly be exposed to raw flesh and often go to great lengths to source corpses for study.⁴ Surgeons and anatomists began formulating their disciplinary body of knowledge around the 1500s by codifying abnormalities found in cadavers through their dissection. The invention of the first anatomi-

3 For a discussion of the influence of diagnostic techniques on anatomical knowledge refer to Jacalyn Duffin, *History Of Medicine: A Scandalously Short Introduction*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999, 75-79, 198-200.

4 Annet Mooij demonstrates that the scholarly background of physicians was often contrasted with the more humble background of surgeons and anatomists, relating class to the kind of operations each performed. See "The pathologization of dissection," in Laurens de Rooy, Han van den Bogaard, Simon Knepper, Johan Kortenaar, and Antoon Moorman (eds), *Forces Of Form*, Amsterdam: Vossiuspers UvA, 2009, 36. For a historical discussion on the relationship between anatomists and body snatchers see Alan W. Bates, "Indecent And Demoralising Representations: Public Anatomy Museums In Mid-Victorian England," *Medical History* 52:1, 2008, 1-22; Alan W. Bates, "Dr Kahn's Museum: Obscene Anatomy In Victorian London," *Journal Of The Royal Society Of Medicine* 99:12, 2006, 618-624; and Simon Chaplin, "Nature Dissected, Or Dissection Naturalized? The Case Of John Hunter'S Museum," *Museum Soc* 6:2, 2008, 135-51.

cal organizational systems was largely associated with coarseness, impropriety and, in earlier days even profanity, and was cultivated by surgeons and anatomists who would regularly perform the tasks that physicians felt were beneath them. Diagrams and illustrations constituted a set of visual and discursive practices crucial to develop the profession and laid ground for medicine's *will to know*. The epistemological grounds for the constitution of the healthy and normal body were then set through gaze and correlation.

Kinship and Correlation ///

Best known as Normal distribution, Laplace's principle of errors is graphically represented by the 'bell-shaped curve' and is also known as Gaussian distribution or density function. Invented within the context of the study of probabilities, the Normal distribution was taken up and used by the Belgium astronomer Adolphe Quetelet (1796-1874) to predicate the concept of *l'homme moyen* or the 'average man,' characterized by the mean values of the measured variables that follow a distribution. This concept first appeared in the influential *Sur l'homme et le développement de ses facultés ou essai de physique sociale*, published in 1835, and translated in English as *A Treatise on Man*.⁵ In this work the astronomer suggests that the distribution of human features such as weight, height and life expectancy can be measured against a statistical mean. Considered by many the father of quantitative social sciences, he originally claimed that Laplace's law of errors could be applied to the distribution of all social phenomena. Quetelet's main thesis argues that the history of evolution is aimed at a fixed point of development but contains in itself a certain frequency of errors. Inspired by the Aristotelean 'Golden Mean,' developed in the second volume of the *Nicomachean Ethics* whereby virtue is the desirable mean between deficiency and excess, this fixed point of evolution becomes a major concern to the contemporary debates in the life sciences. As Lennard J. Davies argues, the social implications of this concept were pivotal for a century consumed by thoughts of progress and industrialization. According to Davies, Quetelet provided an empirical basis of *les classes moyennes* and justification to ossify social stratification: "with bourgeois hegemony comes scientific justification for moderation and middle-class ideology. The average man, the body of the man in the middle, becomes the exemplar of the middle way of life."⁶ Underpinning these discus-

5 M.A. Quetelet, *A Treatise on Man and the Development of his Faculties*, Edinburgh: William and Robert Chambers, 1842. Note that this is the first edition of the English translation of *Sur l'homme et le développement de ses facultés ou essai de physique sociale* and was digitized and made available online by Google Books. On a further note, this edition was part of a series "People's Edition" and was widely distributed in the UK for the price of three shillings.

6 Lennard J. Davies, "Constructing Normalcy: The Bell Curve, the Novel and the Invention of the Disabled Body in The Nineteenth Century," in *The Disability Studies Reader*, London: Routledge, 2006, 5.

sions was the belief that the materiality of the body, one's physical features were a catalogue of signs to be interpreted not only for the sake one's own body, as was the case for bedside medicine, but rather and mainly for the *body politic*. Control and perpetuation of the Nation's health was to be carried out by statistical measurement as a mode of scientific and social investigation. In the writings of Quetelet:

This determination of the average man is not merely a matter of speculative curiosity; it may be of the most important service to the science of man the social system. It *ought* necessarily to precede every other inquiry into social physics, since it is, as it were, the basis. *The average man, indeed, is in a nation what the center of gravity is in a body; it is by having that central point in view that we arrive at the apprehension of all the phenomena of equilibrium and motion.*⁷

Importantly, Quetelet did not intend to calculate the average of the human species as a whole; rather, he sought to codify the characteristic of a nation and its people as a racial *type*. *L'homme type*, as Ian Hacking suggests, is a sum of the physical and moral qualities of the man of that race.⁸ This move towards codification signals that, on the one hand, it might be possible to preserve the average qualities of a particular national body, *and as such*, that it might also be possible to alter them. By laying the grounds for the science (and politics) of eugenics, Quetelet's means enabled the scientific and juridical community to come together in shaping the evolution of the modern Nation-State. Sir Francis Galton (1822-1911) a Victorian polymath whose legacy expands from crucial contributions in geography and meteorology to inventing fingerprint identification was, most importantly, recognized for being a pioneer of statistical correlation and regression, proto-geneticist, and the main advocate of eugenics. The half-cousin of Charles Darwin gave the fullest expression of the new scientific discipline in *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development* (1883):

My general object has been to take note of the varied hereditary faculties of different men, and of the great differences in different families and races, to learn how far history may have shown the practicability of supplanting inefficient human stock by better strains, and to consider whether it might not be our duty to do so by such efforts as may be reasonable, thus exerting ourselves to further the ends of evolution more rapidly and with less distress than if events were left to their own course.⁹

The unique body represented at the tail ends of the Bell shaped curve served to legitimize and naturalize a particular sociopolitical

⁷ Quetelet, *A Treatise on Man and the Development of his Faculties*, 96 (my emphasis).

⁸ Ian Hacking, *The Taming Of Chance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

⁹ Francis Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development*, London: J.M. Dent & Co, 1907, 1.

order. Aberrant anatomies were previously identified as monstrosities by visceral experience and operated primarily within a theological discourse rather than within scientific reasoning. It was only in the late eighteenth century with Diderot and D'Alembert's publication of the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des Sciences des Arts et des Métiers* (1751-1772) that monstrosity was translated into scientific discourse, prepping the grounds for the norm. As a part of the Encyclopedia's *Supplément*, Jean La Fosse (1742-1775), a Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in Montpellier, wrote a series of articles on the anatomy of the monster in which monstrosity is, for the first time, systematically divested of divine causes and instead founded in malfunctions of the normal.

According to the disability studies pioneer Rosemarie Garland Thomson, the aberrant body "framed and choreographed bodily differences that we now call 'race,' 'ethnicity,' and 'disability' in a ritual that enacted the social process of making cultural otherness from the raw materials of human physical variation."¹⁰ This naturalization of 'variation' concerns what Foucault called the process of 'normalization' in a series of lectures at the *Collège de France* between 1974 and 1975. In *Abnormal*, 'normalization' partakes in the model of the modern medico-judicial *biopower* and aims at the integration and inclusion of the abnormal and pathological into the normal through a series of interactions between different institutions.¹¹ Rather than acting through a model of exclusion or opposition, 'normalization' assimilates the 'abnormal' as part of the 'normal' state and its proper function, turning the body into an object of strict control and under constant surveillance.

Georges Canguilhem alike confronts the reality of the type and the relation of particular individuals to the power of the norm. In asking, "is the pathological the same concept as abnormal? Is it the contrary to or the contradictory of normal? Is normal the same as healthy? Is anomaly the same thing as abnormality?" the philosopher and physician raises questions related to the consensual nature of scientific knowledge.¹² In his view, the 'normal' is the state that institutes the 'norm,' and the 'normative' as such is a prototypical condition. An anomaly is thus a mere difference in degree for which the norm will serve as metric. Concerning the aberrant body he writes: "Once monstrosity has become a biological concept, once monstrosities have been divided into classes based on invariable relations, once

10 Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, 60.

11 Michel Foucault, *Abnormal : Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974-1975*, Valerio Marchetti and Antonella Salomoni (eds), Graham Burchell (trans), London: Verso, 2003, 26.

12 Georges Canguilhem, *Knowledge Of Life*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2008, 121.

one prides oneself on being able to bring them about experimentally, the monster is *naturalized*, the irregular is brought back to the rule and the prodigy to predictability.¹³

The locus where the aberrant could be brought back to the rule was the 'Anthropometric Laboratory,' which Galton, like Quetelet, opened in London as to further his statistical enquiries with larger sample sizes.¹⁴ Both had invariably distinct approaches to the Bell shaped curve and their legacies differ greatly. As a brief illustration, Galton was the inventor of the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and Quetelet that of the Body Mass Index (BMI), two corporeal metrics with distinct teleologies still in present use. Whereas Quetelet with the BMI sought a society in which the average is ideal, Galton with the IQ sought a society in which the ideal corresponds to the optimal. However, to our present purposes, the idea that a population can be normalized and therefore have deviations from the mean diminished is the direct product of Quetelet's *social physics*. Statistics was a mere technology that enabled the empirical presentation of the *normal type* as a matter of maximized value to the utilitarian political agenda. For the astronomer, the deviant body was an abstract topographic document upon which the symbolic codes of egalitarian democracy were institutionalized. The interchangeable use of anatomy and statistics developed a sovereign political discourse that codified how and what to 'know' in order to ascertain its functions and operations. These scientific 'normalizing' systems of knowledge based on seeing and measuring corporeal difference effectively established representational strategies for the difference-enabling taxonomy-of-otherness popularized by the standard design methods of Ernst Neufert.

The Geometric Man Under Conditions of Law and Sentiment ///

If we were to consider readings of history prior to the period examined in this essay, we could recall that the man was once posited as *the measure of all things*. Throughout history man used his own body as metric for the instruments of service to him and his built forms. With the introduction of the metric system in post-revolutionary France, *le mètre* substituted *the man* and was established by continental scientific consensus as the new decimal unit of length. The gamut of nineteenth century's conception of progress was unavoidably connected

13 Ibid., 140.

14 The Galton Laboratory emerged of the Anthropometric Laboratory part of the London International Health Exhibition of 1885. Visitors to the Exhibition were tested with instruments Galton had devised and paid a fee for a copy of their measurements and other data. Following its success at the Exhibition, once it closed Galton established a second Anthropometric Laboratory in the Science Galleries at the South Kensington Museum in London, which corresponds today to the Victoria & Albert Museum. Over 9000 people contributed to his measurement exercises, although the data gathered was not properly analyzed until 1920-1930s when the Lab was transferred to University College of London (UCL) and renamed The Eugenics Records Office (later designated The Galton Laboratory), a predecessor to the Department of Applied Statistics at this University.

tect's Data reflected a realist political view of society, one that at the time was impregnated with historical affinities to Social Darwinism, a direct contribution from the anthropometric studies that enshrined Quetelet and Galton in History.

The social physics of Neufert's buildings was one that strived towards the ideal of the average. Presently in its fortieth German edition, *Architect's Data* has been translated in over twenty languages and remains the most important compendia on architectural standards ever written. Explained in a nutshell, the architect sought to create guidelines that could accelerate the process of design and building for which he undertook an exhaustive study of the relationship between the sizes of human limbs and the space that surrounds the human body. First published in 1936, his oeuvre remains the canon of spatial planning and site requirements for most designers who rely on the metric system for introducing the standard dimensions of the spaces we inhabit today.

Both a predicament of its time and an omen of the post-war, Neufert's standards act as textual evidences of the requirements, specifications and guidelines that ensure that industrial processes consistently meet public demand. My proposal investigates the possibility of standardization not as it is translated from the German *normun* (or *normierung*) but as technology of *normalization* of the body as Foucault and Canguilhem scrutinized.

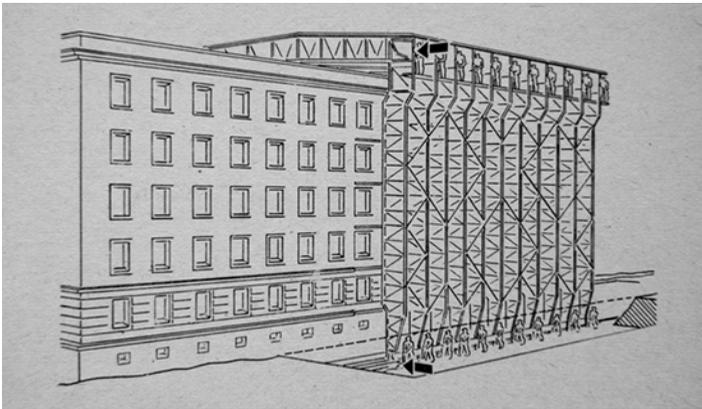
Conceptually, Neufert's intentions to 'normalize' all objects in space to a system of interchangeable units, from the "Octametric Brick with Standard Brick Thickness" to human bodies, simplifies the production of *otherness*. In the words of Nader Vossoughian concerning Neufert's standardized products:

Binary categories are used to organize rooms – they are implicitly designated as either public or private, wet or dry, female or male, domestic or professional, work-related or recreational, consumption based or production-oriented – which simplifies the task of programming spaces.¹⁶

According to the historiography Nader Vossoughian draws upon, Neufert arrived at his efforts inspired by the experiments of a Munich based institute *Die Brücke – Internationales Institut zur Organisierung der geistigen Arbeit* (in English, International Institute to Organize Intellectual Work) from whom Wilhelm Ostwald (1853-1932) remarkably influenced his thoughts. Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry in 1909—the same year Francis Galton was knighted by Her Majesty of England—Ostwald believed that the development of standards for

¹⁶ Nader Vossoughian, "Standardization Reconsidered: Normierung In And After Ernst Neufert's *Bauentwurfslehre* (1936)," *Grey Room* 54, 2014, 44.

the production and consumption of knowledge, such as disciplinary manuals would foster processes of socialization (*i.e.* the reification of norms). The idea for the standardization of paper dimensions was Die Brücke Institute's most successful undertaking which, following its bankruptcy, was taken over by the *Deutsches Institut für Normung* (in English, German Institute for Standardization) that in 1922 presented the DIN paper format which remains the standard metric for paper in most countries where the metric system prevails. Although this account does not follow prescribed historical records, it is possible through a forensic reading of texts and events to imagine that Quetelet's calculations of the average man resonated with Wilhelm Ostwald, who in turn laid ground for Neufert's will to disseminate his homogenized proportional systems. For Neufert, centralizing disciplinary knowledge in one single source allowed for its contents to be circulated faster and disseminated to a wider public, and thus, by consequence, normalize the production of society.



Blueprint From *Bauordnungslehre* by Albert Speer and Ernst Neufert (1943)

Appointed in 1938 as Albert Speer's Standardization Officer for the rationalization of housing in Berlin, Neufert continued to develop throughout his trajectory quantitative methods aimed at the efficient acceleration of the building process based on the average men. Additionally, as revolutionary winds were actively blowing throughout Europe and, colonial power in need of reassertion in ultramarine territories, standardization appeared to scientists an efficient mode of guaranteeing stability and control over the National population at an absolute dimension. In practical terms, the use of Neufert's design processes and products in the metropolis and its National colonies was again a method of asserting power by means of industry and conforming the production of the city to directives of utilitarian politics.

Foucault and Canguilhem carefully differentiated philosophical conventions that tend to trace a clear demarcation between 'normative'

or prescriptive statements (*i.e.* what *ought* to be) and declarative statements (*i.e.* what *is*). Quetelet and Neufert, the former through statistics and the latter through architecture, relied on normative statements to signify and design expected scenarios of social behavior. Quetelet's *social physics* was to inaugurate the momentum from which Neufert's architectural data could be read as empirical, and Neufert was to codify the 'average man' by 'normalizing' the subject of architecture. For both men, the mean was not merely a descriptive tool rather was a statement of the ideal. *L'homme moyen* provided the "right angles" by which modern architecture would be designed.

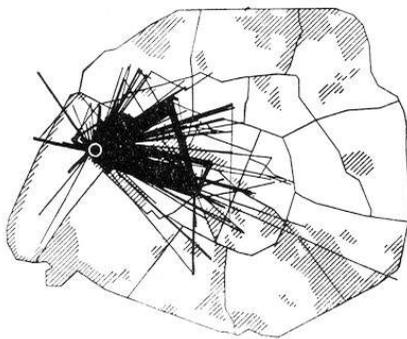
/// Published on July 15, 2014

57/

PATTERNS OF LIFE: A VERY SHORT HISTORY OF SCHEMATIC BODIES

BY GRÉGOIRE CHAMAYOU

1/// In his 1956's *Theory of the Dérive*, Guy Debord described a Paris map drawn up by an urban sociologist depicting "all the movements made in the space of one year by a student living in the 16th Arrondissement". "Her itinerary," he remarked, "forms a small triangle with no significant deviations, the three apexes of which are the School of Political Sciences, her residence and that of her piano teacher."¹



Routes taken during one year by a female student living in the 16th *arrondissement* of Paris by Paul Henry Chombart de Lauwe

The cartographic *objectivation* of a life form was taken as a starting point for a poetical and political critique of daily life. This was a critique of its narrowness, of its routines, of the reduction of the lifeworld these routine articulate. Debord concluded: "Such data — examples of a modern poetry capable of provoking sharp emotional reactions (in this particular case, outrage at the fact that anyone's life can be so pathetically limited) [...] will undoubtedly prove useful in developing *dérives* (drifts)."²

1 Guy Debord, "Theory of the *dérive*," in Ken Knabb (ed), *The Situationist International Anthology*, Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981, 50.

2 Ibid.



Pablo Picasso drawing with light / Photograph by Gjon Mili (1949)

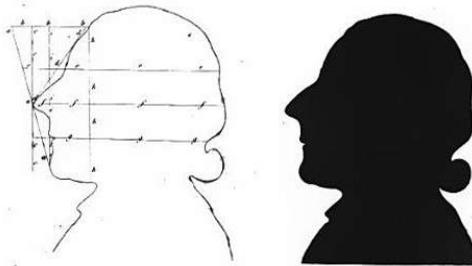
2/// Today, San Francisco designers offer to sell strange jewels. They are small geometric medallions that look like spider webs or crystal-line structures. Their patterns are actually those of your routes. Meshu, a new type of small silversmith business, uses the geolocation data collected by your smartphone in order to extract the schematic map of your peregrinations. The visualization of your chronospatial data generates a graph that may then serve as a model to carve out your personalized pendant in metal or wood.



The route map of an individual in San Francisco converted into a pendant by Meshu

The spatialized history of your travels therefore becomes a cryptic sign that you can wear as ornament. It is also a personalized emblem, the expression of a new art of portraiture.

3/// As cultural objects, these graphs may be compared to one of their precursors: the “silhouette portrait” developed at the end of the 18th century. With Johann Kaspar Lavater’s invention of a “sure and convenient machine for drawing silhouette,” such portraits became popular objects, a trend that carried new aesthetic codes for the presentation of oneself, but also new supports for an anthropological knowledge that claimed to decipher personalities by the study of the contours of one’s head.



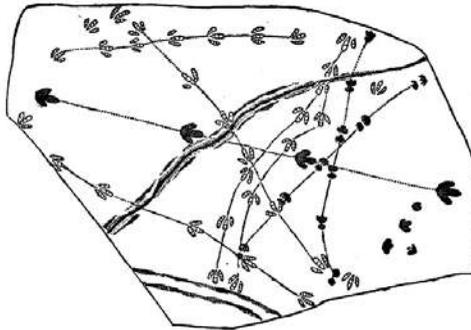
Lavater’s silhouette portrait (1806)

The chronospatial profile has in common with the old *skiagraphic* profile the multiplicity of its usages.³ The difference is, of course, that the trace turns away from the body’s morphological contour to focus instead on the imaginary lines of its movements. The profile must henceforth be understood in a metaphorical sense: it no longer refers

³ *Skiagraphic* is the Greek term for the art of shadow drawing/writing.

to the static shape of a body, but to the dynamic form of its trajectories. This is the kind of schematic body that forms the topic of my investigation

4 /// Since the 19th century, paleontologists have drawn an enlightening distinction between *body fossils* and *trace fossils*: “when we mentioned prints, molds, counter-prints,” writes Alcide d’Orbigny in 1849, “we spoke only of organic trace fossils of solid parts of animals buried in the strata; but there are other fossils left by living bodies on not-yet-consolidated sediments, and those have less to do with these solid parts of bodies than with their vital and physiological habits. They are prints of animal steps, furrows, fluting, rolls left by the moving organs of walking and swimming animals.”⁴ Edward Hitchcock named such fossils “ichnites.” In German they are also called *Lebenspurren*: traces of life or “fossil vestiges of life.”



Fossil footprints found in Gill, Massachusetts in the 19th century

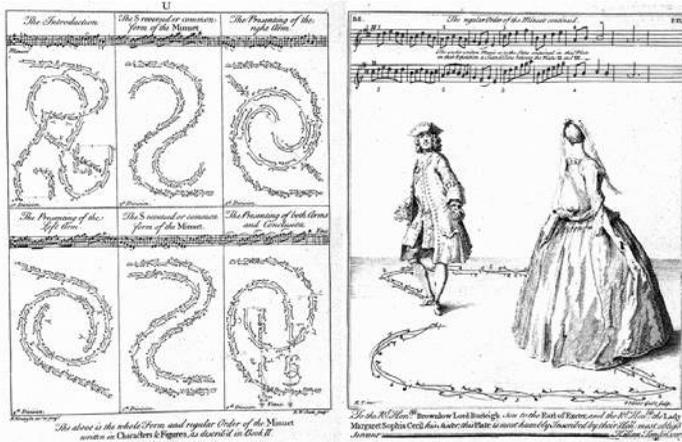
While the molding of a dead body, prisoner of the clay, provides the replica of a solid with its volumes and its textures, a series of footprints found on the ground only provides an account of its movements. In the latter case, the print has not been simultaneous but successive. The trace of an activity is a precipitation of successive events in the simultaneity of a space, its durable solidification on the plane of an inscribing surface. It is the image of a spatialized duration.

5/// In 1790, Kant wrote: “Every form of the objects of sense [...] is either figure or play. In the latter case it is either play of figures (in space, viz. pantomime and dancing), or the mere play of sensations (in time).”⁵ The form of a dance, or more generally of a perceived movement is not that of a *thing*, with its fixed contours (the shape of a vase). It is a “play of figures” that can only authentically appear in a double difference of space and time.

4 Alcide d’Orbigny, *Cours élémentaire de paléontologie et de géologie stratigraphiques*, Premier volume, Paris: Masson, 1849, 27.

5 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, Werner S. Pluhar (trans), Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1987.

During the same era, choreographic notation systems were invented. In corresponding treatises, a dance took the aspect of undulated sentences written in a weird symbolic language. Within the space of the sheet, these sentences evolved under the chronological horizontal axis of the musical score. The layout of the play of forms was no longer a mere account, it had become a *script*, which was only transcribing the activity so as to better conduct it in practice.



Two sheets illustrating dance step notations in the 18th century

6/// In the 1910s, two disciples of Taylor, Lilian and Frank B. Gilbreth developed an apparatus they called “chronocyclegraph.” After having affixed small electrical bulbs on a worker’s hand, they would take long exposure photographs of him as he executed his task. Thus did they obtain the image of a “continuous path of a cycle of motions” appearing in white lines on the photographic emulsion.

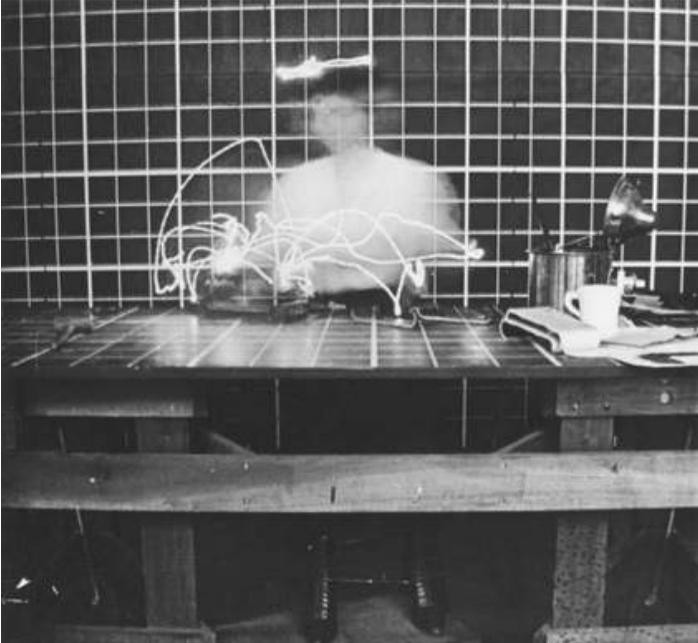
“I believe”, explained an enthusiastic young engineer, “a good method of illustrating how a motion model helps one to visualize is to compare it with the wake left by an ocean liner.”⁶ What the various techniques I am describing have in common is that each presents us with a means of capturing trails, or else of adding more or less long-lasting trail-effects to activities that do not necessarily generate them spontaneously.⁷

In this specific case, the task of extracting the trajectory is accomplished by photographic means, or more precisely by a chronophotography: by treating the light source as a “spatiotemporal ink,” chronophotographic processes “constitute trails, as Didi-Huberman would say, by allowing the mobile’s movement to appear by an ex-

6 Frank B. Gilbreth and Lilian Gilbreth, “Motion Efficiency Study,” in Walter Hines Page and Arthur W. Page (eds), *World’s Work*, New York: Doubleday, 1916, 321.

7 See Georges Didi-Huberman, *Phalènes*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 2013.

tended presence in various points of the image, which thus take on the appearance of simultaneity.”⁸ The invisible is thus made visible. It is, however, equally true that this process of visualization achieves a concomitant operation of invisibilization or erasure. On the photograph, the worker’s body is blurred into a kind of halo in the background. The body literally disappears behind the lines of its gesture. From the evanescent body, only the bright fossil of its past movement remains.



Motion Efficiency Study by Lillian and Frank Gilbreth (1914)

Michel Foucault has shown that the discipline of the 18th and 19th centuries was mobilizing “a sort of anatomo-chronological schema of behavior.”⁹ But this is no longer exactly the case here. If the schema is still in a sense chronological (and even chronospatial), it is no longer anatomical. From the living body of the worker, there remains “merely the orbit of the motion.”¹⁰ Orbit is an instructive metaphor: a shift, so to speak, from an anatomy to a micro-astronomy of the productive gesture, where the glow of the small light bulbs would have replaced the brightness of the stars, although for a quite different study.

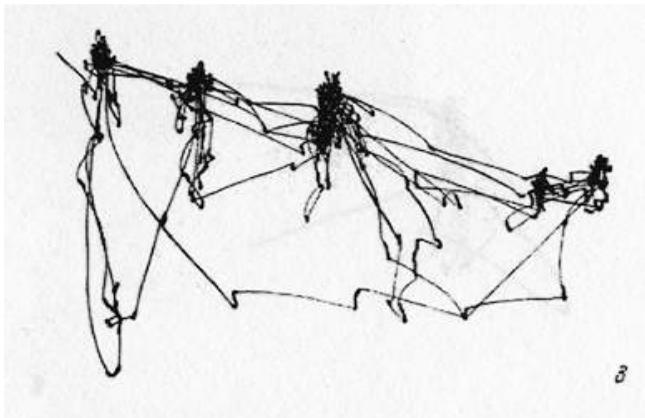
8 Caroline Chik, *L'image paradoxale, Fixité et mouvement*, Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2011, 90.

9 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Alan Sheridan (trans), New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

10 Frank B. Gilbreth and Lillian Gilbreth, “Motion Efficiency Study,” 321.

These orbits must not only be visualized but also modeled, in order to better be transformed. If one analyzes the trajectories of the gestures, it is in order to simplify them, to rid them of their useless detours: it is the principle of “waste elimination.”¹¹ Modelization is a prelude to standardization: “through a comparison of graphs or models showing the paths of different operators doing the same kind of work, it is possible to deduce the most efficient method and to make this a standard.”¹² The method, etymologically, is *the path* to follow. The standard is the shortest path, the one most economical. The Gilbreths also sculpt these movement models in three dimensions with wire and use it “to teach the path of the motion” to operators. The worker’s gesture, reconstructed in a laboratory, re-enters the workshop in a modified form, this time as a conducting thread to which productive bodies must conform their dance.

7 /// In the mid-1960s, a member of the USSR Academy of sciences, Alfred Yarbus, published a book that deeply renewed the study of sight.¹³ For his experiments, he used a sophisticated machine, a bit like the device on which one puts his/her chin in an ophthalmologic office except, in this case, equipped with cameras. Having recorded the micro-movements of the eyes, he could retrace the fast course that a subject’s eyes unconsciously follow when looking at a painting. These drawings, with their jolts and their fixed points, look a lot like Gilbreth’s photographs. They are also maps of gestures, but of ocular gestures, where the object of visualization is nothing other than the very action of seeing.¹⁴



Eye movement traces of a subject looking at a picture by Alfred Yarbus (1967)

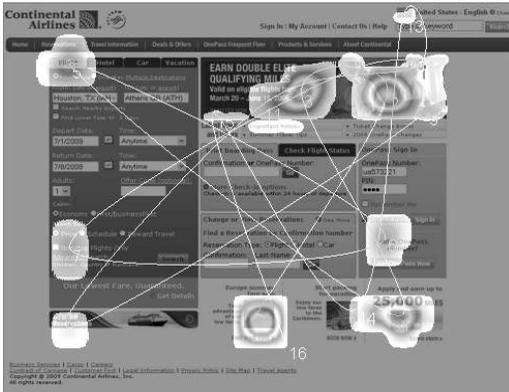
11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Alfred Yarbus, *Eye Movements and Vision*, New York: Plenum Press, 1967.

14 See the work of the artist Julien Prévieux, “Esthétique des statistiques,” in Isabelle Bruno, Emmanuel Didier, and Julien Prévieux (eds), *Statactivisme: Comment lutter avec des nombres*, Paris: Zones/La Découverte, 2014.

Nowadays, eye-tracking technologies are mobilized by marketing research. In the age of the “attention economy,” the user’s vision is methodically scrutinized in order to better capture it. Eye tracking heat maps are produced to conduct “usability tests” and to choose the most efficient “design route” for a given graphic design project.



Eye tracking heat map analysis of the gaze of a subject on a webpage

This method of analysis applies to web page design, product packaging, but also to the very architecture of retail spaces. Nowadays, some stores couple the video feed of their surveillance camera to the phone signals picked up by their wifi network in order to retrace their clients’ movement. Within the physical space of the store the client is an eye, but an eye with legs. Thanks to the collected behavioral data, the space can then be reorganized in order to optimize the capture of attention.



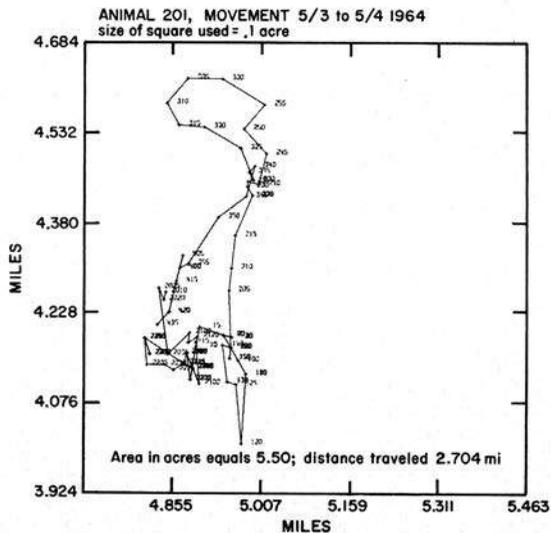
Screenshot of a customer tracking apparatus in a store

This method of analysis applies to web page design, product packaging, but also to the very architecture of retail spaces. Nowadays, some stores couple the video feed of their surveillance camera to the phone signals picked up by their wifi network in order to retrace their

clients' movement.¹⁵ Within the physical space of the store the client is an eye, but an eye with legs. Thanks to the collected behavioral data, the space can then be reorganized in order to optimize the capture of attention.

Despite the similarity between these graphs and Gilbreth's, the relation of normativity here is not the same. The wage relationship is structured by a relation of constraint that fundamentally gives to the norm the aspect of a command (even if it is also implemented through other means). In the mercantile sphere, it is at once through more lateral measures that an activity scheme is prescribed to bodies. In that case, the strategy consists in redrawing the space of visibility in order to orient and magnetize the ocular and corporeal mobility according to pre-established navigation routes. This normativity proceeds according to tactics of *capture through design*.

8/// In the beginning of the 1960s, American ethologists began to use new radio transmitters in order to study the movements of wild animals. These devices, fixed on bodies of cotton-tail rabbits or white-tailed deers, allowed their positions to be known and their itineraries to be retraceable.¹⁶ To address the mass of data rapidly produced by such radio-tracking systems, the scientists designed a program capable of automatically converting this data into maps.



Map of the movements of "Hare 201" between May 3 and 5 1964

15 See Stephanie Clifford, Quentin Hardy, "Big Data Hits Real Life," *The New York Times* (July 14, 2013).

16 See John R. Tester, Dwain W. Warner and William W. Cochran, "A Radio-Tracking System for Studying Movements of Deer," *The Journal of Wildlife Management* 28:1 (January 1964), 42-45.

The rise of telemetric technologies also inspired other disciplines. In 1964, at Harvard, two behavioral psychologists, Ralph Schwitzgebel, and his twin brother, Robert, developed a “behavioral supervision system with a wrist-carried transceiver.” This device, tested on “young delinquents,” foreshadowed the electronic bracelet later adopted by the penal system. It was their dream to replace the old techniques of incarceration by new control technologies operating in an open milieu. To this end, they imagined a small wearable device able to record and to transmit various behavioral data wirelessly, including the geographic position of the subject, as well as “his pulse, brain waves, consumption of alcohol, or other physiological facts.”¹⁷ If this electronic snitch sensor detected a risky behavior, the individual could be located and, if necessary, subjected to a preemptive intervention.

But what also deeply motivated this invention had to do with a *libido sciendi*. Through the automated remote collection of behavioral data, the electronic bracelet would allow behavioral sciences to continuously access a mass of detailed information about daily life. Could not the psychologist imitate the ethologist, and have his own network of transponder necklaces placed on the bodies of human animals? This art of remote measurement of human behaviors was named *anthropotelemetry*.

The task of collecting behavioral data that was to be entrusted to special sensors is nowadays largely accomplished by individuals themselves, who self-document their own activity in a context of generalized traceability. Tom MacWright is a geographic information systems engineer. He is also an amateur runner. He recently created an application that allows him to visualize his running routes in the city, as well as his heartbeat fluctuations during his efforts.



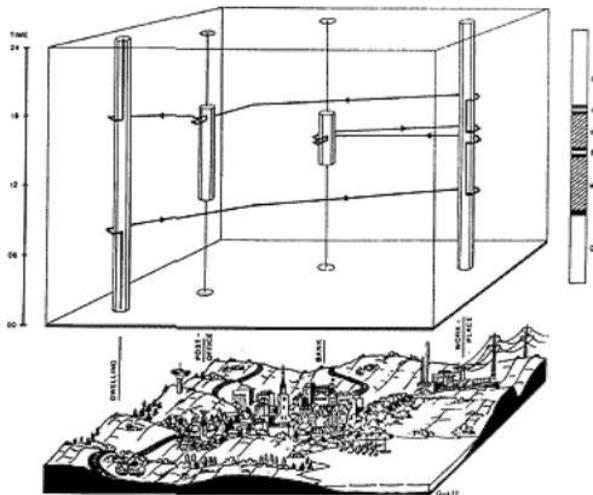
Data visualization of the running routes and the heart rate of Tom MacWright

¹⁷ Ralph Schwitzgebel, “Anthropotelemetry: Dr. Schwitzgebel’s Machine,” in *Harvard Law Review* 80:2 (December 1966), 403-421.

This map illustrates an important principle: data fusion refers to data collected from heterogeneous sources that are fused to the same chronospatial schematic body. The only condition is that this information must have been referenced in advance according to spatio-temporal coordinates.

9/// Still in the 1960s, an innovative movement in human geography undertook to revolutionize its discipline: it was the project of chrono-geography, or time-geography. The fundamental idea was that one could give an account of human lives by treating them as paths within space-time. This implied, among other things, the invention of new kinds of maps, which would articulate time to space. Torsten Hägerstrand, one of the founding fathers of this methodology, summed up its postulate as follows: "In time-space the individual describes a path [...] the concept of life path (or path of it such as the day path, the week path, etc) can easily be shown graphically if we agree to collapse a three-dimensional space into a two-dimensional plain [...], and use a perpendicular direction to represent time."¹⁸

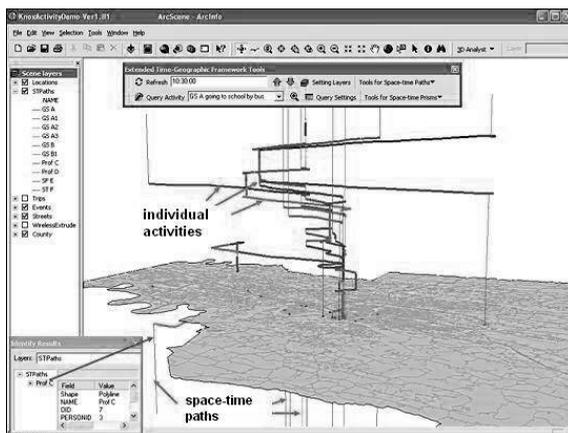
The following illustration is a first instance of this kind of representation, still in a rudimentary state. A thread is wound around vertical sticks that have been hammered into a three-dimensional map representing the itinerary of an individual during a given period:



Time-Geographic Simulation Model of Individual Activity Programs

Nowadays, this kind of cartographic representation has been integrated into powerful geographical data systems used for geovisual analytics research:

¹⁸ Torsten Hägerstrand, "What about People in Regional Science?," in *Papers of the Regional Science Association* 24:1, 1970, 6-21.



Visualizing space-time paths and individual activities with ArcGIS

As Mark Monmonier points out, this kind of object is fundamentally “*mapping*,” rather than *maps*, because cartography is not limited to static maps printed on paper or displayed on computer screens. In the new cartographies of surveillance, the maps one looks at are less important than the spatial data systems that store and integrate facts about where we live and work.”¹⁹

The tools of chronogeography, conceived in the 1960s, had been mostly conceived as tools of urban and social planners, usually associated with reformist political agendas. Nowadays, much less benevolent functions are being increasingly assigned to them. The fundamental postulate of time-geography, according to which individual biographies can be tracked as “life paths in time-space” is in the process of becoming the epistemological basis of other sorts of practices of power.

10/// In 2010, the highest authorities in the U.S. Intelligence community laid down the principles of a new paradigm. It was the “Activity Based Intelligence” (ABI) doctrine, elaborated under the auspices of the NSA’s less famous sibling bureaucracy the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGA). Theoreticians of intelligence describe this shift as the conversion to a new philosophy, a new method of knowledge.

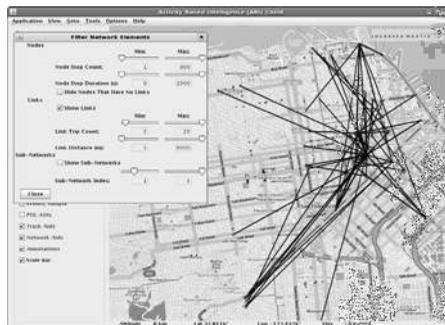
Derek Gregory describes it insightfully as “a sort of militarized rhythm-analysis, even a weaponized time-geography” based on the use of programs “that fuse and visualize geospatial, temporal and intelligence data from multiple sources (‘combining the where, the when and the who’) as a three-dimensional array that replicates the

¹⁹ Mark Monmonier, *Spying with Maps: Surveillance Technologies and the Future of Privacy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004, 1.

standard time-geography diagrams developed by Swedish geographer Torsten Hägerstrand in the 1960s and 1970s.”²⁰ As Gregory concludes, it consists in “tracking multiple individuals through different social networks to establish a ‘pattern of life’ consistent with the paradigm of activity-based intelligence that forms the core of contemporary counterinsurgency.”²¹

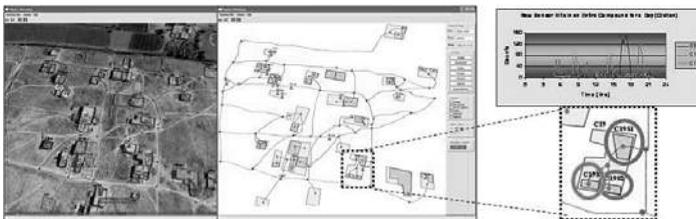
This methodology is based on, among other things, the use of data mining applied to trajectories of movements in order to discover, within gigantic assortments of paths, periodic patterns or signatures corresponding to characteristic segments of habits. Beyond tracking singular itineraries, the goal here is to progressively extract typical schemas of activity. Regular routes progressively thicken on the screen, like paths frequently taken by a flock dig their furrows in the grass of a field.

The following figure is a map produced by an Activity Based Intelligence module conceived by Lockheed Martin engineers and tested on cab trips in an American city:



Network links and detected nodes and in a cab track dataset

What works with taxi trips can, of course, be applied on other objects, as, for example, pedestrian routes in an Iraqi village monitored by the camera of a drone :



Neighborhood near Al Mahmudiyah, Iraq, where most transport is on foot. Simulated walking path were exploited to discover networks

20 Derek Gregory, “From a View to a Kill: Drones and Late Modern War,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 28:6, 2011, 188-215.

21 Derek Gregory, “Lines of descent,” on opendemocracy.net (November 8, 2011).

11/// Originally, chronogeography was born out of a refusal of the predominance of statistical methods in social sciences. If we describe social reality mainly through aggregates of large numbers, such as those given by a census, “we regard the population as made up of ‘dividuals’ instead of individuals,” regretted Hägerstrand.²² Statistic aggregates, such as the GDP or salary groups, do not provide us with access to a primary knowledge about individuals, but only, through an indirect way, to statistic beings that we reconstructed as fractions of a global number. Chronogeography, on the contrary, was claiming to represent individuals in how they exist in a continuous manner, as physical points affected by spatiotemporal trajectories. The conviction was that between the work of the biographer and the one of the statistician, “there is a twilight zone to be explored, an area where the fundamental notion is that people retain their identity over time [...] and where aggregate behavior cannot escape these facts.”²³ In other words, as Nigel Thrift puts it, chronogeography starts from the methodological premise of the “indivisibility of the human being.”²⁴ What was then proposed to social science was to rebuild aggregates of data starting from the undividable granularity of the individuals, whose “lived corporeality” could then be schematically represented through traceable and measurable paths in space-time.

It is striking that, in order to express this idea, Hägerstrand used the very same vocabulary that Gilles Deleuze would mobilize twenty years later to define what he called “societies of control”: “We no longer find ourselves dealing with the mass/individual pair. Individuals have become ‘dividuals,’ and masses, samples, data, markets, or ‘banks’.”²⁵ On the one hand, there were disciplinary societies structured around a relationship between the individual and the mass; on the other hand, societies of control articulated through the dyad of “dividuals” and databanks. On the one hand, institutions of confinement; on the other hand, processes of control operating in open milieus. On the one hand, signatures and administrative numeration taken as the landmarks of individuality; on the other hand, codes and passwords as conditions of access.

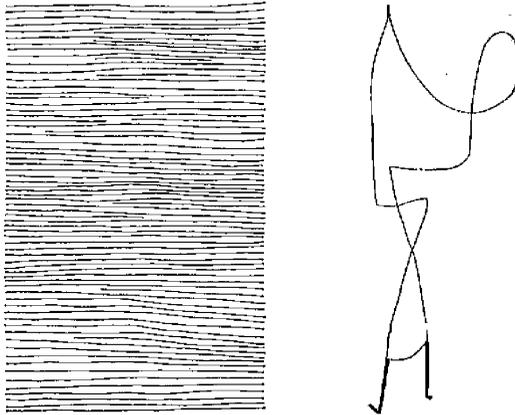
Hägerstrand and Deleuze borrowed this conceptual distinction between individuality and dividuality from some reflections on form that the painter Paul Klee developed during the interwar years. According to his view, this pair of notions could be schematized as follows :

22 Hägerstrand, “What about People in Regional Science?,” 9.

23 Ibid, 9.

24 Nigel Thrift, “An Introduction to Time Geography,” in *Institute of British Geographers*, London, 1977, 6.

25 Gilles Deleuze, « Postscript on the Societies of Control, » in *October* 59 (Winter 1992), Cambridge: MIT Press, 3-7.



Dividual (1) and individual (2) according to Klee

The individual is illustrated by a linear figure, a shape of a body in motion (figure 2). It is defined negatively as something from which nothing can be cut off without destroying the whole, without rendering it unrecognizable. In that sense, the individual is first something indivisible: to divide it would be to mutilate it, to destroy its constitutive organic unity. The dividual, on the contrary, is defined by its divisibility. Divide or carve up the lines in figure 1, cut off one or some of them, and the pattern will still not disappear. It will remain despite its partition. This is, in brief, the difference between the pattern of a tapestry, whose rhythms are repetitive, and the drawing of the organic form of a body.

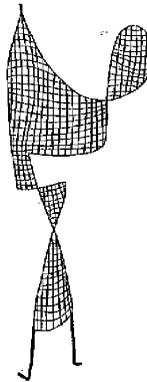
Beginning in the 1970's, Hägerstrand made it a prescription of method that we shift from (1) to (2) — namely to replace, as the basic element of knowledge, statistical dividuality by chronospatial individuality. In turn, what Deleuze says at the end of the 1990's — but this time as an historical and political diagnosis — is that we are shifting from (2) to (1), *i.e.*, that ancient machineries of power centered on individuality were in part being replaced by new ones, whose object would be the “dividual.”

For now, our question is the following: what happens to Deleuze's prognostic when the basic postulate of chronogeography — mainly, the lashing of an aggregation of data to individually indexed chronospatial paths — becomes so prevalent as to serve as the effective operational basis for an entire series of practices of power?

What we then obtain is, at first glance, something different from the dividual; on the contrary, we find chrono-geographical individualities considered both as objects of knowledge and of intervention. As Derek Gregory has shown, the contemporary uses of various electronic means of identifying, tracking, and locating targets amounts in fact to an operation of “technical production of ‘individuals’ as artifacts and

algorithms.”²⁶ If this surely entails a certain mode of individuation, the question would then be to characterize it conceptually. Yet, one of the difficulties to do so is that it hardly fits the category of disciplinary individualization recalled by Deleuze in his ‘Postscript.’

The technologies in question certainly focus on the search for “signatures” — that is, according to the philosopher, one of the favorite signs in the political semiotics of the discipline — but they also spread out today in open milieus like the apparatuses of control. They focus on individualities conceived as indivisible chronospatial units, but, to constitute them, they also mobilize dividual material, aggregated in databases and treated in an algorithmic fashion. This double set of traits makes them a poor fit in Deleuze’s framework. They correspond neither to the individualization of discipline, nor to the “dividualization” of control. In order to grasp what we are dealing with here, I think that we could refer to a third figure, also to be found in Klee’s work:



Klee's grid dance

Dividual and individual are not necessarily in opposition, they can also be combined. This third figure illustrates a case of “dividual-individual synthesis.”²⁷ Such a synthesis happens when “certain activities produce very definite structural forms which can observably become individuals,” that is to say, when “the structural characters are rhythmically joined into an individual whole.”²⁸ The undulated dividual thread, in which has been cut in the linear individual figure that also delineates its external contour, then appears as a “dancing grid.”

The corresponding object of power here is neither the individual taken as an element in a mass, nor the dividual appearing with a code

26 Derek Gregory, “Boundless Informant and the Everywhere War,” on geographicalimagination.com (October 31, 2013).

27 Paul Klee, *Notebooks Volume 2: The Nature of Nature*, London: Lund Humphries, London, 1973, 63.

28 *Ibid.*, 247-234.

in a databank, but something else: a patterned individuality that is woven out of statistical dividualities and cut out onto a thread of reticular activities, against which it progressively silhouettes in time as a distinctive perceptible unit in the eyes of the machine. The production of this form of individuality belongs neither to discipline nor to control, but to something else: to *targeting* in its most contemporary procedures, whose formal features are shared today among fields as diverse as policing, military reconnaissance and marketing. It might well be, for that matter, that we are entering *targeted societies*.

12/// For the military promoters of these methodologies, the initial hope was, according to an Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) methodology inherited from the Cold War, to be able to model behavioral “signatures” associated with “terrorist” patterns of life. But this ambition faces at least one fundamental epistemological problem. In a context marked by “a scarcity of meaningful data and a low signal to noise ratio, *i.e.*, [where] the ‘bad’ element look[s] and act[s] much the same way as the ‘good’ elements,” one cannot obtain non-ambiguous patterns of life allowing a positive identification.²⁹

Intelligence specialists are aware of this difficulty. Today, they portray the Activity Based Intelligence paradigm as an attempt to overcome this obstacle. This methodology, they insist, is “focused on understanding entities that don’t have signatures in any single sensor phenomenology.”³⁰

In the “discourses on method” that they write, the problem takes on almost metaphysical formulations. The mystery is the following: how to discover “unknown unknowns?”³¹ An unknown known is an individual whose singular identity is unknown, but whose perceptible attributes correspond to a known type. An unknown unknown is one that slips out of both a singular identification and a generic one: it is not known who he is (ignorance of his name or his face), nor what he is (his activity profile does not correspond to the inventoried ones).

The solution envisioned then is, in a certain way, already contained in the terms of the question: in order to spot unknown forms, one has logically to already possess an inventory of known forms. The idea is thus to identify the typical in order to spot the atypical. One has to develop “patterns of life to identify which activities are normal and which are abnormal.”³² Within such a model, by “accumulat[ing] tracks over

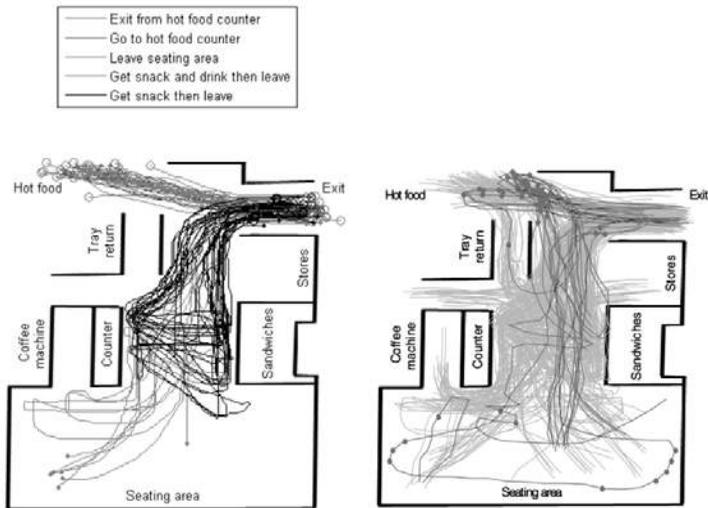
29 On this theme, see Jeff Jonas and Jim Harper, “Effective Counterterrorism and the Limited Role of Predictive Data Mining, Policy Analysis,” at *Cato Institute* (December 11, 2006), <http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa584.pdf>.

30 Mark Phillips, “A Brief Overview of ABI and Human Domain Analytics,” *Trajectory Magazine*, 2012, <http://trajectorymagazine.com/civil/item/1369-human-domain-analytics.html>.

31 *Ibid.*

32 “From Data to Decisions III,” *IBM Center for the Business of Government* (November

time,” one can, for example, “model the movement patterns of pedestrians and detect anomalies from learned behavioral trends.”³³ For example, once the “normal” itineraries of someone carrying a meal tray in a canteen have been identified, one can by contrast see the emergence of a certain amount of aberrant trajectories.



Modeling normal paths and detecting abnormal behaviors in a canteen

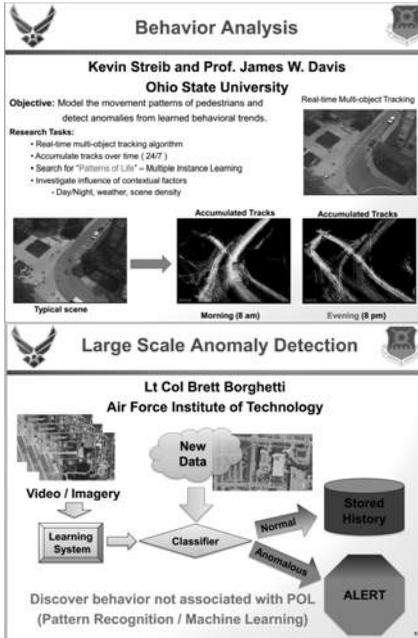
Beyond those kinds of test studies conducted in closed space, the goal is to deploy these methodologies of behavioral sorting within “large-scale anomaly detection” programs. The rationality that orders such a detection work relies on a normative divide, a certain conception of what is normality. But, from a philosophical standpoint, one has to note that the notion of normal patterns or forms of life is not based here — unlike for instance in the discourse of transcendent morals — on any particular “must be” or normative imperative. These are, in a sense, *normativities without norm*. Their notion of the normal is, in fact, strictly empirical: it is *learned* by the machine on the basis of an analysis of frequencies and repetitions in given sets of activities. It is then a discrepancy with such patterns of regularities — an *anomaly*, rather than an *abnormality* — that will trigger the red-orange alert on the analyst’s screen.

But one of the classical issues with such a conception of normality is that, as Georges Canguilhem explained, “we would necessarily have to treat as abnormal (that is to say, we believe, pathological) every anomalous individual, every carrier of anomalies — every individual

2013), 32.

33 Kevin Streib, Matt Nedrich, Karthik Sankaranarayanan, and James W. Davis, “Interactive Visualization and Behavior Analysis for Video Surveillance,” conference paper for *SIAM Data Mining International Conference on Data Mining*, Columbus, Ohio, 2010.

aberrant in relation to a specific, statistically defined type.”³⁴ While a singular discrepancy can be interpreted in various ways, for instance “as a failure or as an attempt, as a fault or as an adventure,”³⁵ a paranoid apparatus immediately tends to flag it as potential threat: “ALERT.”



Anomaly detection through behavior signatures

In a rather ironic way, it is within the very societies whose dominant ideology held sacred the individual freedom to follow one’s own way of life that the singularity of such a route soon ends up being automatically signaled as suspicious. It should be noted, however, that this is not due, in this case, to the predominance of a logic of standardization or uniformization. By using these chronospatial patterns to filter behaviors, these devices have no particular model trajectory they seek to impose on the various lives they monitor. Their normativity without norm is animated by another goal, another kind of devouring appetite: to spot discrepancies in order to “acquire targets,” and this in a mode of thought where, targets being unknown, it is the unknown that becomes targeted. Another way to put it is that, in such regimes of knowledge and power, a potential target appears fundamentally as a *drift* [une dérive].

/// Published on December 4, 2014

34 Georges Canguilhem, *Knowledge of Life*, Stefanos Geroulanos and Daniela Ginsburg (trans), New York: Fordham University Press, 2008, 127.

35 Ibid., 125.

BEE WORKERS AND THE EXPANDING EDGES OF CAPITALISM

BY RENISA MAWANI

In the past year, newspapers in the United Kingdom have reported new exigencies emerging from commercial and public responses to the global decline in honeybees. To offset the devastating effects of colony collapse disorder (CCD), many British residents have turned to beekeeping as a national, global, and environmental responsibility. Despite good intentions, the “boom in bee keeping,” writes the *Daily Mail*, “may be doing our countryside more harm than good.” A “surge in the number of bumblebee hives means thousands of colonies are being imported” from elsewhere in Europe, and “many of these are riddled with parasites that pose a threat to native species.”¹ A study of 48 colonies brought to the UK from European suppliers has revealed high rates of contamination: 77% were infected by parasites harmful to indigenous bee species in the region. Given recent warnings of the long-term effects of CCD, particularly on agriculture and global food production, the government has been listening attentively. Effective January 1, 2015, non-native bee species will only be used “as an emergency measure if native bees cannot be found.”² In the coming year, “foreign worker bees will be banned from getting jobs pollinating crops when there are millions of redundant British workers.”³ This law is the most recent addition to a series of UK security regulations — including specified “Border Inspection Points” and required health certificates — aimed at restricting the entry of foreign bees.⁴

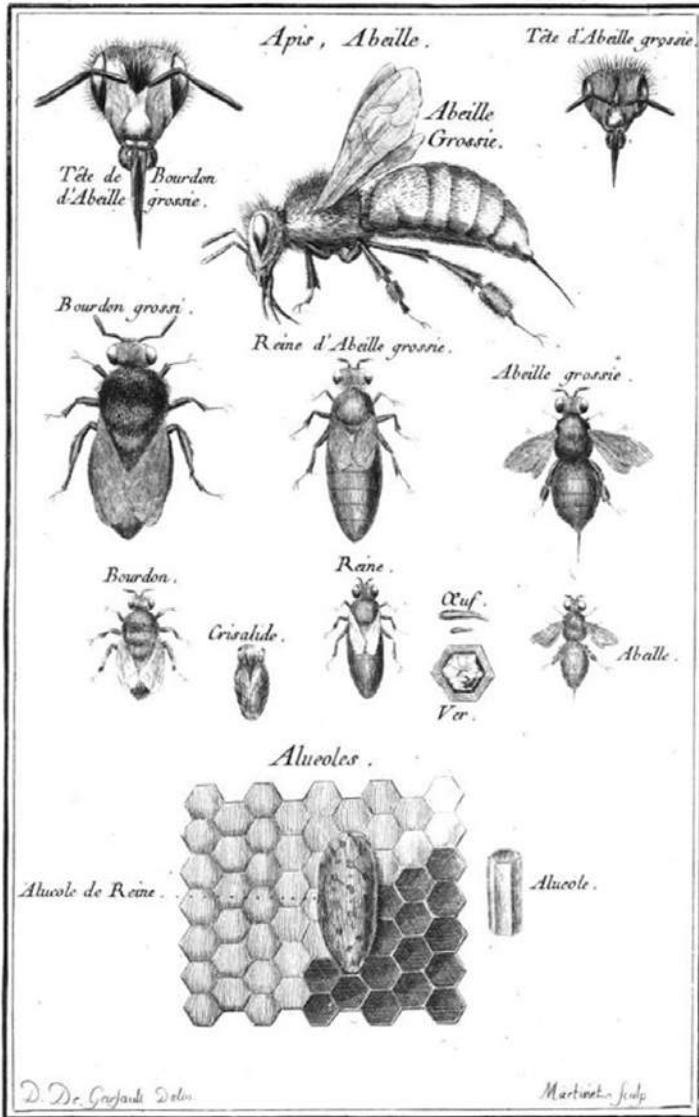
It is tempting to read “foreign worker bees” and their “threat to native species” as allegories for global racial politics, clearly manifested in

1 Fiona Macrae, “The Foreign Bees Posing a Deadly Threat to our Hives,” on dailymail.co.uk (July 18, 2013).

2 “Foreign Worker Bees set to Face Ban in the UK,” *Western Daily Press* (November 27, 2014).

3 *Ibid.*

4 For a discussion of the regulations governing the import and export of bees to the UK, see <https://www.gov.uk/bee-health>



historical and contemporary forms of settler colonialism and most vividly in the geopolitics of migration. Fears of foreigners as diseased bodies and concerns over white labor have a long and well-documented history. Since the later decades of the nineteenth century, both have justified the exclusion of Asian migrants to Canada, the US, and Australia.⁵ More recently, the militarization of land and sea, intensifying regimes of state violence directed at detainees and deportees, and the detention and death of migrants in the border zones of Canada, the US, Australia, the UK, and elsewhere make it difficult to resist anthropomorphizing “foreign bees.” Like for humans, the foreignness ascribed to bees, we might say, is always racial: the inclusion of some and the expulsion, exclusion, and death of others.

As compelling as such readings are in highlighting racial and cross-species border control, this essay seeks to offer a different reading. Concerns over foreign bees in the UK reflect the urgent global necessity of the *bee as worker*.⁶ Bees have acquired a reputation as “model ‘modern’ industrial workers.”⁷ They are industrious, cooperative, attentive to the hive’s division of labor, and acquiescent of their place within it. However, as pollinators, wartime companions, and architects, bees no longer serve as *models* of human behavior alone. They now perform a variety of jobs vital to national and global economies, as evidenced in food production, national security, and technology. Indeed, the “busy bee,” despite its decline, has become integral to the future of human life as we know it.

The bee worker — as individual and aggregate - has received considerable attention in literature and philosophy. The bee’s productivity, the cooperative and collective properties of bee labor, and the reticular organization of the hive have long been a source of inspiration and admiration. “For so work the honey-bees, creatures that by a rule in nature teach the act of order to a peopled kingdom,” wrote Shakespeare.⁸ The bee has been idealized as an aspiration for human labor, sociality, and politics. Yet, it is only with the projected crisis of colony collapse disorder — its threats to bees and bee products, to commercial profits and human diets — that we have come to notice bees as workers. Only recently has the bee’s significance to human life and death become palpable.

5 For a discussion of these dynamics along Canada’s west coast, see Renisa Mawani, *Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871-1921*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009.

6 There is a complex division of labor among honeybees that I cannot address here. For now, I use the term *workers* in a generic sense.

7 Anna Lowerhaupt Tsing, “Empowering Nature, or: Some Gleanings in Bee Culture,” in Sylvia Yanagisako and Carol Delaney (eds), *Naturalizing Power: Essays in Feminist Cultural Analysis*, New York: Routledge, 1995, 123.

8 William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, London: Penguin Books, 2010, Act I, Scene II, Line 16.

In this essay, I begin with the bee as worker to ask two related questions: First, what does it mean to think and write from the body of the bee? Second, what does the bee's body — as a laboring body — tell us about the mutability and adaptability of capitalism's destructive forces? The interdependence of bee and human life and death, I contend, may have much to say on the expanding horizons of contemporary capitalism. However, these entanglements demand a different set of analytic tools.⁹ One strategy, as I suggest below, includes a (re)turn to Marx and Engels, a (re)reading that turns from historical materialism to the materiality and interrelationality of human-nature exchange.

Bee Power ///

One need only read the *New York Times*, *Nature*, or other popular periodicals to note that bees have become highly newsworthy. Notwithstanding their projected vulnerability (or perhaps, because of it), bees regularly appear at the forefront of human advancement, particularly in the fields of technology and security.¹⁰ Recent headlines in *Popular Science* refer to “European bee sperm bank[s],” “bee-inspired algorithms,” bees as “bio-detectives,” and bees that can “solve hard computer problems faster than supercomputers.”¹¹ Bees, we might say, are the (endangered) future.

Since 2006, scientists, entomologists and beekeepers have reported a mysterious decline in bee populations. The causes remain disputed. Whereas some have attributed bee deaths to changing environmental conditions, pathogens and parasites, others have argued that declining bee populations can be traced directly to neonicotinoids, a chemical insecticide used to kill crop-damaging pests in Europe, Canada, the US, and elsewhere. The irony is difficult to miss. Chemical agents used to protect crops from insects have the unintended consequence of killing bees that pollinate. Efforts to preserve the vitality of certain crops will lead to their eventual demise. The use of neonicotinoids, it is predicted, will result in the disappearance of crops that depend largely or entirely on bee pollination (almonds, apples, blueberries, cranberries). Colony collapse disorder will affect the availability of certain foods, which in turn will alter western diets. Farmers and governments are especially concerned with the high financial costs at stake. Of the “100 crop species which provide 90%

9 For a fuller discussion on this point, see Renisa Mawani, “Insects, War, Plastic Life,” in Brenna Bhandar and Jonathan Goldberg Hiller (eds), *Plastic Materialities: Politics, Legality, and Metamorphosis in the Work of Catherine Malabou*, Durham: Duke University Press, forthcoming.

10 On art and aesthetics see Mary Kosut and Lisa Jean Moore, “Bees Making Art: Insect Aesthetics and the Ecological Moment,” *Humanimalia* 5:2, 2014, 1-2.

11 *Popular Science*, <http://www.popsci.com/tags/honeybees>.

of food worldwide, 71 of these are bee pollinated.”¹² In the US alone, the value of bee-pollinated crops is estimated to be \$15 billion dollars per year.¹³

Although the link between insecticides and bee deaths remains disputed, escalating concerns of global ecological crises have generated swift juridical responses. New laws have been passed. Whereas the UK has prohibited the entry of foreign bees, local governments in Canada have passed by-laws to regulate non-commercial beekeeping. Others, including the US, are deliberating whether to prohibit the use of chemical insecticides. In 2013, the European Union agreed to ban three neonicotinoids for a two-year period. But the life of bees is not only what motivates legal action. In Canada, two of Ontario’s largest honey producers have filed a class action lawsuit against Bayer and Sygenta, companies that manufacture neonicotinoids. The lawsuit is concerned with saving bees only insofar as their longevity protects commercial profits. “Beekeepers have suffered, and will continue to suffer devastating economic hardships as a result of the continued used of Neonicotinoids,” reads their statement of claim.¹⁴ Canadian beekeepers are seeking damages of more than \$400 million dollars.

From the 1960s onwards, employment repertoires for bee workers have expanded. Bees, alongside other insects have drawn considerable interest and attention from scientists, the United Nations, and from American and Israeli military personnel. They have become workers, models, and prototypes to advance technologies of war. This is not entirely new. Insects, writes Jake Kosek, “have long been recruited and bred for military purposes.” Today, the honeybee is newly “enlisted in novel modes of material production in war.”¹⁵ Easily trainable. Sniffing explosives. Protecting soldiers. Defending western life. Bees have become central to military futures. The US Military has harnessed the long-admired properties of bees — their adaptability, industriousness, and cooperation — to assist in the detection of land mines and to advance other military projects. Expanding from military agendas, bee workers are now infiltrating civilian spaces. A UK biotechnology firm is using bees to locate explosives. In German airports, bees are mobilized to test air quality.¹⁶ Bees may not yet inhabit the frontlines of war, but that future might be nearer than we think.

12 United Nations Environmental Program, “Global Honey Bee Colony Disorders and other Threats to Insect Pollinators,” 2010.

13 Ibid.

14 Sun Parlor Honey Ltd., 1187607 Ontario Ltd. (Munro Honey), Bayer Cropscience Inc., Bayer Inc., and Sygenta Canada International. Ontario Superior Court, Court File CV-14-21208.

15 Jake Kosek, “Ecologies of Empire: On the New Uses of the Honeybee,” *Cultural Anthropology* 25:4, 2010, 655.

16 Abby Seif, “Bugging Out on Homeland Security,” *Popular Science* (March 7, 2007).

The juxtaposition between colony collapse disorder and the militarization of bees suggests that bee workers are valued as living and dying. While their longevity is central to pollination and to the future of crop-production, their expendability is what makes them so vital to military operations.¹⁷ The bee body is one that is clearly valued. Yet, it is not an agent comparable to other nonhuman animals. Through exploitation and appropriation, the bee has been mobilized to maximize the potential of human life. Notwithstanding our concerns over the death of bees, the bee body remains exploitable, killable, and disposable in ways unimaginable for most other life forms.

To date, US military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have relied primarily on canines for detection of landmines and explosives, and for surveillance. According to recent reports, dogs in the field suffer from high rates of posttraumatic stress disorder:

Like humans with the analogous disorder, different dogs show different symptoms [of PTSD]. Some become hyper-vigilant. Others avoid buildings or work areas that they had previously been comfortable in. Some undergo sharp changes in temperament, becoming unusually aggressive with their handlers, or clingy and timid. Most crucially, many stop doing the tasks they were trained to perform.¹⁸

Although the prevalence of PTSD among canines is still being debated, these reports have renewed discussions on the ethics of using dogs in war. Bees may offer a viable alternative. Their heightened sense of smell is easy to train. They are air-bound and will not set off explosives. Perhaps most importantly, we cannot relate to bees as we can to dogs. The death of bees does not incite the same ethical crisis over loss of life.

Bees have always been pollinators. Insects have been mobilized in tactics of war since antiquity.¹⁹ What has changed in the contemporary global moment is that the future of human life has become increasingly entangled with the maximization of bees as workers. Though their future as pollinators remains in question, their life and death is indispensable to human vitality and longevity. The death of bees via colony collapse disorder will not result in the death of humans. However, it will affect global food production. Agribusiness revenues and western diets are at stake. How are we to make sense of this all? Are colony collapse disorder and the death of bees symptomatic of

¹⁷ It is hard to know how many bees die in military training. According to one source, bees that are confined for testing experience high rates of mortality after 48 hours. Stephen Ornes, "Using Bees to Detect Bombs," *MIT Technology Review* (December 7, 2006).

¹⁸ James Dao, "After Duty, Dogs Suffer like Soldiers," in *The New York Times* (December 1, 2011).

¹⁹ Jeffrey A. Lockwood, *Six Legged Soldiers: Using Insects as Weapons of War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

a crisis in capitalism, one that Marx and Engels predicted in the nineteenth century?²⁰ Or is the appropriation and instrumentalization of bees for agribusiness and military purposes evidence of capitalism's expanding horizons? What might the life and death of bees tell us of the changing configurations of global capitalism? To address these questions, I turn to the materialism of Marx and Engels.

Metabolic Interaction ///

The fluctuating and oppositional entanglements between human and nonhuman life and death, signaled by the bee's competing roles as pollinator and military agent, demand new analytic tools and innovations. These include modes of reading philosophies, imagining ontologies, and practicing politics, all part of a larger project that I can only begin to gesture to here. Marx and Engels are central to my approach. Both have figured prominently, though inconsistently, in recent discussions on climate change and ecological crisis. As nineteenth century critics, their relevance to contemporary discussions has been contested.²¹ What I propose below is a *materialist* (re)turn to their writings, one that revolts against conventional readings.²² A materialist (re)reading of Marx and Engels foregrounds the interrelationality of human and nature in their work. More importantly, it invites reflections on the entanglements between bee and human life and death in the global expansion of capitalism.

Marx and Engels have long been regarded as the progenitors of historical materialism. However, Marx's materialist understandings of history, we should recall, was deeply shaped through his early engagements with Epicurus. While some readers have glossed this critical influence, others have insisted that Marx's historical materialism must engage with the other materialisms that run through his work.²³ The relation between history and nature, and the influences of Epicurean philosophy, can be traced in many of his sole authored and collaborative writings: "The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals," he wrote with Engels. "Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature."²⁴

20 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, New York: Penguin, 2002.

21 John Bellamy Foster offers a materialist reading of Marx in *Marx's Ecology: Materialism and Nature*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000. See also Brett Clark and John Bellamy Foster, "Marx's Ecology in the 21st Century," *World Review of Political Economy* 1:1 (March 2010), 142-156.

22 In the Preface to *The German Ideology*, and in response to the Young Hegelians, Marx and Engels write: "Let us revolt against this rule of concepts": Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, New York: Prometheus Books, 1998. The historical materialism of Marx has often been positioned against other materialisms. See Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2010, xvi.

23 Clark and Foster, "Marx's Ecology in the 21st Century," 144.

24 Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 283.

It is helpful for my discussion that Marx commented famously, albeit briefly, on the bee as worker. In *Capital: Volume I*, he describes labor as “a process between man and nature, a process by which man, through his own actions, mediates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature. He confronts the materials of nature as a force of nature.”²⁵ A few lines later, he writes:

We presuppose labor in a form in which it is an exclusively human characteristic. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of the weaver, and a bee would put many a human architect to shame by the construction of its honeycomb cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is that the architect builds the cell in his mind before he constructs it in wax.²⁶

Insect enthusiasts have read this passage in conflicting ways.²⁷ Jake Kosek reads Marx as “drawing the line between the human and non-human on the back of the bee,” which for him, signals the limits of historical materialism. In Timothy Mitchell’s account, Marx’s comments point to a more-than-human agency. “For Marx, individual capitalists are to be understood not as agents in their own right, but as those who personify the power of capital.”²⁸ My own interest centers on whether we might (re)read Marx and Engels materially, in ways that account for the entangled relations between human and bee workers. Is there a more-than-humanness that might be adumbrated in Marx’s claim: “We presuppose labor in a form in which it is an exclusively human characteristic”²⁹?

To be sure, Marx and Engels could not have foreshadowed the technological and scientific developments that have rendered distinctions between human and nonhuman life and death to be as inseparable as they are today. But there are suggestive insights in Marx that undermine the history-nature divide that has been thought to be so central to his work. Let me offer two brief examples. Marx characterized labor as a material activity through which humans transformed themselves and the natural world: “Labor is, first of all, a process between man and nature, a process by which man, through his own actions, mediates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature.”³⁰ Thus, for Marx, the relationship between humans and nature existed in an exchange of forces.

25 Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume I: A Critique of Political Economy*, New York: Penguin, 1976, 283.

26 *Ibid.*, 283-284.

27 Jake Kosek, “Ecologies of Empire: On the New Uses of the Honeybee,” 669; Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, 45; Hugh Raffles, *Insectopedia*, New York: Vintage Books, 2011, 409.

28 Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, 30.

29 Marx, *Capital: Volume I: A Critique of Political Economy*, 283.

30 *Ibid.*, 283.

Marx expanded his view on the circulating forces between humans and nature in the idea of “metabolic interaction,” a process that was not only evident in human labor but also in the natural world. The global expansion of capitalism in the nineteenth century generated social and ecological conditions that disrupted this exchange. The demands of capitalism, Marx argued, produced a higher concentration of workers in cities. This affected historical configurations of power and also carried serious ecological effects. The growth of urban industrial centers, he wrote, “disturbs the metabolic interaction between man and the earth, i.e., it prevents the return to the soil of its constituent elements consumed by man in the form of food and clothing; hence it hinders the operation of the eternal natural condition for the lasting fertility of the soil.”³¹

Capitalism’s insatiable appetite disrupted the metabolic interaction between humans and nature, increasing strains on both.³²

It is in this disjuncture between nature and capitalism that we might situate colony collapse disorder. Capitalism’s demands on what we have come to call nature have become so acute that they have required a series of interventions ranging from fertilizers to pesticides. Neonicotinoid insecticides, thought to be responsible for CCD, can be coated on seeds, poured into the soil, or sprayed on crops. Irrespective of application, they return us to the soil. Efforts to enhance and/or protect the soil, all in the interests of crop improvement and maximization, combined with the ongoing effects of environmental damage have produced a series of unintended consequences, including the decline of the honeybee. Efforts to counter these destructive effects — through the importation of foreign bees, for example — have only generated additional problems, most notably parasites.

The use of military bees in the detection of landmines also returns us to soil. Buried underground, the toxicity of landmines is responsible for soil depletion, rendering some regions of the world to be inhospitable to human and non-human life. Though Marx’s observations on soil centered on nineteenth century England, what history tells us is that colonial capitalism and imperial interventions have produced environmental hazards that are not equally distributed. According to UNICEF, the short-term and long-term effects of landmines are most evident in Africa, where “an estimated 37 million mines” are “embedded in the soil of at least 19 countries.”³³ As the global north expresses heightened concerns of colony collapse disorder, foreign bees, and western diets, capitalism and war have destroyed the

31 *Ibid.*, 637.

32 John Bellamy Foster has termed this “metabolic rift.” See Foster, *Marx’s Ecology*. See also Clark and Foster, “Marx’s Ecology in the 21st Century,” 145.

33 UNICEF, “Land-mines: A Deadly Inheritance,” on unicef.org.

metabolic interaction of human-nature, making parts of the Global South uninhabitable for human-nonhuman life forms.

But what of the bee? The bee as worker — in agricultural and military futures — may illuminate the contradictions of capitalism that Marx and Engels anticipated in the nineteenth century. At the same time, its expanded role in life and death might also signal the proliferation and expansion of capitalism's own metabolic power.

A Crisis of Capitalism? ///

What is at stake in thinking of labor as an interaction between bee and human? What might we achieve analytically and politically in thinking of the more-than-human not as a passive site of labor but as an active participant? The laboring bee is a lively source of labor that is critical to human longevity, as evidenced in agricultural, military, and technological futures. The life and death of bees — as pollinators, military agents, and biological-mechanical prototypes — has become increasingly entangled with human life. To be sure, these interrelations demand attention in their own right as a mode of rethinking relations between human-nature-politics. But bees, like soil, might also be a barometer for the metamorphosis of capitalism, its proliferating forces, and its devastating effects on human-nature ecologies and exchanges. Threats of colony collapse disorder — and more recently of foreign bee workers and their effects on indigenous bees — point to a series of cross-species interdependencies that are highly asymmetrical. Humans, Marx reminds us, do not exist outside or beyond the vitality of nature but in a changing “metabolic interaction” that is itself an effect of capitalism's expanding edges.³⁴

/// Published on December 23, 2014

34 Marx, *Capital: Volume I: A Critique of Political Economy*, 637.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

BY NICK AXEL

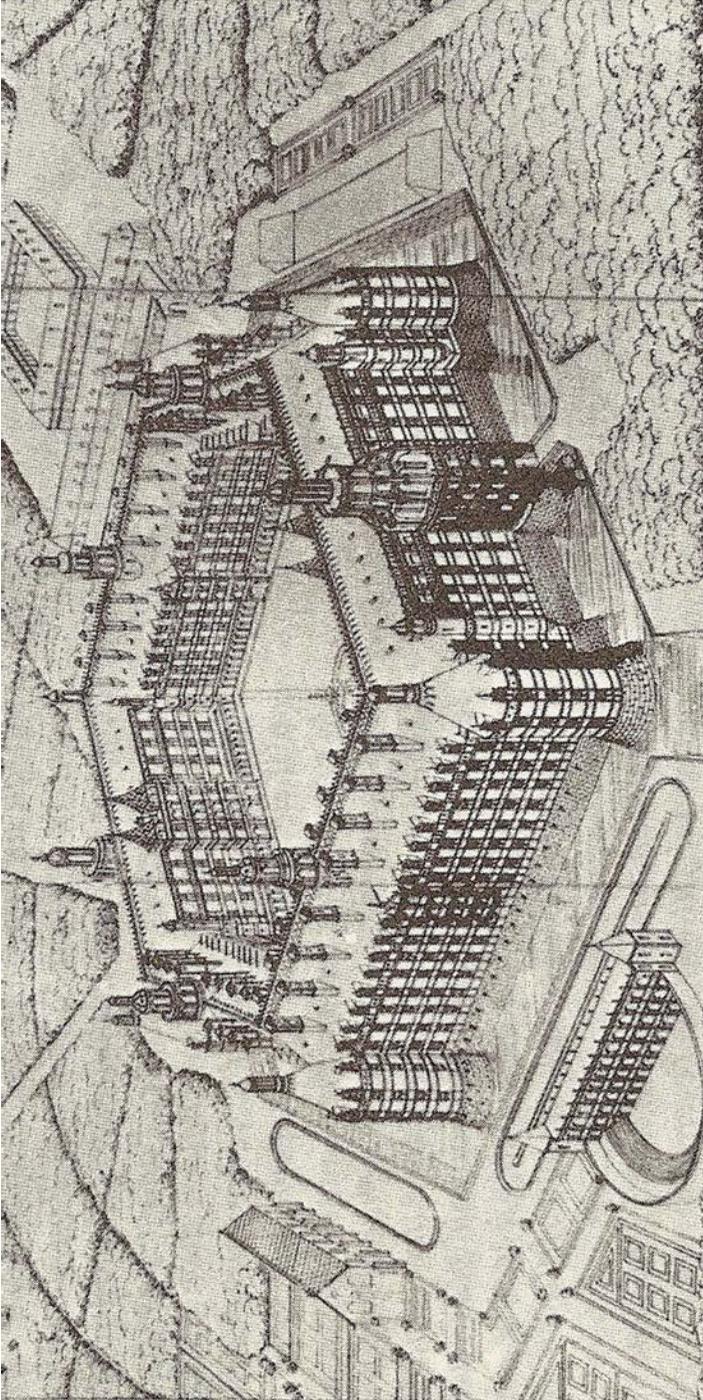
Fear Not the Violent Threat of Power ///

The philosophical discourse of biopolitics has led to a rediscovery of political agency inherent to the practice of architecture and the production of built form within an urban context. Its assimilation within contemporary architectural thought has largely been through its employment as a critical approach to ideology, colonization or war, ranging from Michel Foucault's disciplinary institutions to Eyal Weizman's states of control. Most famously polemicized in the first lines of Walter Benjamin's 1921 seminal essay "Critique of Violence," an ethics of life is posited as the dialectical opposite from the violence of power.¹

Finding this relation between ethics and violence highly troubled, mediated as it is through the actions of power, Benjamin went on to infamously propose the concept of divine violence and ultimately the awkward confrontation between rationality and religiosity. While this type of theological recourse for dialectical overcoming is highly problematic in addressing the contemporary global championing of capital and its neoliberal subjectivity, particularly in our purportedly atheistic age, what I believe to be of supreme value is his metaphysical dissection of violence that ultimately locates its origin not in the political bodies of his (or our) time, but in the institution (as a verb) of power itself. It is therefore plausible to see how the dialectic of (ethics | violence) has been transformed over the past century into the dialectic of (ethics | institution) or even (ethics | power). Despite the fact that what I am taking as my topic for the purpose of this essay may not even be a legitimate argument in Latin languages where the word *power* in English can be translated as two separate words and concepts, it is my intention to put forth an alternative conception of power; one that is not trapped within a negative subordination to violence, but which may in fact actually be capable of its subversion.²

1 "For a cause, however effective, becomes violent, in the precise sense of the word, only when it bears on moral issues." Walter Benjamin, *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, Peter Demetz (ed), Berlin: Schocken, 1986, 277.

2 For more about the two Latin translations of *power* see Léopold Lambert, "Power (Potentia) vs. Power (Potestas): The Story of a Joyful Typhoon," in *The Funambulist Pamphlets Volume 01: Spinoza*, Brooklyn: punctum books, 2013, 18-21.



Abbaye de Thélème / Print by Ch. Lenormand (1860)

Subversion is a concept that, despite its common usage within this discursive context, I believe is in need of a basic rearticulation. In medical terms, if the patient is sick, subversion seeks to address not the symptoms but its cause. If violence is that which we wish to rid our world of, we often look towards the body that inflicts it and seek to subvert that specific body, in its very life or its weapons. We do so under the belief that the body itself, in its agency, is the cause of the violence; not an arrest, but the legal body which engenders the event is thought of as the object to be subverted, in which the act either seeks to disable the right of the legal body to arrest or to destroy the legal body itself. This identification between agency and embodiment is highly problematic and ultimately jeopardizes emancipatory politics with its own 'good intentions.'

First of all, bodies are, as modern science has rightly taught us, surprisingly resilient and plastic, which leads us to the conclusion that if a legal weapon is abolished, such as the right to arrest, another functional instrument of oppressive violence would emerge to take its place, in a possibly more diffuse and intense form.³ Secondly, this first problematic could easily lead us to locate the problem of power (and the threat of violence) in the body itself, for which, taken to a logical extreme (from legal embodiments of power to the literal body of the Other), would result in the nihilistic will to subvert and destroy all life. Subversion is therefore an extremely slippery concept, one that has perhaps done more to hurt us than to help us, whose 'truth' occupies an incredibly narrow territory in between two fallacious interpretations that I believe are a graver threat to the future of subversive ambitions than the forces we are trying to rid ourselves of.

While it would not be difficult to cite historical and contemporary examples of certain legal or religious bodies that condone violence, rather than questioning the legitimacy of the violent event itself (the arrest), it may be more fruitful to question why those legal or religious bodies are instituted in the first place (order). I furthermore believe it would be quite naive to think that these institutions did not historically emerge for specific reasons that responded to real social, economic and political problematics of their time, and through their evolution, to this day continue to operate in social, economic and political modes that function positively and, as constituents of our lived reality, should not and cannot be ignored.

Conjecturally, if we were able to archaeologically identify the institution's legitimate reasons for being and then supplant these functions, would this not effectively make those embodiments of power obsolete? This is not to say, to take the stock market for example, if we were able to find a better way to make exorbitant amounts of

3 Jeffrey T. Nealon, *Foucault Beyond Foucault: Power and its Intensifications Since 1984*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

money for a select few, there would be no need for the stock market, but rather: if we could create an economic infrastructure (the stock market) that gives a greater existential reason for the existence of society (money, pleasure, value) while at the same time sustaining its continued existence (the circulation of capital), why would we need the stock market? If the market-as-it-is is viewed as the problem, perhaps the market-as-concept is the most powerful weapon we can use against it; fire, if it really is the problem, can, in fact, be fought with fire, particularly if what we add consumes oxygen and combustible material faster than the fire we are fighting.

Before moving on any farther, I feel it necessary to summarize my argument and its presuppositions up until this point. Violence has become endemic to the contemporary political order. Paradoxically, yet as can be witnessed in the contemporary fate of May 1968, a purely anti-approach to ethics, seeking either to abolish all violence or its embodied cause, is negative and reactionary, ultimately obstructing its own intentions with its own form taken to a logical extreme. Even though violence that has become endemic to contemporary institutions of power is radically contingent, these bodies of power came to be for arbitrary, yet real and (historically) legitimate reasons. But, importantly, the fact that power was embodied is not contingent, but is itself necessary. Echoing Walter Benjamin's insight into the legal function of nonviolent conflict resolution, we can take insight from the political theory of agonism's basic presupposition, the fundamental inerradicability of conflict, and view the essential function of politically embodied power as the resolution of conflict and the pacification of violence.⁴ Power is essential to mankind, and if power is the essence of what we may be fighting, we should not let ourselves be intimidated or distracted by its threat, and instead focus its contemporary manifestations, distinguishing between what is contingent and what is necessary.

The Differential Metaphysics of Power ///

At this point, we have reached the rudimentary conclusion that power is the only force that may be capable of subverting power, to which we should be strongly reminded of Foucault's preface to *Anti-Oe-*

⁴ Benjamin's theory of nonviolence also has an uncanny formal affinity to divine violence. We can read: "[nonviolence] never [applies] directly to the resolution of conflict between man and man, but only to matters concerning objects" (*Reflections*, 289), whereas divine violence is only violent insofar as it is "annihilating ... with regard to goods, right, life, and suchlike, never absolutely, with regard to the soul of the living" (*Reflections*, 297-298). The problem with this view, as I doubt any contemporary political institution would deny that this is their intention (or at the very least that their intention is opposite), is that while our juridical notions of violence have remained within a pre-modern disciplinary paradigm, violence and its consequences have become sub(lim)ated. What is at stake can be approached in two ways: to change the conception of violence, or to change the thing that conceives.

dipus where he states, “do not become enamored of power.”⁵ It is therefore necessary to delve further into the potential ways power can be instantiated in order to claim that the weapon of liberation will not merely become the new weapon of oppression after the subversive event has taken place. In this regard, we can turn to Benjamin once again and the historical development of his conceptual project undertaken by Giorgio Agamben in his *Homo Sacer* series.

While Agamben’s project began from a historical examination of the contemporary present and its origin in the trauma of the Holocaust, his recent work has dealt largely with premodern religious institutions, concluding in a detailed analysis of the medieval Christian subjectivity and its enigmatic case of Franciscanism. In an attempt to put forth a conception of power that transcends the particular historical contingencies of today’s neoliberal world order, and as such can potentially be used against it, he uses Benjamin’s aphoristic proposal of divine violence as a starting point from which he conducts an archaeological study of the metaphysics of power as it is subjectively constituted by the ontological forms of commandment, which Agamben terms “rule,” and law.⁶ To roughly paraphrase a profound wealth of research, the commandment holds power over the subject as the rule itself is recognized as legitimate within the act of transgression, whereas law can only hold power over the subject if the subject’s violation of the law is made transparent to the legal body. Furthermore, law has a direct identity with the punishment of its transgression, whereas the rule is fundamentally incongruous with any punishment that may be inflicted for its transgression.⁷ Formally speaking, rule is more totalizing than law, as its mere enunciation instantiates its power, but the rule paradoxically accepts transgression as an integral part of its contingent constitution, whereas law, to put it crudely, intends to eliminate the absolute possibility of its own transgression.⁸

It can therefore be declared that, despite the essential similarity between rule and law in how they both create an ethical framework for judgment through the institution of power, their metaphysical deploy-

5 Michel Foucault, “Preface,” in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (trans), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986, xi. See also Léopold Lambert, “Do Not Become Enamored of Power,” in *The Funambulist Pamphlets Volume 02: Foucault*, Brooklyn: punctum books, 2013, 27-29.

6 For a detailed explanation of the particular meaning and significance of the term “archaeology,” see Giorgio Agamben “The Form of the Commandment,” lecture at the European Graduate School, (January 31, 2012), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-9u0aMbGh8>.

7 “[The commandment] exists not as a criterion of judgment, but as a guideline for the actions of persons or communities who have to wrestle with it in solitude and, in exceptional cases, to take on themselves the responsibility of ignoring it.” Benjamin, *Reflections*, 298.

8 See Giorgio Agamben, *The Sacrament of Language: An Archaeology of the Oath*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011, 7.

ments are radically different, particularly in their association to violence. To put it succinctly, rule is not itself in any way directly related to violence, whereas law is fundamentally based on and constituted by violence. It is furthermore possible to invoke Benjamin once more at this point, in saying that law is structurally unable to annihilate law, but is merely capable of juxtaposing the former with the latter and forcing an awkward synthesis between the two, whereas violence has the capacity to destroy violence.⁹ Even though the rule is historically tied to religious subjectivity, I would propose that it is within the metaphysics of the rule that we may be able to make law, and its violence, obsolete. Furthermore, it is perhaps exactly in the problems that are associated with and inherent in this proposition and its historical affinity to religion that architecture can specifically be used as a subversive instrument.

For a variety of reasons, I do not feel like it is unfair to claim that we have effectively lost the basic faculty of faith in the religious sense of having belief in the legitimacy of a rule and following it as a guiding principle and foundation for one's life; religion has been made obsolescent by the law of the modern state and the global logics of capital. And yet, when we inhabit space and the architecture that structures it, we do not find ourselves oppressed by laws, but surrounded by rules. In response to the discourse of the Funambulist blog that regards the wall as a violent instrument, I would like to put forth a very elementary example to demonstrate the difference between law and rule as it relates to the power of the wall. If we walk up to a house and enter its door, we very well could have climbed through the window or cut a hole in the wall: there is no law threatening us with violence if we climb through the window, and if we were to break through the wall, law could be invoked, but only if the property was within the domain of a law that stipulated against the act and if the owner were to invoke legal apparatuses. If there is a winding path that leads from the street to the house, we could follow it, or we could cut across it and take the shortest route — even jumping the fence, if need be. Architecture therefore must first spatialize rules before it can be treated legally in terms of property. Moreover, architecture is the spatialization of rules that law can hold power over.

The question at this point is, if we have found our subversive power in the rule, what do we wish to subvert? The first step in answering this question is to pose another preliminary one, being, what is there that can be effectively subverted by the rule? The logical answer to this would be law, but in order to more successfully identify the object for subversion, we should look towards the law's causes and effects, more than the law itself. In an effort to avoid merely making the law more 'attuned' to our contemporary environment, the larger

⁹ See Benjamin's discussion of the correlation between legal and mythic violence in Benjamin, *Reflections*, 295-297.

philosophical notion of law should be invoked that encompasses the total structuring of life, ranging from the way we occupy our time throughout the day and the space within our city to the conceptions we have of our neighbors and the relations with our friends to what we desire and how we are fulfilled. It is important to keep in mind that these subversive acts work within the subjective milieu of that which is being subverted, and therefore will instinctively be apprehended in a cultivated manner as inefficient, slow, weird, ugly, inconvenient, or unpleasurable. But these are ultimately what the subversive act acts against: they are the dying breath of what we subvert, through which we may find that these reactions were concealing a world of other potential value, enjoyment, appreciation, care, or desire. It is perhaps even possible that if one were intrigued, convinced, or lured to look beyond those learned reflexes, one may find the place they are in more preferable to where they were before.

/// Published on June 24, 2013

OF ASSOCIATED MILIEUS

BY SARAH CHOUKAH

Recently as I was strolling through my neighborhood in Montreal, I came across a toy I saw that kids played with in the 1980s: the *Cozy Coupe* car with a bright yellow body and a red foot-powered chassis, a popular toy around that time. I remembered how the car's cockpit allowed interfacing with familiar surroundings while giving a first sense of leg-powered, seated motility outside the house.

In a contemporary videogame, by contrast, motility is delegated through the interface to avatars. One would be quick to think that the issue of delegation or that of the materiality of the interaction through the interface has gone from physical, bodily affect (represented by the 1980s *Cozy Coupe*, among other toys) to that of an increasingly dematerialized network of programmed bodies in games. But the transition can't be so easily reduced to this. For example, Ingmar Riedel-Kruse and his team at Stanford University have designed a new set of videogames, this time involving the use of living microorganisms instead of electronically programmed sprites or avatars.¹

This shift is also visible if we think of the main lines of industrial and research development that Westerners have experienced since World War I. The 20th century saw petroleum-based and synthetic polymers such as plastics and latex, change the means of transformation and transportation of goods and people. In contrast, 21st century biotechnologies promise to have a similar, if not greater, effect. Instead of printing out instructions on paper in the twentieth century, in the twenty-first century printing technologies promise the possibility of extruding living cells or entire organs in three dimensions. Parts of our bodies would be augmented with modular, replaceable sub-systems, a mix of hardware and software development techniques. Our homes, instead of depending on external sources of energy to sustain us, could start growing themselves into self-sustaining organisms of which we would be an integral part.

1 I.H. Riedel-Kruse, A.M. Chung, B. Dura, A.L. Hamilton, and B.C. Lee, "Design, Engineering and Utility of Biotic Games," *Lab on a Chip* 11:1, 2011, 14.



Prototype of the Paramedcum Gaming Arcad, a video game controlling microorganisms in real time / Developed at Genspace by Keith Comito and Oliver Medvedik (2013)

In areas such as energy and fuel engineering, health and medicine, manufacturing and environmental control, new production paradigms arise.² Applications and technologies can be grown and cultivated in addition to being manufactured. By tapping into the way energy transfers operate within organisms such as plants or colonies such as bacteria, it is hoped that the design of industrial production and consumption processes will better integrate with other types of life forms. In considering technology from a biological point of view, biological life itself is also considered as a kind of technology.

From Associated Milieus to Individual-Milieus Couplings ///

The point where biology and technology intersect, when we come to think about it, is hard to define. To better understand how life has become so valuable a means to different ends, we better look not at the transition from the non-organic to the organic as preferred building materials. Rather, inspired by Simondon, we could see both non-organic and organic components as different chemical and energetic phase transitions belonging in a wider spectrum. I'll argue that in the case of biomaterials just as in the case of silicon-based materials, at least two things emerge at once in their production: the material and the milieu in which it grows.

To get a better sense of these two terms, I will first turn to Gilbert Simondon's theory of individuation and one of his most well-known illustrations (which I refer to as the "brick example," 2005).³ I'll then expand on the idea that Simondon's notion of milieu is necessary for the development of both physical, living and machine systems. Simondon's philosophy can help mitigate the way we, as consumers, often value "finished" products over the processes that tend to their making. In doing away with a conception that would have technology to stand strictly as a set of means to predefined ends, we can be better attentive to the role milieus have in the formation of "end products."

I'll conclude with a few suggestions, namely that turning to this particular conception of milieu can help, in return, to better grasp its role in the shaping of our contemporary informational and biotechnological political economy.

Simondon refers to the example of the making and the molding of a clay brick to illustrate how such a technical operation can be used to explain individuation. He discusses the preparation of the clay at length to make the reader aware of its distinct material properties.

² For upcoming applications in these areas, visit the international Genetically Engineered Machine competition (iGEM) website, and look through the team projects at igem.org.

³ Gilbert Simondon, *L'individu et sa genèse psycho-biologique*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964.

The mold used to shape the clay is similarly discussed: the mold has to be prepared in a specific manner so it can give shape to the clay. Thus the molding of a clay brick involves not one but at least two distinct series of operations converging together: the abstract form of the matter (clay) is involved in its preparation just as the matter of the form (the mold) is crucial for the operation to succeed. For Simondon, what is involved in this kind of technical operation is the mediation, or the communication of two initially disparate domains of reality.

As matter and form get both in-formed into an invented structure, other disparate elements of reality also converge. The natural matter the brick maker utilizes and the forms invented in the double process I was discussing above also constitute what Simondon calls an *associated milieu*. In his book entitled *On the mode of existence of technical objects*, Simondon specifies pretty early on how technical objects undergo a process of individualization that is the “true condition of technical progress” (my loose translation):

The process of individualization is made possible by the recurrence of a cause (or feed-back) in a milieu that the technical being creates around himself and that conditions him just as he conditions the milieu. [...] The associated milieu mediates the relation between fabricated technical elements and the natural elements within which the technical being functions. [...] This associated milieu is the invented technical object's condition of existence.⁴

The two domains, natural and technical, are very difficult to separate from the onset. Technical form is also natural matter; natural matter also exhibits technical form to structure itself and function.

Similarly a biologist wishing to grow particular cells will have to order the ones appropriate for the kind of experiment he wishes to undertake. She will have to grow them in a liquid or gel medium, that is the broth, in liquid form or gel, which both nurtures and contains the growth of colonies of cells, bacteria or yeast for example. Its composition has to be controlled. This growing in medium will have to be done at certain temperatures and will take specific periods of time, just to mention a few of the initial conditions one would have to be confronted with if one wished to culture bacterial cells of some kind in a laboratory setting. In designing her experiments, the biologist has to create very specific environments for her cells to grow into and for enzymatic reactions to take place. We might say that both the clay brick maker and the biologist are never dealing with stable systems, but with *metastable ones*, systems where energy transfers can occur and form between two initially incompatible domains.

⁴ Gilbert Simondon, *Du mode d'existence des objets techniques*, Paris: Aubier, 1989, 57.

At another scale, a communication or mediation can happen between two initially incompatible domains of reality: what's outside of the culturing medium for the bacteria or the yeast does not matter to it, but it does to us. The biological medium itself is essential for this organism's survival, just like clean air (with a certain kind of composition) is essential for us humans to survive. Through the molecular reactions and chain alignments involved in the preparation of clay and liquid medium for cells, both the biologist and the brick maker get introduced to the reality of the technical and biological objects they individuate through their experiments. The clay brick and the prepared cells become milieus for further experiments as well: the construction of a wall or building of some kind (which involves countless other operations), and the completion of an experimental protocol in molecular biology for instance. We can say that technological as well as biotechnological domains of reality constantly involve not one but many milieus and technical objects co-existing together, one being the condition of existence of another.

Without their culturing media the organisms cannot support themselves. Badly maintained media lead to badly maintained cultures: the lab technician will have to reconsider his whole experiment. Carelessly prepared clay leads to an unstable blend, a poorly executed brick and therefore a poorly executed building. Experiments are perturbed and life is again at stake, as contamination can easily happen.

We could say that in general, just as media and organism go together, a third entity, the contaminant or the parasite, is also a constant eventuality. As the life system is metastable, it stays that way. Once some life problems get solved in a certain form or another (say a particular configuration of organs or proteins, or the stabilization of certain properties in design materials), others appear. The only kind of system that cannot further transform itself, or can do without confronting more problems, according to Simondon, is a dead system.

A microclimate like the one cells grow in offers us the opportunity to see their embedding in the wider milieus they are connected with. Bacterial communities individuate and proliferate in their media, but they're also media for other kinds of biological processes and enzymatic outcomes. A milieu and the individual it supports can thus be understood in its ability to foster other kinds of milieus, to coexist in relation to other climates where individuals, also borne out with and through their milieus, might eventually communicate and inform each other. If we extend this idea to physiological and psychological levels of being, we can observe that with a particular type of activity or culturing practice comes a particular kind of human being, or more specifically, a practitioner.

Simondon's ontology primarily relies on trying to understand how certain types of energy transfers (known as transductions) inform systems that would not have communicated together before an initial gap or signifying difference would have thrown them together into an individuation process. That is, a process resulting into both an individual and its milieu. For Simondon, systems resulting into individuals and milieus can still contain enough potential (Simondon calls it "pre-individuality") to provoke more individuations: an individual then undergoes "dephasing" and becomes by communicating with a different domain of reality. One milieu-individual coupling is the field of individuation of another future individual.

Basing ourselves on Simondon's philosophy, we can come to observe that an individual body is continuously informed by the associated milieu it derives from in its emergence. A body cannot be so easily understood when cut off from its milieu. For Simondon, a body would be akin to an individual that is always understood as a "relation of relations."⁵ In other words, even in order to start understanding what "a body can do," one has to look at the way a body's initial medium of emergence gets individuated, Simondon would write, into this milieu and its individuality.

The Politics of Milieus ///

As we try to examine our contemporary political economy in light of the notion of milieus, we can see how Simondon's philosophical relevance allows us to emphasize certain reconfigurations. Along with the sophistication and increasing interdependence of contemporary modes of industrial production comes the necessity to value products as well as the means and modes of their making. The potential for biotechnology to make bodies and organisms grow and proliferate is also understood in its basis as a power to make and stabilize specific milieus. Biotechnology is not a mode of intervention or action set apart from politics: it constantly participates in reconfigurations corresponding to current commodities, subjectivities and discourses as much as other technologies.

Similarly, biotechnology can help us locate specific zones of subjective and collective politicizations. Considerations pertaining to who is allowed to foster individual-milieu couplings and what kinds of bodies are allowed to proliferate are not politically neutral. With certain technological and biotechnological practices come certain configurations of power, but the locus of that power and its forms are not set in stone. They are also as metastable as the associated milieus and the individuals they inform.

⁵ Muriel Combes, "Une vie à naître," in Pascal Chabot (ed), *Simondon*, Paris: Vrin, 2002, 39.

With developments in the genetic modification of food emerged forms of resistance to its perceived irreparable consequences. Heirloom seeds are being rediscovered in ancestral attics and regain value; urban farms sprout in cities with the debated promise of immune, well-lived consumption and life. Organic farming techniques and practices have been reconfigured as alternatives to an agro-industrial, mass-scaled and controlled offer. Their respective promises and shortcomings are still the topic of prolonged concern and debate.

Within more general concerns about genetic engineering and modification, questions abound: how are certain transformed bodies and milieu couplings (genetically modified seeds for example) affecting others? What kinds of successive effects emerge from the prolonged ingestion and internal culturing of specific outside couplings within human and animal organisms? What about the countless toxins, waste products and byproducts released through contemporary industrial modes of animal farming? Perhaps what bothers us and equally surprises us is how they are increasingly addressed as the milieus of hybrid, biotechnological processes of selection and transformation of animals. The successive couplings they foster at numerous scales (environmental degradation, cellular mutation) also concerns us.

Practices of “Do-it-yourself” biology (DIYbio) have also emerged since 2009. In few and certainly reductive words, DIYbio can be considered a potential reconfiguration of previous ways of doing and talking about biology outside of established institutions and private laboratories. Motivations to get into DIYbiology can also stem from a wish to avoid constraints as they are commonly found within the practice of contemporary molecular biology and synthetic biology (patents and non-disclosure agreements, for example). Collective proposals for the sharing of scientific knowledge and practices centered on the growing and culturing of cells for experimentation outside of private academic biotech centers surface in the form of biotech community labs. With other collective experiments such as community supported agriculture and the recent re-popularization of diverse fermentation and conservation processes (brewing and canning for instance), comes an interrogation, among others, on the very nature and specificity of milieu-making and its politics. What these practices express and emphasize is the nature of our intricacy and relation to our milieus, as well as how our inherent caring for certain milieus can be seen as way to constitute ourselves.

These numerous instances of politicization reveal more than the polarization around either of two extremes that consider biotechnology as inherently good or bad in public debate. What they tell us about is how inherent problems such as atomic or microscale processes of intervention and engagement can pose for contemporary subjectivi-

ties as well. For Simondon, such different scales of reality (the micro-scale of enzymatic reactions and, in contrast, the macro-scale of individual and collective life and psychology, for example) have deep relations with each other that get worked out through processes of “transduction” and “individuation.” Very quickly explained, transduction refers to the successive structuration of a domain or scale (or phase) of reality after another, or the way energy exchanges operating in a domain of reality also structure one another. Individuation is the overall process that tends to the information of both an individual and its milieu or associated milieu.

A Simondonian view on the relational aspect of individuation can certainly help in complicating issues concerning the well-being and modes of life the living can afford in diverse milieus, just as these milieus in turn inform the living. The perceived danger of an environmental or a human catastrophe after the incidental or voluntary release of a pathogen is one of the ways these configurations translate into different perceived effects of a break of isolation from an associated milieu. This both makes milieus as well as issues of practice, making, process and technology the objects of a continuous interrogation into what makes us come together as individuals and bodies, as well as participants, in different kinds of cultures. It is in this sense, Simondon would say, that the possibility of psychic and collective individuation offers itself to us.

/// Published on November 30, 2013

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~~FJORD~~ AND //DESERT// BODIES ~~LEAKING~~ AND //CONTAINED// BODIES

BY ANDREAS PHILIPPOPOULOS-MIHALOPOULOS

My fascination with Norway began early on, before I ever visited the country. Admittedly, it had little to do with the country itself, and its focus was exclusively cartographic. I spent hours musing over the map with a concentration frissoning through my very body and making my skin tingle. The reason? To my eyes, Norway looked like a human arm that was being slowly, painfully but pleurably gnawed by the incoming fjords. Its coast emerges like a moth-eaten lace, with its play of blue and yellow that defies the usual clean-cut depiction of cartographic boundaries. I would then compare Norway's coast to the line that separates Algeria from Mauritania and Mali, a straight, brutal, metallic line cutting the desert in two arbitrary sides. There, my feeling would be one of cleanliness and purity but also incomprehension, suspicion even at how straight it was. And I would return to the intricacy of the coast. I was 6 years old.

142

This fascination has not left me, but I now understand it better. First of all, it would seem that these different ends of the spectrum work together. Not in some sort of Hegelian dialectics that cannot wait for their synthesis, nor in the positive/negative understanding of mutual constitution. Saharan desert and Norwegian sea operate on the same cartographic continuum, each one a desire to spread out one's body differently. Each spread is a way of affecting and being affected by other bodies. Each spread captured my eye and my fingers, tracing the lines that were thrown into relief merely by their black ink. I now understand that my cartographic fascination was double: on the one hand, the need for knowing with certainty oneself and specifically one's limits; and on the other, the assemblage-spread of a body that comes along with other bodies. The latter is what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari call *haecceity*, a body's "relations of movement and rest between molecules or particles, capacities to affect and be



Swedish fjords vs. Saharian desert / Google Earth

affected.”¹ Haecceity opposes standard conceptions of identity and reinterprets them as difference. It plays with the blue of the sea and the yellow of the land. This smudged sort of identity is a funambulist perilously balancing on the straight black line across the Sahara.

The Norwegian body is one that neither ends nor begins. Liminality at its most luminous, the coast bases its Escher-like structure in a simple but indisputable fact: a fjord is not the open sea. It is an incubation of water within the land, a tellurian hug strengthened by gentle lapping across glacier eras. It is an invitation by the land extended to the water. At the same time, it is an aquatic invasion that slowly but surely eats up the entrails of the inner lands. On the prime-coloured, spreadable map of my childhood, attempts to keep land and water separately were not always successful: there were stretches where the fjord was turning a little too abruptly in, or the land was protruding too much out in the blue, so that the black typographic outline could no longer follow faithfully the interlacing and the colours would bleed into each other in a sort of myopic double-take. These were the bodies I knew existed all around me: a body was always a continuum with space. No line clearly separating this side from that. No desert to split, only a continuum to dive in and out. And there were other continua: space as a continuum, and the bodies leaking into their surrounding space also connected with folds of space opening away from them, seemingly unrelated to their skin, their beliefs, or their physical functions. Henri Lefebvre has been writing on how bodies produce space: “each living body is space and has its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space.”² Bodies and space are not found in a relation of foreground/background but fully folded to the extent that, ontologically, bodies are space and vice versa. I knew that, although I could not cite Lefebvre.

And then there were the Saharan desert bodies. Strong, bounded, contained, closed, certain about their limits, secure in their contours. These were bodies brimming with a self-aggrandising sense of identity and filled with a certainty of emplacement as of right. They belonged squarely within their body-contours, accepting as unintended but not unwelcomed consequences the displacement they caused and their radiating connection to all the space they colonised just by being there, secure in their all-thematising presence. These bodies were bodies to aspire to, solar strongholds of solidity. They were also bodies to dislike because of their strong positioning, their unyielding lines. I was being suspicious of them while pining for them. I even wanted to become one of these bodies myself. This is the way I was brought up: seeking a solid identity, defining oneself against the

1 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia II*, Brian Massumi (trans), London: Athlone Press, 1988, 262.

2 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Donald Nicholson-Smith (trans), London: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991, 170.

world without constantly thinking of who or what might question my contours. I am a child of identity politics.

But one forgets that there are always fjords seeping in like somnolent underground waters and eventually corrupting any linearity. A body is not a neatly defined, contour-bound entity. The body is not defined by its outline. If they were a painting, bodies would be Venetian sprawls of colour without drawn boundaries, staging through their expansive leaking a radical withdrawal from the Florentine canon of humanist containment. Deleuze writes

the edge of the forest is a limit. Does this mean that the forest is defined by its outline? [...] We can't even specify the precise moment at which there is no more forest.³

All bodies are leaking. By 'all bodies,' I mean human and nonhuman. While usually, whenever included, nonhuman bodies are either resource, context or the negative of the dialectics of humanity, the conceptualisation of bodies has now expanded to include human and nonhuman, geological and psychological, animal and vegetal bodies. This is what the schools of thought largely identified as new materialisms, non-representational theory, speculative realism and object-oriented ontologies maintain, themselves generally drawing from a Spinozan/Deleuzian understanding of the body.⁴ Thus, for Deleuze "a body can be anything: it can be an animal, a body of sounds, a mind or idea; it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity."⁵ What is more, all bodies are assemblages, namely aggregations of human and nonhuman bodies that are contingent upon the conditions of their emergence and that do not presuppose the centrality, and certainly not the exclusive presence, of the human. Bodies are both actual, namely space and matter, and virtual, namely potential but still real. Actual and virtual are not found in a dialectical opposition; nor does the actual determine the virtual.⁶ Rather, there is no ontological distinction between the two, and if anything, the actual is determined in its folding with the virtual. Each body has a spatiality and materiality that is both, schematically speaking, its own (actual), and part of the wider continuum with other bodies (virtual).

3 Gilles Deleuze, "Cours Vincennes: Sur Spinoza, 17.02.1981," trans. Léopold Lambert, in Léopold Lambert, "A Sunflower Seed Lost in a Wall is Capable of Shattering that Wall," in *The Funambulist Pamphlets, Vol. 01: Spinoza*, Brooklyn, punctum books, 2013, 73-75.

4 Diana Coole, and Samantha Frost (eds), *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2010; Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2010; Nigel Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory: Space | Politics | Affect*, London: Routledge, 2007.

5 Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, Robert Hurley (trans), San Francisco, City Light Books, 1988, 127.

6 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberiam (trans), London: Athlone Press, 1986.

Bodies are properly speaking geophilosophical, namely spatial and temporal, part of the great earth continuum yet individually different to each other.⁷

How does a body differentiate itself from its continuum with space and other bodies? For, is this not at least one definition of identity, namely to become an identifiable, recognisable, contoured-body? Let us take a step back and see the whole map continuum. What I am looking for is not the continuum but its assemblage. See how it is constantly ruptured? Cartography is a continuum of ruptures, and rupture is the locus of corporeal singularity. Ruptures can be Deleuzian folds, namely co-emerging assemblages, and therefore ontological differentiations. Or they can be relatively arbitrary distinctions between an interior and an exterior, and therefore epistemological differentiations, such as the Saharan desert boundaries.⁸ They can also be necessities, such as the withdrawing sea from the land; or an effect of political and legal strategising, such as the cutting possibility of a new state. Whatever they are, they are part of the continuum, constituting it in difference. The continuum of bodies is always ruptured by distinctions on its surface.

Ruptures are the locus of singularity in the continuum. Through ruptures, bodies differentiate themselves from other bodies. Ruptures are the outcome of withdrawal. Every body withdraws from other bodies and from their space. Even haecceity, that most connected of states, needs withdrawal in order to come forth, and bodies need to withdraw from connections as much as they need leakages and smudges. In his work on Bruno Latour, Graham Harman writes: “objects are not defined by their relations: instead they are what enter into relations in the first place. Objects enter relations but withdraw from them as well; objects are built of components but exceed those components. Things exist, not in relations but in a strange sort of vacuum from which they only partly emerge into relation.”⁹ I understand objects and bodies as synonymous yet coming from slightly different theoretical trajectories.

On that basis, and replacing objects with bodies in the above quote, bodies are at the same time assemblages of other bodies, part of assemblages with other bodies, and withdrawn from every relation. Withdrawal is ontological: every body is a closed, autopoietic system that withdraws from full openness, connectivity or exteriority, and into a monadic singularity that is gathered around its autopoiesis, its self-

7 Mark Bonta, and John Protevi, *Deleuze and Geophilosophy: A Guide and Glossary*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004.

8 Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, *Spatial Justice: Bodies, Lawscape, Atmosphere*, London: Routledge, 2014.

9 Graham Harman, *Prince of Networks: Bruno Latour and Metaphysics*, Melbourne: re.press 2009, 132.

perpetuation, its conative desire.¹⁰ Its openness rests on its closure. Its connection with the exterior takes place only through the systemic interior. Assemblaging does not take place in an exterior but in a fractalised interior. Withdrawal is taken inside the body, takes place from within the body, and ultimately becomes self-withdrawal. Assemblage rests on withdrawal. The world is what each body makes of it. But this is not relativism or subjectivism. The world withdraws as much as the body withdraws. “Nothing ‘points’ toward anything else or bleeds into anything else. Everything withdraws into itself.”¹¹

The commonality of withdrawal is, therefore, the main tool of differentiation between bodies. The continuum is not threatened by this — on the contrary, precisely because the continuum is a series of ruptures, ruptures do not rupture the continuum as such: they are all inscribed within. So, the continuum is crossed by lines that produce meaning, while continuously being ruptured by them. In her seminal work on the body, Lisa Blackman has called this the problem of ‘the one and the many,’ namely the ontological difficulty of being coherent yet multiple, in other words, self yet othering.¹² The main challenge is how to avoid categorising either of these as inferior, namely how to escape the trap of mapping the continuum and the rupture “onto differentiations made between the civilized and the primitive, the superior and the inferior, the simple and the complex, and the impulsive and the environmental.”¹³ Indeed, how not to make rupture and continuum a dialectic of opposites, namely a question of positive presence and negative absence, but a co-emergence.

This is not an easy struggle. But it is a common struggle. It is the struggle of each and every body that attempts to define itself without losing its continuum with other bodies. It is a struggle of survival that often dictates political cut-offs or atmospherics of illusionary comfort while conflict rages outside. At the same time, it is a question of retaining the responsibility of the continuum, and the constant questioning of one’s spatio-corporeal boundaries. It is a question of retaining both a Saharan and a Norwegian spread of one’s body on the map.

/// Published exclusively in this volume

10 Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, *Niklas Luhmann: Law, Justice, Society*, London: Routledge, 2009, and Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*.

11 Harman, *Prince of Networks*, 113.

12 Lisa Blackman, *Immaterial Bodies*, London: Sage, 2012

13 *Ibid.*, 59.

DRESS BECOMES BODY: FASHIONING THE FORCE OF FORM

BY ERIN MANNING

*My intention is not to make clothes.*¹
Rei Kawakubo

Some shapes hold things apart
Madeline Gins

“Cut to invent anew,” proposes Rei Kawakubo, owner and designer of the fashion label *Comme des Garçons*. “Make an abstract image.” “Break the idea of clothes.”

“Break the idea of clothes,” has been Kawakubo’s call for over 40 years, a call that has motivated the creation of some of the most intriguing clothing of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, opening up the field of fashion to an architectural potential perhaps unprecedented. With Kawakubo’s insistence that clothes are not a predetermined category, but a proposition according to which a body is invited to continuously reinvent itself, she has led the way toward a textile-based architecting of experience. In this regard, Kawakubo has pushed and continues to push the Spinozist mantra “we know not what a body can do” to its limit, recasting not only the realm of fashion but the way fashion situates itself in relation to other practices, especially that of architecture.²

That Kawakubo’s creations are sculptural is well-known, but they are also more than that. They are what Madeline Gins and Arakawa would call *procedural* architectures. Procedural architectures are propositional: it is *what they can do* that is foregrounded. To say that fashion is architectural is often to speak of it in representational terms. Despite the visible architectonics of Kawakubo’s designs, to focus solely on their form would be reductive: Kawakubo’s textile creations function architecturally in ways that far exceed representation.

¹ Interview with Rei Kawakubo on *wwd.com* (November 19, 2012)

² Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, Edwin Curley (trans), New York: Penguin Classics, 2005.



They are productive. It is in this sense that they are procedural. Arakawa and Gins define procedural architectures as “overlapping tissues of density.” Architecture understood this way must be considered beyond the built environment. Procedural architecture is “a world-constituting procedure.”³ It builds worlds more so than buildings, its mandate to directly cleave the biosphere, or, in Arakawa and Gins’ vocabulary “to bioscleave.” This bioscleave procedural architecture fashions never stops cleaving. It is an active, procedural milieu that remains in-act as a persistent reminder that what sites life also cleaves the environment, opening it to its differential. Cleaving cuts open the field of experience. This cut has the effect of reorienting the field: the cleave, like decision in Whitehead, is the decisional force which activates, which tweaks the in-act toward the punctual creation of life-living.

A procedural approach depends on the rigour of the proposition that sets it in motion. An architecture is procedural if it is capable of opening up a field of relation or an emergent ecology such that it can activate the conditions for the continued interplay that keeps life in the process of self-invention. Most architectures, Arakawa and Gins argue, do anything but, deintensifying life rather than opening it to its potential difference. We follow their routes, we embrace their limits, and in so doing our lives become predictably oriented by them. What if instead we built toward the density of experience, beginning not with form but with textures of life-living, embracing the force of form that is the lively interstice of environment and body? What if instead of assuming that the built environment contained the pre-constituted body, we interested ourselves in the amalgam of their co-constitution?

The challenge is that the procedures of a procedural architecture must continuously be reinvented to stay apace with the architecting of experience. No procedure is failsafe, nor does one procedure work in all similar circumstances. A procedure must be crafted with care, must be relevant to the conditions already at hand, must be capable of activating the ecology of which it is part, must have enough longevity to leave a trace. More procedures fail than succeed. But this is part of their necessity, that they put us in the way of experimentation. A procedure is always connected to a constraint. At its best, this constraint is enabling. It asks of habit that it activate its conditions of possibility. From here, the procedure pushes possibility to its limit, excavating at the edges where possibility and potential meet. This is where the procedure most often fails: habits die hard, including our habits of reconstructing the already-known. A procedural architecting will not be capable of opening up the field of experience if the manner of opening contains the habit fully-formed. What is essen-

3 Madeline Gins and Arakawa, “Biotopological Diagramming, A New Procedure/Method for Staying Alive Indefinitely,” in *Alive Forever, Not If, But When* (unpublished manuscript).

tial is to work from the habit's edging into experience, experimenting with the ways a habit's repetition activates minor departures from the norm, keeping in mind that the only habit which holds on absolutely to its form is the habit of reducing experience to the *what was*.

With the work of Rei Kawakubo, I want to explore how procedural architecture activates minor gestures within fashion. Where the proposition, following Whitehead, is the lure that gets a process on its way, and the minor gesture is the activating force in the field of relation of the work's working, the procedural is the following-through of a set of conditions toward repeatable difference. The procedural, as Arakawa and Gins define it, is what gives the minor gesture consistency without allying it to precomposed models of formation. For the procedural is not a set of instructions. While instructions are usually organized according to a linear set, the procedure is more diagrammatic, in the Deleuzo-Guattarian sense: it activates zones of intensity in fields of relation and directs a follow-through that reintensifies at every turn. Where instructions are reiterable in their form and content, producing not difference but repetition of the same, the procedure does quite the opposite: it sets a path in motion that asks to be returned to, toward different results. "Let the word 'procedure' stand for that which baffles us as to what it is even as it brings us world."⁴

Enabling Constraints ///

In the everyday, habit operates as a choreographic tool. It directs our movement, organizes our time, makes experience predictable, framing it in ways that are usually associated with comfort and well-being, two concepts that make Arakawa and Gins highly suspicious. For well-being and comfort too often keep us in the same place, a place we return to daily without much thought, a place that doesn't encourage experimentation. This place, framed as it is by the architectures that surround us, is anything but procedural, they argue.

Despite the focus in Arakawa and Gins' work on the necessity to break habit, to open experience to invention and surprise, there is nonetheless in their work an attentiveness to *what else* habit can do. For habit, as both Arakawa and Gins and Kawakubo recognize, is a mutable force. Habit directs our movements, even while it constrains other tendencies. These other tendencies, constrained as they are, can be said to still be operative in germ at the heart of habit. The challenge is to make these minor tendencies operational, thereby opening habit to its subtle multiplicity and exposing the fact that habit was never quite as stable as it seemed.

In the creating of conditions for new modes of existence, in the crafting of a procedural architecture, habit should therefore not be fully

⁴ Ibid.

discarded. A procedural architecting must look at habit's repetitive pathways to see how they subtly diverge from what is perceived as their assigned choreography, finding within repetition the difference that keeps habit inventive. This difference, alive as it is with minor tendencies that keep habit from ever fully reproducing itself, is what procedural architectures make operative. As world-constituting procedures, procedural architecture works from these minor tendencies to extend experience to its full potential.

This is another way of saying that what architectural procedures do, before they create architectures, is create modes of existence. Modes of existence as Etienne Souriau defines them, are not states but passages.⁵ They are the transitory and fragile interstices of experience in the making.

Modes of existence neither emerge from nor belong to a subject. They do not define existence: they propose it. On a continuum with the Whiteheadian actual occasion, modes of existence are ecologies that activate a field of concern. This concern is active in the event itself, a concern for the world in its unfolding.

Modes of existence are less species than speciations, where speciation is understood as an emergent field of relation. They are speciations because they don't name a state, but activate a modality that pushes existence to its intensive limit. They are speciations because they don't fit into existence preformed but activate the minor gestures of its most potentializing edgings into experience. As such they are ecologies, ecologies that activate differential tendencies in the milieu of their co-composition. Modes of existence act, cut, reorient: they are world-constituting procedures.

Modes of existence are precarious. They emerge as they are needed and then, like actual occasions, they perish. It is not their stability that defines them, but the persuasiveness with which they affect all that comes into contact with them. This persuasiveness is what makes them compelling. It is an active participant in the event of their coming-to-be.

Modes of existence come into being through enabling constraints. They emerge out of a necessity that has a procedural tending. This necessity is enabling in the sense that it provokes new forms of process, but constrained in the sense that it occurs according to the limits of this singular junction. Each time a mode of existence comes into being, it does so "just this way," in direct accord with how the constraint was enabling in this singular set of conditions. And yet, *just this way* is always, like habit, open to deviation. Minor tendencies are everywhere present in all modes of existence.

⁵ Etienne Souriau, *Les Différents modes d'existence suivi de L'œuvre à faire*, Isabelle Stengers and Bruno Latour (eds), Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009.

For Rei Kawakubo, crafting enabling constraints for each new process is key to the techniques that make up her procedural architecting of experience. Kawakubo does emphasize the creative necessity of an open field for experimentation, but there is always focused attention in her practice to the quality of the constraints that delimit it. Her practice involves continuously experimenting with constraints she sets in place to see where else the process can lead, not only as regards the potential of the fabric she works with, but also with respect to the very tissues of density she takes as her matter of concern. For Kawakubo as for Arakawa and Gins, what is at stake is not simply the form the product takes. What matters is how the constraint embedded in the procedure becomes enabling of new processes.



Comme des Garçons SS 1997

Body and environment are for Kawakubo complicit partners in the reorientation of what textile can do. They are her palate. But neither are predefined, and importantly, she does not pretend to know, from one process to another, where the details of their co-composition will lead her: each new process requires a new enquiry into the body-environment constellation. With this as the directive that drives her practice, Kawakubo invests in the field of relation, the orientation of her practice always transdisciplinary. In the ecology of practices, she then requires that her process be invented each time anew through an emergent activation situated in the event of creation itself.

Kawakubo emphasizes that the intuitive problem, the problem that opens experience rather than seeking solutions, cannot be searched

out from beyond the bounds of a given process, cannot be found in a world preconstituted. She writes: "Going around museums and galleries, seeing films, talking to people, seeing new shops, looking at silly magazines, taking an interest in the activities of people in the street, looking at art, travelling: all these things are not useful, all these things do not help me, do not give me any direct stimulation to help my search for something new. And neither does [the] fashion history. The reason for that is that all these things above already exist."⁶ Kawakubo is not inspired by the already existent configurations that make up our worlds. She wants to create at their interstice, in their coming-to-be: "In order to make this SS14 collection, I wanted to change the usual route within my head. I tried to look at everything I look at in a different way. I thought a way to do this was to start out with the intention of not even trying to make clothes. I tried to think and feel and see as if I wasn't making clothes."⁷ The enabling constraint here is clear: to work from the perspective of a new way of seeing. The intuition will emerge in the process, creating the problem in the art of time if Kawakubo doesn't assume she already knows what fashion can do.

For Kawakubo, what is at stake is the making itself, not the making of the object. The object does not define the purpose, and cannot be subsumed to it. What she strives toward is to create a series of enabling constraints for each process that, in the 'best case' scenario, are procedural enough to create new modes of existence. Hers is a procedural fashioning: for each new process she invents procedures that push the very idea of what a garment can be to its limit. Kawakubo seeks not the final form, not the production of a neutral layer for a pre-existing body, but the creation of a propositional field that activates what a body can do in its co-constitution with an emergent environment.

This process of engaging with the working of the work is what Souriau calls "faire oeuvre." Like the mode of existence, which composes in the between of existence's necessity, or existence's persuasiveness, the *oeuvre à faire* is the force of making that only knows itself as such after the fact, in the tense of "Oh! This is what I was looking for!"⁸ The not-knowing-in-advance is part of the procedure. For knowing is always to some degree reducible to the already-known. Habit will play a part in the process, but it must be procedurally tweaked. What emerges from the process must push the habit to its limit. The habitual carries within itself a certain degree of belief. The ecology of practices that is fashion believes, for instance, that it makes sense that a dress follow the shape of what we perceive as our body-en-

6 "Rei Kawakubo's Creative Manifesto," *Business of Fashion* (October 30, 2013), <http://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/bof-exclusive/rei-kawakubo-comme-des-garcons>.

7 Ibid.

8 Souriau, *Les Différents modes d'existence suivi de L'oeuvre à faire*, 109.

velope. This, we have come to learn, is how to clothe a body. We know, of course, that there have been other habits within fashion that have involved cutting cloth in ways that accentuate parts of the body in ways that are today unimaginable.⁹ We know that historically, the body-envelope has shifted in its proportions and emphases. We know that, despite the growing homogeneity of fashion across cultures, there remain cultural differences in regard to cuts, fabrics and habits of dressing. But nonetheless we tend to dwell within the realm of the imaginable.

Certainly a quota of the unimaginable continues to grace the seasonal fashion runways. But this is the crux: that the unimaginable is only to be paraded, not really to be worn—note that the bustle has not yet come back into fashion despite Yamamoto's and Kawakubo's best efforts! This is not to deny that each season does bring something new, and that we as consumer tend to welcome seasonal shifts in fashion. Sure, we collectively say: Lengthen and accentuate the leg with low-waisted skinny jeans! Put everyone in maternity clothes for a summer! And then, the next year: Widen the pant to accentuate the waist! Despite the normative directions of fashion's operations — retain the proportion between waist, breast and hip! — mutability does have its place. As long as its tendencies are relative to what came before, fashion's variations are generally accepted and even welcomed.

But these are not examples of the unimaginable. They are simply small deviations from the norm. Within most contemporary fashion, difference remains relative to what came before. While change is an option, the commitment to difference tends to be constrained to possibility: difference rarely engages with true potential, with the unimaginable not-yet. This allows fashion to plan itself long in advance (designers tend to work up to two seasons ahead), holding creativity within a relatively predictable frame. We might see a change in colour, or a change in cut, but we will rarely be introduced to a completely different paradigm. The tweaking of the habit thus still remains within the realm of the habitual — it is more of a lateral stretch than a recomposition. Kawakubo does not operate this way. Against the parsing of fashion into seasons, she works procedurally, her attention not focused on the already-existent. This is the force of her procedural fashionings, that she understands that the edgings into existence of habit's mutability are composed of the more-than-of form, the more-than-of the existent shapings of garment-imagination. In this regard, her work proceeds at the pace of a world-constituting procedure.

⁹ There also exists indigenous traditions in garment design that challenge the idea of the predefined shape of a body, inviting the body to define itself through an encounter with the fabric. These include the Indian sari, the Malay or Indonesian sarong, and the African kanga or kitenge, each of which is emergent as garment in the folding.

World-constituting never means world-constituted. To craft a procedure that is world-constituting, the fine-tuning must occur *in the event* — it must be immanent to the event's coming — into-itself. Fashion that follows habit fully-formed is not doing this. It is creating according to an externally imposed normative framework. Kawakubo's practice departs from this approach: she is very much engaged in the constitutive tendencies that open habit to its more-than. In this regard, her fashionings actively produce what Deleuze calls "a belief in the world."¹⁰ Like the world-constituting procedure, a belief in the world refuses to follow the world as given. A belief in the world is about crafting the conditions to encounter the world differently each time. Procedural architecture takes this as its mantra. To become procedural, a practice has to directly connect to habit's mutation and, from there, create not new habits, but new incipient directionalities. These incipient directionalities *will* have the tendency, over time, to morph into habit. A procedural architecture must therefore be capable of activating minor gestures that continuously direct incipency toward new modes of existence. Much tweaking is necessary to find the right balance between the static and the chaotic.

When incipency tunes toward new modes of existence, it is because the emergent event has been mobilized in the differential of the in-act and the acting. Arakawa and Gins define this differential as "a tentative constructing toward a holding in place."¹¹ Scales and speeds coexist in this tentative fragility, reminding us that the procedural must work at differing degrees of intensity. "Everything is tentative, but some things or events have a tentativeness with a faster-running clock than others. So that there can at least be a keeping pace with bioscleave's tentativeness, it becomes necessary to divine how best to join events into an event-fabric, which surely involves learning to vary this speed at which one fabricates tentative constructings toward holding in place."¹²

To become procedural, scales and speeds must be taken up from the perspective of the event. This approach ensures that we do not fall prey to building world-constituting procedures that are simply sized and timed for human benefit. Procedures must be crafted that are capable not only of creating the conditions for an event that is perceptible to the human, that engages the human (within the scales and speeds of our own emergent bodyings), but that are also capable of fielding difference and creating openings in the continuously speciating arena of the more-than human.

10 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (trans), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989, 172.

11 Madeline Gins and Arakawa, *Architectural Body*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002, 48.

12 Ibid.

In Arakawa and Gins' writings, as in Kawakubo's, there is sometimes the sense that the human body rears up as the starting point rather than one of many potential fields of activation within the relational milieu. And yet, a closer look at the workings of their work (including their writing, in the case of Arakawa and Gins) makes it amply apparent that it is the *event* of the work's workings that matters. In their *faire œuvre*, in terms of what they can *do*, both Arakawa and Gins' architectings and Kawakubo's fashionings challenge the view that the human subject is at the stable centre of experience and that the body can be abstracted out from the complexity of the milieu:

We do not mean to suggest that architecture exists only for the one who beholds or inhabits it, but rather that the body-in-action and the architectural surround should not be defined apart from each other, or apart from bioscience. Architectural works can direct the body's tentative constructing toward a holding in place, its forming in place. But it is also the case that how the body moves determines what turns out to hold together as architecture for it.¹³

The tentativeness is in and of the body as mobile concept. A body is not a definitive form, but a tentative construction toward a holding in place. The tentativeness of all bodyings must be held onto in the creation of procedural architectures, for this is what makes the event remain open to speciating potential. The minor gesture makes ingression into the procedure at just this intersection: the minor gesture lands onto tentativeness. In landing onto tentativeness, the minor gesture opens up the field of relation, making felt how the field is, by its very nature, co-compositional. In this tentative field of relation made felt by the minor gesture, "how the body moves determines what turns out to hold together as architecture for it." The action does not belong to a pre-constituted body. Body is bodying, or, in Arakawa and Gins' vocabulary, "tentative constructing toward holding in place."

Similarly, Kawakubo does not design for a pre-existing form. She designs in the event-fabric of a reorienting of what fashioning can be. "I put parts of patterns where they don't usually go. I break the idea of 'clothes.' I think about using for everything what one would normally use for one thing. Give myself limitations."¹⁴ In Kawakubo's practice, even the fabric, the materiality of the proposition that moves her work, becomes procedural, oriented toward a tentative encounter with emergent modes of existence that activate a bodying not yet defined. Procedurality moves materiality to its limit.

That Kawakubo's experiments are not constrained to a focus on the garment is key: otherwise she would not be capable of pushing the

13 Ibid., 50.

14 "Rei Kawakubo's Creative Manifesto."

material beyond its attachment to the forms vividly associated to current habits within the fashion industry. "The main pillar of my activity is making clothes, but this can never be the perfect and only vehicle of expression. I am always thinking of the total idea, and the context of everything. Fashion alone is so far from being the whole story."¹⁵

The "total idea" Kawakubo composes with includes the totality of what a material can do, the material here never abstracted from the question of bodying: when Kawakubo asks what the textile is capable of, she is necessarily also asking how a bodying exceeds its putative limits. Creativity is at work, but a creativity not restricted to the creation of either a subject or an object. When Kawakubo says "one cannot fight the battle without freedom. I think the best way to fight that battle, which equals the unyielding spirit, is in the realm of creation. That's exactly why freedom and the spirit of defiance is the source (fountainhead) of my energy," what is at stake is not a capitalist creation of the newest new, a new body, a new object, but the activation of the force of relation that has as its goal the fashioning of a new mode of existence.¹⁶ Freedom here, as in Bergson, is allied to the in-act, activated in the field of experimentation. Linked to the concept of creativity, which in Whitehead is defined as the "actualization of potentiality," freedom in Kawakubo's work is what makes the everyday operational.¹⁷

Speaking of modes of existence, Souriau writes: "It's a matter of invention (like you "invent" a treasure)."¹⁸ There is no pre-determined existence (just like the treasure only takes form "as treasure" when it is considered one). Since existence is only ever invented from within the field of relation and no two events activate the same field in the same way, modes of existence as Souriau defines them are by necessity interstitial. This interstitiality is what gives modes of existence their differential force and protects them from becoming restricted by habitual forms of life. Nonetheless, to "become a treasure," a mode of existence needs a push toward consistency. What gives the mode of existence the consistency it needs to become itself is the minor gesture. How the minor gesture courses through and punctuates a mode of existence will define how the mode's interstitial nature lands as event-time. A mode of existence punctuated by the minor gesture of a procedural fashioning has the consistency of a bodying alive in an ecology it carries on its back. This carrying is the carrying of an intensity momentarily harnessed in the now of a potentializing architecture. This potentializing architecture, carried as the fashion-

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 For more on Whitehead's concept of creativity, see Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, New York: Free Press, 1938.

18 Etienne Souriau, *Les Différents modes d'existence suivi de L'œuvre à faire*, Isabelle Stengers and Bruno Latour (eds), Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009, 142.

ing that is another term for the becoming-body, is always an opening to artfulness.

Beyond Site ///

Kawakubo resists being cornered into ethnicity. Where she comes from is an accident of birth, her husband Adrian Joffe reminds a journalist.¹⁹ This is not to say that the country of her birth has no effect on her practice. What it means is that with the creation of new modes of existence come new tentative ways of siting oneself. Historical memory crosses over, of course, but Kawakubo is firm: her practice is never a replaying of history as a simple score. What matters for her is not the cradle of inheritance, but the force of form that pushes experience to its limit.

This is not to underestimate the importance of what came before. As Whitehead would say, nonsensuous perception, the way pastness folds into presentness to tweak the in-act, makes a difference in the coming-to-be of what experience can do. The key is to understand that nonsensuous perception is not analogous to the carrying-over of a history fully-formed. Nonsensuous perception is an inheritance of the past in the present, an inheritance always in the midst of reinvention, of recomposition. The past is in this way always a futurity in the making. In Kawakubo's case, one of the areas of inheritance, I believe, is a specific cultural encounter with two singular forms of spatial patterning, the kimono and the tatami. These two patternings have orientations in common: both tend toward a complexity of potential form-takings, both are minimal in their cut, preferring the simplicity of a straight edge that refuses to mould to a shape predefined, and, as a result, both are open to various interpretations of what a fashioning (of the environment, of the body) can do.

In the kimono, a garment used across genders that is cut in a way that does not conform to a given idea of pre-existing body-contours (cut beyond the length of the body, for instance, refusing to use body-dimension as a point of departure, preferring instead to foreground texture, color, the artistry of the textile itself) there is the inheritance of a different way of thinking the pattern: there is a sense of the infinite in the cut of the kimono, of the infinite line. For the kimono is not made to fit, its lines are not contouring, its cut is not first and foremost gendering (though its textures can be). How it is worn is what makes the difference, and there of course contouring and gendering both occur. But that this happens in a second stage means that the garment retains an openness to invention: as emergent patterning, the kimono evokes not shape as aligned to pre-existing form, but a processual unfolding that changes in each singular instance of dressing.

¹⁹ "Adrian Joffe: The Idea of Comme des Garçons," Hypebeast (January 10, 2011), <http://hypebeast.com/2011/1/adrian-joffe-the-idea-of-comme-des-garcons>.

This history of an openness to the line — think the kimono as an assemblage of straight lines — an openness that at all stages of the process inquires not into the fit of the garment but into its material potential, is perhaps what gives Kawakubo the confidence to ask her pattern-makers to work collaboratively with materials before even thinking of the form they can create. She mentions, for instance, giving her pattern-makers a crumpled piece of paper with an invitation to create something beyond a form, something that is not yet clothing, not yet architecture, but a mode of existence that brings both into tentative appearance.²⁰

The tatami, as I mentioned above, is another example of an inheritance that may have an effect on the kinds of constraints Kawakubo develops in her procedural approach. The tatami as it is used architecturally can be seen as an activator of space's malleability: the tatami room, in a traditional Japanese context, keeps the environment bare enough that the space can become the conduit for more than one kind of activity. Furniture is kept to an absolute minimum, the space itself open to continuous reorganization. In this regard, the tatami room can be seen as an architecting of mobility for a tentative holding in place, for an experience of spacing or bodying wherein "the design process never starts and finishes."²¹

Both these inheritances encourage us not to delimit Kawakubo's creations to a superficial definition of "Japaneseness," but to emphasize that inheritance as a nonsensuous operation has procedural potential. These inheritances, if they make a difference, do so only in the way they energize a procedure yet to be invented, opening experience in its unfolding to the discovery of the oeuvre à faire, not the work as it has been historically pre-oriented, but the work's working in the now of its evolution.

Take the "Dress Becomes Body" (*Comme des Garçons* collection): the public's response when this collection came out was to see the clothing only with respect to what it did to the preexisting body and how it aligned with or diverged from the history of fashion design. Within this contingent of responses came the unsettled gaze that wondered whether this was a collection that idealized deformity or disability, whether it was an affront to the body itself.

Such responses to the collection are in the mode of first contact. They all depend on a vocabulary of the pre-existent and on the categories available within this vocabulary. But what if we look further, taking Kawakubo's procedural fashioning at its word. What if instead

20 Timo Rissanen, "Types and Fashion Design and Patternmaking Practice" *Nordes 2* (special issue on Design Inquiries), 2007, 3.

21 "Rei Kawakubo Doesn't Sketch, Use A Desk, Or Like Being 'Understood'," on *Styleit* (June 3, 2012), <http://www.styleite.com/news/rei-kawakubo-nyt/>.

of beginning from what we know, from the habits of fashion, we began in an encounter with tentativeness? “Persons need to be rescued from self-certainty, but they also need to put their tentativeness in precise order in relation to works of architecture.”²²

In the “Dress Becomes Body” collection, a shaping occurs. Why must we assume that this shaping hides a body? Why not take instead this shaping for what it is, as the event in itself, a event that includes a body-world co-composition? What if instead of assuming that the person is not the shape, we were open to a different concept of personing that included its architecting? Arakawa and Gins speak of “organism that persons.” Could this be what is at stake in “Dress Becomes Body”?



Comme des Garçons SS 1997

Look again, this time refusing to abstract body from shape. See the personing as the architecting and refrain from selecting out from the emergent shaping the contours of the body’s skin-enveloppe. See the shape for what it is: a new contouring. Acknowledge this tendency to see textile as that which covers and not as a materiality in its own right. See textile in the moving, as an active shaping of what a body can do. See textile as an ecology of practices that is not separate from the body which it clothes. And now wonder at the ways you have become capable of abstracting the one from the other (and then wonder about how you abstract the sitting body from the desk, the walking body from the street, the sleeping body from the bed).

Look again. This time see the shaping not as a still body covered with material, but as mobile architecture. Can you see the bodying beyond an image of what you consider a deformation of a preexisting shape? Can you see that the humpback, the strange shoulder-hip tumour may not prefigure the grotesque body of your horrified imagination, but might instead remind you of what you see every day as you walk around the wintry city of Montreal?

²² Gins and Arakawa, *Architectural Body*, 50.

Look again. Now see the tentative architectures. See the movement that was made invisible by the tendency to abstract textile from body. See the backpack, see the cross-body purse. See the puffy coat with the baby underneath, collar slightly open for its head. See what you see every day from November to March in your cold climate and wonder again why when you saw it in the subway, on the street, in the café, you didn't see it as a disfigurement. Wonder at how quickly just yesterday you were able to see this body-dressed-for-winter as a body separate from its fashioning, at how quickly you unburdened the skin-envelope from its Michelin-Man coat. And note in surprise what Kawakubo's work has given you: a new mode of perception. Now looks again and see not the clothing that mask a moving body, but a shape in the making that includes movement, the includes textile, that includes body, the three together an ecology that is an emergent bodying, a procedural fashioning. Note with some awe that the "Dress Becomes Body" collection is not the high and useless fashion you may have assumed it was, but a lively encounter with the everyday.



Winter in Canada (2014)

The envelope has been ruptured. We are accustomed to the act of excision, of subtraction. Parsing is what we neurotypicals are best at. We see the winter-clad body with its thick coat, the knap-sack, the heavy bag and we simply excise them from existence. We assume that the body is the shape underneath instead of the force taking form of an ecology, instead of a speciation. What else does that mean we don't see?

The "Dress Becomes Body" collection is a world-constituting procedure for autistic perception: Kawakubo has created a shaping that refuses to celebrate the parsings that make reflective consciousness the order of the day, and she has made it available for all of us. With "Dress Becomes Body" she has introduced us to a modality of perception not so far from our everyday experience that we can't account for it once it's made available for perception, and yet far

enough that we perhaps realize how we've become distanced from the operative interstitiality of modes of existence in-forming.

Souriau has a word for the cleaving that makes operational a mode of existence: *instauration*. This untranslatable word, which means to constitute, to create, to found, to inaugurate, is defined in Souriau as the capacity of the mode of existence to settle itself into the world as procedural. "A philosophy of *instauration* will bring together at once the modes of the in-act and those of being, studying by which path they can be combined."²³ *Instauration* directs the mode of existence toward what Whitehead calls the becoming of continuity. *Instauration* is the inflection that makes felt the difference in the event. Allied to the punctuating force of the minor gesture, instauration marks the decisional cut in experience. It is here, in the activation of difference, that new modes of existence are redirected toward new forms of life-living.

The "Dress Becomes Body" collection invents a mode of existence that is in alliance with what Arakawa and Gins call "a site of sited awareness."²⁴ It makes felt the double articulation of the in-act and the acting at the very level of perception itself. To articulate the concept of sited awareness, Arakawa and Gins develop the concept of the landing site. The landing site seeks to articulate how a perception, a movement, a tendency, extracts itself from the wider field of experience to land *just this way*. For Arakawa and Gins, this landing can be said to be an "apportioning out": "That which is being apportioned out is in the process of landing. To be apportioned out involves being cognizant of sites. To be cognizant of a site amounts to having greeted it in some manner or to having in some way landed on it."²⁵ It is important to understand that the landing is not first and foremost spatial nor is it oriented by a preexisting subject or object. The siting is a bringing into relation. This bringing into relation has the capacity to dimensionalize, and when this happens, architectural tendencies in the environment are brought to the fore. But the landing site can also have other functions, working more at the level of perception, of attention, or even making felt edgings of experience that are still in germ. Arakawa and Gins write of "dancing attendance on the perceptual landing site," of "landing sites dissolv[ing] into each other, or abut[ting], or overlap[ing], or nest[ing] within one another," of "distributing sentience."²⁶ The landing site is not a location, not a point, but the tending, the abutting, the segmenting that selects out what is most persuasive at this eventful conjuncture.

23 Souriau, *Les Différents modes d'existence suivi de L'œuvre à faire*, 164.

24 Gins and Arakawa, *Architectural Body*, 51.

25 Ibid., 5.

26 Ibid., 7-9.

“Dress Becomes Body” sites awareness by creating the potential for a perceptual landing to occur differently. How perception lands has an effect on how a tentative architecting toward a holding in place *bodies*. In the event of “Dress Becomes Body,” the emergent shaping procedure invites perception to reorient: perception lands differently. The landing site activated by the collection is operational, it makes felt perception’s processual nature. Siting awareness in the field of relation opens perception to its neurodiverse potential. This challenges our tendency to assume that what we perceive is simply preconstituted form, opening perception to what for neurotypicals has tended to become latent. With “Dress Becomes Body,” we directly perceive the activity of shaping. Because perception lands differently, the work gives the neurotypical the rare opportunity to participate in the ecology that is autistic perception, an ecology where morphogenesis trumps form, and body becomes bodying.

In the siting of awareness activated by this and other *Comme des Garçons* collections, as with Arakawa and Gins’ built procedural architectures such as Bioscleave House in Long Island and the *Reversible Destiny* Lofts in Tokyo, what is at stake is the process of shaping that lands awareness differently. To land awareness is a way of working the work, of *faire œuvre*: it brings into focus not the work as such but the very procedurality of the work’s workings. This is not to say that all work by Kawakubo and Arakawa and Gins does this to the same degree. Different procedures produce different ecologies, and the same is true in reverse. While for me, for instance, Arakawa and Gins’ Tokyo lofts are capable of activating a procedural architecture that remains vital and reorienting at each juncture, I find myself less certain about Bioscleave House in Long Island. Similar materials were used in each of these two architectures, and yet what they do is divergent, it seems to me. This is likely because the fields of relation (cultural, social, environmental) are profoundly different in the two cases. Whereas in Tokyo the architectural inheritance of the tatami room brings a certain continuity to the work of Arakawa and Gins, opening habit to its mutation in a way that makes the everyday operational in new ways, in New York the house feels strangely deactivating, its hard, bumpy floor sometimes more of an affront to movement than an activator. Perhaps in New York, the house is simply too excised from the everyday, out of context and therefore procedurally not quite ready yet. This is not to say that the house has no potential, but simply to emphasize that each ecology of practices will emerge to different effect, opening up different fields of potential that will themselves always to some degree have to connect with the inheritances that come with the act of life-living.²⁷

27 See Jondi Keane and Trish Glazebrook (eds), *Inflexion 6: Arakawa and Gins*, Montreal: Senselab, 2013.



Reversible Destiny Foundation, Bioscleave House / Photo by Léopold Lambert (2008)



Reversible Destiny Foundation, RD Lofts / Photo by Léopold Lambert (2014)

What is most interesting about a procedural approach, it should be clear by now, is not the final form a process might take. What is at stake is the shaping itself, how a form might be capable of remaining procedural, and even more so, how its procedurality is capable of keeping minor gestures alive. In the case above, both architectures remain procedural, but they do so to different degrees. What matters is how these degrees are taken up in experience. What matters is what new processes they enable: what new modes of existence they solicit, what minor tendencies they call forth. What matters is how the work is attended to in the modality of sited awareness, how its *instauration* is felt and how the work's *faire œuvre* persists, persuasively. What matters is how the event continues to be procedurally capable of carrying the untimeliness of event-time — “Oh! That’s what it was!” — while operatively attending to the singularity of the event in *this*

iteration of its coming-to-be. For work that works does take a stand. It stands in the time in which it lands, and it makes demands on that time. It marks it. A procedural architecting, a procedural fashioning, always involve an encounter with a work that persists even as it stands, that engages with the openings of potential even as it takes its place, here and now.

This is the strangeness of the procedural as world-constituting, that it must at once be taken up in the absoluteness of its self-determination in the here and now and that it must at the same time remain open to the differential of times not yet invented. How to create conditions whereby the here and now and the necessity of time's unfolding coexist? This might produce some anxiety. "What can I do so as not to be paced out of existence?" ask Arakawa and Gins.²⁸ The only way not to be paced out of existence is to remain steadfastly in the act. For to be paced out of existence suggests being on existence's edge and watching it go by. This only happens when there is an assumption that what matters is outside of the event, this event of life-living. If we consider our being to always be in the midst, if we consider that the body is never one, never outside, never enveloped, but always a singular speciation of an emergent ecology, there is no danger that we will be paced out of existence. But this does not mean that the immortality Arakawa and Gins make the beacon of their work will be attained.²⁹ What will remain immortal is not the human body, but the procedural force that bodies, that architects, that fashions, the procedural force that sites awareness in the field of relation. What will persist, in shifting ecologies that include us but are not limited to us, is the more-than, the body as a society of molecules, a tentative construction toward a holding in place.

Modes of existence as they are crafted out of ecologies of practices are never primarily human. They are ecological, active at the interstices of what life is becoming, life understood not in terms only of the vital, but as an active vector that passes through the organic and the inorganic. Life as life-living, as force of form invented in the cut that cleaves experience, opening it to new modes of existence.

Choreographic Architecture ///

In addition to siting awareness, "Dress Becomes Body" architects mobility. Architecting mobility does not mean creating a site for mobility. It refers instead to a way of understanding the siting of awareness through a focus on the force of form. A choreographic architecture dances attention, siting an event in the midst of its potentiality.

28 Madeline Gins and Arakawa, unpublished paper.

29 For a more detailed exploration of how attention dances, see Erin Manning, "The Dance of Attention" in *Always More Than One: Individuation's Dance*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

When a choreographic architecture comes to the fore, what is perceived, what is lived, is not the siting of the body but the fielding of its mobility. It is here, in the differential folding of the choreographic potential of mobile architectings that fashion and architecture most readily meet. For when fashion becomes procedural what it does is assist us in attending to how a bodying is already an architecting of mobility at a different scale.

Kawakubo's work embodies such choreographic tendencies, bringing to awareness the dance of attention active in the materiality of her textile creations. This is very apparent in her early work, often termed "deconstructive." I draw attention to the work of the so-called deconstructive period for two reasons. First, to challenge the usage of the way the term deconstruction tends to be used in fashion, and to suggest that deconstruction, taken as an engaged rethinking of what textile can do, is still very much at work in the current collections produced by *Comme des Garçons*.³⁰



Comme des Garçons AW 1982



Comme des Garçons AW 2008

When deconstruction is theorized in relation to Kawakubo's work (as well as to other Japanese designers such as Yohji Yamamoto), it tends to denote the making apparent of the seams of a garment in a way that creates a conversation about the garment's form. It foregrounds, for instance, the unfinished seams and tends to make a statement about counter-culture (emphasizing, for instance, the way

³⁰ It is important to emphasize that not all collections are primarily designed by Rei Kawakubo, though she does supervise the process. Junya Watanabe has been an important designer for *Comme des Garçons*, first as a patternmaker starting in 1984, and then as a designer in 1987. He started designing under his own name in 1992. Other designers include Tao Kurihara and Kei Ninomiya.

a given designer refuses to conform to *Haute Couture*'s norms). Derrida's definition of the term takes it much further. For Derrida, deconstruction is never a method, but rather a way to return again to the act of reading or making in order to see how it stages its alliances to form, to history, to epistemology.³¹ This approach encourages an account of how the work moves, and what it can do in its incipient activity. In the case of fashion, this allows to turn not to the form itself but to the materiality of construction itself, to the ways in which the deconstructive gesture activates the force of form.



Comme des Garçons SS 2011

In the context of the choreographic in its relation to dance, it is always compelling, I find, to explore the share of movement that “remains,” that is “left over” in the passage from force to form. This is particularly perceptible in the work of choreographer William Forsythe. In rehearsal, Forsythe repeatedly encourages his dancers to “leave behind” the form of the movement in order to explore what exceeds its form, its representational stature. I have written about this in terms of the “what else,” asking what else movement can do in its fielding of relation? It seems to me that the “what else” is of central importance in Kawakubo’s so-called deconstructive work, a gesture that once again brings architecture and fashion together, but not in terms of scale or form, I want to argue, but in terms of what is left behind. How, for instance, has what takes shape altered, refigured, reoriented past ecologies of fashion in the making? How has its operation incited a

31 See, for instance, Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (trans), Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, and *Dissemination*, Barbara Johnson (trans), Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1983.

reengagement with inheritance? The garments portrayed in the image below from the spring-summer 2011 collection are particularly interesting in this regard. What is at stake here is not simply the making apparent of the seams of the garment's production but a foregrounding of the immanent potentiality in the seams, at the edges, in the linings of the garment. The infinite line returns here, but where it goes is not toward the kimono. The kimono is perhaps what the form could have been. The garment below is what was left behind.

What was left behind is the "what else" of Kawakubo's procedural fashionings. This left-over share of movement-moving, the share that has not quite taken form, opens up future processes. Like the what else in Forsythe that activates the more-than of form, the what else of fashioning is what opens material to the potential of its infinite line.

It is important to emphasize that these garments (like many others), placed on display for the runways of that 2011 season, are not for direct consumption. They take the season's garments (the works that will be sold in boutiques around the world) and emphasize their procedurality, making felt not only the tentativeness of their propositions, but the more-than, the what else, of their constructedness.

Kawakubo states repeatedly that fashion is neither the starting nor the endpoint of her research. Fashion for her is not limited to the idea of a holding-in-place of a body as pre-formed. Nor is it about deconstructing the past in the linear sense often attributed to both her work and that of other Japanese designers such as Yohji Yamamoto, nor simply, as the deconstructive vocabulary within fashion would have it, of revealing tradition and pulling it apart at the seams. It is, rather, about constructing toward a tentative holding in place, more re-constructing than de-constructing, thereby cleaving the body-concept toward an architecting that sculpts mobility more than form. That this work reveals its seams is of course necessary at times, and amongst my favourite pieces of *Comme des Garçons* are these early works, not simply because they shed and fade and show their fragility, but because they open the act of dressing to the fragile articulations of its very composition, allowing the garment to function as a lively interstice. That the garments feel alive is key to their artfulness.

Kawakubo does not work from a desk. She does not use fabric swatches. She does not sketch. She seeks no ultimate experience, no precise moment of revelation. As she says, "there is no eureka moment, there is no end to the search for something new." Instead, she works, intuitively, problematically, to create conditions for the activating of connections heretofore unavailable to her, she constructs to make felt a relation that has not yet come to the fore. But she does not stop there. "Often in each collection, there are three or so seeds of things that come together accidentally to form what ap-

pears to everyone else as a final product, but for me it is never ending.” Kawakubo continues, she persists in a serial manner, working in the interstices of what is on the way, in the art of time. “There is never a moment when I think, ‘this is working, this is clear.’ If for one second I think something is finished, the next thing would be impossible to do.”³²

In a procedural fashioning there can be no end to the process. This is a serial adventure with pinnacles of form that emerge along the way. The middle, the milieu of the in-act, is what is at stake. In this milieu, architectings of mobility produce tentative bodyings. Fabric shapes. But metamorphosis is what is most sought after. Kawakubo designs in interstitial seriality, always toward that which “can and cannot be found.”³³ “Boundaries for an architectural body can only be suggested, never determined.”³⁴

In the middling, everything is at stake. Remember: this is not pure process. It is replete with the becoming of continuity, with the cleavings, the enabling constraints that make of process a practice. A collection must emerge, for it is from here, from the materiality of a form-taking, that the next procedure, the next dress, coat, pair of pants will invent itself.

But are these really still dresses, pants, coats? Ideally we would need a processual concept for these incipient forms. A dressing? A coating? A trousering? The same would need to be said of the procedural architectures - not a house but a housing, a lofting, a rooming, a thresholding. For procedural processes to make a difference, they must be created such that they can perform, reshape, constrain in ways unforeseeable. This is a difficult call, and often it fails. When this happens, the potentializing “dressing” returns to the habitual “dress,” the “thresholding” becomes reduced to “entryway.” In such cases the modes of existence the procedural fashioning sought to create lost the sense of their potential trajectory, becoming less a pathway than a finite project, as Souriau might say, losing the force of their incipient directionality.

The complicity here between a procedural fashioning and a procedural architecting is as speculative as it is pragmatic. In either case it cannot be about the product. It has to be about how the procedure does its work, and keeps working. This is hit and miss. It requires a long and rigorous process of experimentation, of study, and a willingness to begin anew without pretending to know the starting point. Recall Kawakubo’s constraint: begin with the belief that we don’t know

32 “Rei Kawakubo Doesn’t Sketch, Use A Desk, Or Like Being ‘Understood’.”

33 Ibid.

34 Gins and Arakawa, *Architectural Body*, 68.

what clothing can be. In a procedural approach nothing can be taken for granted. It is always a question of the ecology at hand, of the architecting toward mobility of an emergent bodying:

Landing site configurations articulate at least this many positions; nearnearground, nearmiddleground, nearfarground, middlenearground, middlemiddleground, middlefarground, farnearground, farmiddleground, farfarground; nearmiddlefarground, nearfarmiddleground, middlenearmiddleground, middlenearfarground, farnearmiddleground.³⁵



Comme des Garçons AW 2012

But take care, Arakawa and Gins remind us, not to think of these shifting grounds as positions, for they are also “areas of an architectural body, which takes its ubiquitous cue and command from the form and features of an architectural surround, subtending all positions within the surround’s confines.”³⁶ The environmental surround in a procedural fashioning is infinitely productive, for the starting point is topological: the body is that which folds.³⁷ Without articulating it as such, I believe Kawakubo’s procedural fashioning takes this notion of the body as its starting point. The fold is where it always begins — the

35 Ibid., 71.

36 Ibid.

37 This concept is developed at more length in Erin Manning and Brian Massumi, “Just Like That: William Forsythe, Between Movement and Language,” in *Thought in the Act*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

fold of the tissue paper she gives her pattern cutter as an inspiration, the fold of the texture that constrains the scissors when she cuts, the fold that resists, that reshapes, that escapes finite form. Hers is a lifetime of research into the fold, the fold produced by the body's bending, its kneeling, its touching, the fold of the texturing of a given piece of fabric, of the pleating so often part of her designs, the fold of the inside-out that brings the back to the fore in a garment, turning the seam on itself, the fold that resists becoming a seam, the imperceptible fold, even, of the infinite line.³⁸ For it is a fold, imperceptible as it may be, that I see as the inspiration of her Autumn-Winter 2012 two-dimensional collection, a collection that strangely accentuates the body's n-dimensionality.

A procedural architecture, in its siting of awareness at the scale of the middlenearmiddlefarground, takes the fold at its point of inflection, making apparent how the fold is the force of form the Euclidean architecture of our most normative surrounds must always build against: the fold of the hill within the landscape, of the air as it rushes against cement, creating a vortex that bends and twists, the fold of the body that moves with the building's capacity to make space for it. To commit to a procedural approach is to commit to this fold, imperceptible as it might be, and of course to commit to how it cleaves, and then to persuasively include it, to architect at its limit, inventing new ways of colluding with it, all the while attending to the dance of attention active within the force of the event's own procedural unfolding. For what the fold does first and foremost is remind us that the body is never one, is never outside the ecology of its environmental architecting, its nearfarmmiddleground never a question of bare ontology. The body is that which folds into the architectural surround, that which folds into the architecting of mobility that sites awareness, that which folds into its own activity, that which remains infinitely serial, that which cannot but procedurally unfold. What a procedural fashioning can do is bring this tendency to its limit. Kawakubo's procedural fashionings begin here, at this point of inflexion, architecting toward the creation of fragile modes of existence. Here, in the edging into itself of world-constituting procedures, Kawakubo designs not for the body but for a belief in the world.

/// Published on March 13, 2014

38 There is a conceptual connection between the absolute fold or infinite line described above and Deleuze and Guattari's "abstract line." They define an abstract line as "a line that delimits nothing, that describes no contour, that no longer goes from one point to another but instead passes between points, that is always declining from the horizontal and the vertical and deviating from the diagonal, that is constantly changing direction, a mutant line of this kind that is without outside or inside, form or background, beginning or end and that is as alive as a continuous variation — such a line is truly an abstract line, and describes a smooth space. It is not inexpressive." Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia II*, Brian Massumi (trans), London: Continuum, 2003, 498

A SENSING BODY - A NETWORKED MIND

BY ADRIENNE HART

An inbuilt desire to stray from the path, across the grass in a city park, is one example of how the learned or 'schooled' body misbehaves. I'm interested in the tension between our body's social contract and hard-wired collective behaviour. I'm also interested in what happens when the mind no longer requires a body to communicate. When we sit at a desk computer or peer into a smartphone, our minds log in and our sense of embodied self rapidly decreases. The networked mind locks into a network stream and sends itself to locations far from the host body's reach. How relevant is the body in an age that allows minds to roam free? Should we fight for the notion of body or are we already floating around in corpses, our vessels proving only to serve some kind of nod or nostalgic reflection to the past?

The Influence of Embodiment on Mind-Perception ///

Psychologist Kurt Gray among others has recently developed the idea that we're all "Cartesian dualists," our minds able to work independently of the body.¹ Writer Matthew Hutson describes a more complex picture drawing from Gray's paper on the subject:

Their results suggest that we see the body together with some of the mind — the part that feels things — as one type of stuff, and the remainder of the mind — abstract cognition — as another. A sensitive body versus a competent mind. They say we're Platonic dualists, as Plato believed our eternal minds knew the universe's ideal forms before we became implanted in and corrupted by the body, which came with sensation and desire.²

So what we plant online might only be part of what makes us who we are. The sensing body is left to consume, digest and react to our growing and increasingly singularitarian abstract cognitive self.

¹ Kurtist Gray quoted by Matthew Hudson, "Are you looking at me? What goes on in our minds when we see someone naked? The more we see of a person's body the stupider they seem," on aeon.co (November 6, 2013).

² Matthew Hudson, "Are you looking at me?"



Photograph for Alexander Schneider for Neon Dance / Courtesy of Adrienne Hart

As a choreographer I spend vast amounts of my time in the studio challenging and questioning how we move. A dancer trains his/her body for years with daily technique classes only to spend a professional career battling with this codified technique. Now imprinted on the body, they risk becoming products of an institution. We challenge the body to consider in a split second the many possible pathways available. But to “embrace every possibility” mental discipline is required along with strategies to avoid deception.³ My thinking is that technology has networked the mind, placing a new system within a new type of architecture for us to flow through, which in turn shapes how we think. So where does that leave the sensing body?

Automation ///

My old route from Shoreditch to Liverpool street station in London comes to mind. On hitting the main street flooded with suits, free paper handouts and generic coffee shops, I sink into the groove, *I* become we and, collectively, we march; the sound of progress reaches a deafening pace; the rules I follow are simple and mimic that of a flocking bird or a bug in a swarm. I’m not even that aware of the noise around me anymore, and instead my brain disconnects from its immediate environment as I reach for my phone to go online. There my mind expands out to form a small part of many other networked minds. I feed it, feed off it, rely on it, get too consumed and bump out of synchronicity with my fellow pace makers. Up until that point I have been existing in some kind of dualist “lock-in”:

At a certain density, the bugs would shift to cohesive, aligned clusters. And at a second critical point, the clusters would become a single marching army. Haphazard milling became rank-and-file — a prelude to their transformation into black-and-yellow adults. It’s a phase transition, like water turning to ice. The individuals have no plan. They obey no instructions. But with the right if-then rules, order emerges.⁴

I see the body as this moving form in constant transformative flow. In a way the body becomes a form escapism, where ideas can germinate and rattle around for a while without the interference of an external force. We have the ability to do that, internalise and process an idea before projecting a slightly altered self, back into world. Vernon Lee, best known for her work on aesthetics at the turn of the 20th century, described how “the subjective inside us can turn into the objective outside.”⁵ Lee’s *Beauty and Ugliness*, which was first published in *The*

3 Jorge Luis Borges, “The Garden of Forking Paths,” in *Labyrinths*, Penguin Classics, 2000, 51.

4 Ed Yong, “How the Science of Swarms Can Help Us Fight Cancer and Predict the Future,” on wired.com (March 19, 2013).

5 Vernon Lee quoted in Carolyn Burdett, “The subjective inside us can turn into the objective outside: Vernon Lee’s Psychological Aesthetics,” *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 12, 2011, 2..

Contemporary Review in 1897, noted physical changes in the body when looking at art and architecture. She hinted at our entangled nature with things. Ian Hodder, on the other hand, suggests that “the lack of inertness is linked to the lack of isolation.”⁶ He speculates in a thought experiment that only a child born suspended in darkness deprived of all external stimuli unable to even touch and therefore learn from its own body might escape such a fate. “The thing ties people together, and into relations of dominance and subordination.”⁷ But what if we could train our mind to enter that dark suspended space and free our bodies momentarily from all the connections, cutting all the strings?

While you were sleeping... ///

“Our need for belonging comes right after physical safety,” and yet, if we are to assume Maslow has our needs all worked out, why do we put our ‘physical safety’ on the line in order to stay connected?⁸

When you are a passenger in a car you hand over responsibility to another. Perhaps the cars motion sends you off into a deep thought, and bumping over car lights triggers you awake. A sideways glance over to the driver whose eyes are at half mask affirms the fact that you’ve both been sleeping. Where are the bumps in the road now that the digital world has spilled out and mapped itself on top of the physical world — two realities operating at the same time. Duality exists today at the expense of our bodies.

I like the body when it misbehaves because in that moment it over-rides a system. Singularity shattered into infinite possibilities. When I am in a state of data or information flow I feel disembodied. The mind expands beyond the confines of the body and connects/locks into a stream where it is subject to a flurry of influences as I bounce from link to link. The flow is unyielding and constant. Can I hover momentarily above the stream and forge pathways that are not simply reactionary but self-aware? The sense of an embodied mind might return and there creativity can serve the purpose of offering both the individual and the collective an alternative.

/// Published on February 10, 2014

6 Ian Hodder, *Entangled: An Archaeology of the Relationships between Humans and Things*, Hoboken: Wiley and Sons, 2012, 5.

7 *Ibid.*, 9.

8 Abraham Maslow, “A Theory of Human Motivations,” *Psychological Review* 50, 1943, 370-396.

50/

DREAMS OF FLYING - FLYING BODIES

BY ELENA LOIZIDOU

There is no dream but in forgetting a word.
Edmond Jabès¹

Is it possible to provide a meaningful relation between dreams of flight, a common variation amongst the form of dreams, and the body? And even if we are capable of doing so, even if we assume that we agree as to how we conceive the body, what kind of pathways such a relation opens up for us? Would we be able to sense ourselves being moved towards different political, ethical, or aesthetic directions than the ones that we have been given and taught to obey? Even if we are able through the dream of flying, to see how we can break the mould of formality, would we want to shape the break into a new mould, or would we prefer to remain suspended in air, defying gravity? And then again, to desire or want to remould the break provides us with an encounter with an agentic self — a self that can direct its future in this or that way, that perhaps, most probably it can't exert such agency. Indeed, perhaps the most we can learn from this encounter with the dream of flying is precisely to let go of the chimera of remolding — turning into some form or blue print for the future the sense that such a dream may open up to us.

177

The dream of flying is a particular type of dream. It is one that puts our bodies into a position that we can't really achieve when we are not asleep without the assistance of technical support, auxiliary wings — remember Daedalus and Icarus's flight — or without being on a plane or some other air vehicle. The dream of flight, we may say, puts our bodies in an impossible position, up in the air, defying gravity, breaking the law: a formality of movement. The dream of flying positions our bodies beyond this law. In this brief piece I will consider where Freud's and Bachelard's accounts of this type of dream can take our bodies.

¹ Edmond Jabès, "Outside Time: The Dream of the Book" in *The Little Book of Unsuspected Subversion*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996, 27-30.



Platonic Love by Hannah Höch (1930)

Freud did not have much to say about dreams of flight. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud dedicates less than three pages under the subheading, "Other Typical Dreams" on dreams of flying.² Freud tells us that he had never had such a dream: "I have no experience of my own of other kind of typical dreams, in which the dreamer finds himself flying through the air," especially, he continues, "since I turned my attention to the subject of dream interpretation."³ Despite his inexperience in this area he proceeds to provide us with a brief analysis of his understanding of how such dreams come about:

... these dreams, too reproduce impressions of childhood; they relate, that is, to games involving movement, which are extraordinarily attractive to children. There cannot be a single uncle who has not shown a child how to fly by rushing across the room with him in his outstretched arms, or who has not played at letting him fall by riding him on his knee and then suddenly stretching out his leg, or by holding him up high and then suddenly pretending to drop him. Children are delighted by such experiences and never tire of asking to have them repeated, especially if there is something about them that causes a little fright or giddiness. In after years they repeat these experiences in dreams; but in the dreams they leave out the hands which held them up, so that they float, or fall unsupported.⁴

Freud positions the dreams of flying to a childhood scene, and specifically one that takes place in a familial environment. Dreams of flying, a common adult occurrence, are mere reproductions of scenes that they have experienced as children, being lifted into flying by an adult. The pleasure (when lifted) or fear and anxiety (of falling) of this experience is being repeated or re-lived later on in life in the flying dream. Reference to any sexual arousal that may be connected to either the dream of flying or the actual experience of being lifted by an adult in the air, is mentioned in the actual text and elaborated and supported by two footnotes. In these two footnotes, Freud directs us to analytic and medical research on the matter. The analytic literature connects the enthusiasm that children demonstrate either when they are lifted in the air or watching acrobatics to the stimulation of the sexual organs or the witnessing of a sexual act in humans or animals. The medical discourse appears to suggest that the first pleasurable sexual arousal in children, particularly in boys, is witnessed "while they were climbing about."⁵ Freud categorically dismisses Strümpel's account of the flying dream as the "image which is found appropriate by the mind as an interpretation of the stimulus produced

2 Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, James Strachey (trans), New York: Basic Books, 2010, 288.

3 Ibid., 290.

4 Ibid., 289.

5 Ibid., 288

by the rising and sinking of the lobes of the lungs at times when cutaneous sensations in the thorax have ceased to be conscious.”⁶ Such an interpretation focuses he notes on the source that may trigger a dream (inflation and deflation of the lungs) which he finds unsatisfactory, or rather hypothetical. Nevertheless, despite the fact that he had not experienced himself any dreams of flying, and despite the fact that he has no material to enable him to provide us with a fully-fleshed interpretation of such dreams, he insists that these dreams have their roots in early memories of sensations of pleasure (being lifted) and anxiety (the fear of fall) that one may have experienced in his or her childhood, drawing on his wider experience of the dream analysis of psychoneurotics which showed that dreams have their roots in “infantile experience.”⁷ In line with his method of dream analysis — dreams provide us with access to our unconscious, and consequently to our hidden desires, anxieties, drives — Freud points out that each analysis of a dream remains particular to each dreamer, as the content of each dream is unique to each one of us.

Nevertheless, even if Freud recognises that the content of each dream will provide us with access to the particular unconscious, he simultaneously direct us to read the content in his usual way. The cause of anxiety of falling or the pleasure in the dream of flying has its origin in sex. His medical professional colleague assures him also of the relation between being elevated and sexual sensation that Freud sees as being repeated in the flying dream: “Patients have often told me that the first pleasurable erections that they can remember occurred in their boyhood while they were climbing about.”⁸ The individual meanings that each flying dream is meant to body forth, are therefore narrowed down, by returning us to the probable cause in the dream — sexual desire. Of course Freud has made very important contributions to our understanding of the operation of the psychic world through sexual desire and this should not be underestimated. Nevertheless, by reducing the meaning of a dream, and here in particular the dream of flying, to sexual desire, Freud inadvertently limits the possible interpretations that we may deduce from the flying dream itself, the multiple ways in which pleasure is shaped by our relation to our bodies and the pleasures that flow through them. For example, Luce Irigaray (sexual difference), H  l  ne Cixous (female sexuality and writing), Judith Butler (queering gender), and Chrysanthi Nigianni (female sexuality, queering gender, writing and pleasure) have all shown us in distinct ways how polymorphous is female sexuality and pleasure, drawing to our attention to the limits of psychoanalytical accounts of pleasure and sensations such as Freud’s.⁹

6 Ibid., 69.

7 Ibid., 289.

8 Ibid., 280.

9 Luce Irigaray, “When our lips speak together,” *Signs Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 6:1, 1980, 69-79; H  l  ne Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa,” *Signs Journal of*

Moreover, if the dream of flight is reduced to its content — irrespective of the particularities of the content — which in turn is directed by a particular prism (context) of interpretation (sexual desire), we may want to consider to what extent Freud's interpretations of the flying dream really addresses the materiality of the body. We may want to ask to what extent the context through which the dream is interpreted is an abstraction of the material body, an abstraction of the material body in flight, and as what happens to a particular material body while in the dream of flight.

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Gaston Bachelard recounts his understanding of the dream of flight in his book *Air and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Movement*.¹⁰ As Colette Gaudin points out, Bachelard's account of dreams in general is critical of psychoanalytic interpretations. As she writes:

In *L'eau et le rêves*, Bachelard explains his refusal to account for images as in terms of organic impulses by his lack of medical knowledge, alleging that this prevents him from going to the same depths as psychoanalysis. The real reason is that he wants to seize the specific originality of the symbol without reducing it to its causes.¹¹

Indeed we can observe that, like in *L'eau et les rêves* (translated in English as *Water and Dreams*), in *Air and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Movement*, when Bachelard accounts for the dream of flight he diverts us from the causes of such dreaming, its content and symbolisation. When he explains, for example, that somebody seeing themselves flying does not necessarily relate to a desire to ascend in society, it is not a metaphor for the achievement of some aspiration, but rather it is related to some movement in the dreamers' instinctual world and their dynamic imagination.¹² Put otherwise, Bachelard urges us to avoid exploring the contents of such a dream or reading such a dream in a symbolic way, as a revelation of some deeper or, unconscious meaning, something that Freud in his *Interpretation of Dreams* follows. Instead he urges us to view it on its surface, understand and follow the dynamic movement that it produces in the soul, and understand it as an internal movement that

Women in Culture and Society 1:4, 1976, 875-893; Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, New York, London: Routledge, 1990; Chrysanthi Nigianni, "Butterfly Kiss: The Contagious Kiss of Becoming-Lesbian," in Chrysanthi Nigianni and Merl Storr (eds), *Deleuze and Queer Theory*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh Press, 2009, 168-182; Chrysanthi Nigianni, "The Taste of Living," in Patricia McCormack (ed), *The Animal Catalyst: Toward Ahuman Theory*, London: Bloomsbury, 2014.

¹⁰ Gaston Bachelard, *Air and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Movement*, Dallas: Dallas Institute Publications, 2011.

¹¹ Colette Gaudin, "Introduction" in *On Poetic Imagination and Reverie*, Indianapolis, New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Inc., 1971, xvi.

¹² Bachelard, *Air and Dreams*, 57.

shakes the soul, and deforms reality — the reality of our inability to fly. Bachelard tells us that flight dreams require us to look away from the form of the flight (e.g., flying with wings) and from the symbolisation/signification of the content of the dream.¹³ Instead, he asks us to concentrate on the movement that such dreams introduce upon the dreamer: a “‘journey for its own sake,’ an ‘imaginary journey’ that is more real than any other since it involves the substance of our psyche.”¹⁴ And once we focus on what the flight dream does, we notice an ascending, a deforming reality, exposing us to an imagination that is not bound to a form (that “frees us from the tyranny of forms, and restores us to substances and to the life of our own element”) and to the desire of the soul to ascend, to unburden itself from the formal restrictions — or as Bachelard puts it, transforms the motion of the soul into the “whole soul in motion,” to the joy that we gain from the fear of falling.¹⁵ Indeed, the didactic lesson of the flight dream according to Bachelard lays in teaching us not to be afraid of falling. This is indeed a diametrically opposite lesson from the one we may infer from Freud. Freud suggests that the falling or descending we may experience in the flying dream produces anxiety, for we are fearful of the fall. It is only then, according to Bachelard, that we may be able to see what the flight dream is: “a future with a vector breaking into flight.”¹⁶

Without causes to guide us, no origin to the sensations that follow the flight, no symbolic interpretations, Bachelard’s reading of the dream of flight opens our horizon to listen, to feel the subtle movements of our soul, to feel the body breaking with its form, weight, organs, bound-ness, and breaking, and not be in fear of what the future of this break may bring. It is a journey, a pleasurable journey, throwing us in unknown, undiscovered directions.

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I have told, and re-told two possible stories about the body in the dream of flight. Freud’s story, brings back the body to earth, chains it to a sex that is presented here at least as being one (we are aware that Freud understood sexuality to be multiple) and returns it to a familial scene. The other, Bachelard’s story, unchains the body from its form, shows us its movement, its ability to fly beyond itself fearlessly. Freud’s story is a story of needs, desires, fears, an origin, and a cause that can’t really be proved, the other, Bachelard’s is a story of pleasure beyond needs, a joy without cause or origin, with a direction that is not directive, a break from a past, a release of the imagination.

13 Bachelard, *Air and Dreams*, 22

14 *Ibid.*, 24.

15 *Ibid.*, 26-48.

16 *Ibid.*, 21.

If we are to think of these stories politically, Freud's story of the flying dream restricts our vision within the horizon of the familial, and while psychoanalysis may undo the fear of the fall, we will not escape from having our body reduced to the one sex or the one of sex. This is not to say that the body is not sexed, as of course it is. Bachelard moves the body away from the familiar and familial, to directions unknown. Bachelard's story opens up a space to sense an organisation of life beyond the one that the family scene offers. It entices us to glimpse such a future without fear, while simultaneously it offers no guarantees of an idyllic resolution. We can choose to break from Freud, and indeed many women philosophers (Irigaray, Cixous, Butler, Nigianni) have done so, and we may choose to break from form, and it may indeed be not even be a choice but rather a political necessity. We may break from form and it may just happen only in a flying dream, "a future with a vector breaking into flight," and it may be just enough for us to sketch a new political horizon.¹⁷

/// Published on March 8, 2014

¹⁷ Ibid., 21.

THE ACT OF WAITING

BY JOANNE POUZENC

In a society obsessed with speed and efficiency, there are not so many situations where a body accepts waiting. Most of the times, when waiting is necessary, waiting spaces try to provide the minimum comfort for a body to cope with the context: seats, magazines and smart phones provide the mind the mental escape the body needs to stay uncomplainingly inactive while maintaining a distance from the other waiting bodies.

In fact, if the space allocated for waiting doesn't show the specific characteristics of a waiting area — queuing lines poles, peripheral chairs and benches, red digital numbers and their stressful call — the act of waiting becomes less acceptable: the minds seem to be programmed to react to signals they can clearly identify in order to accept a given situation. Logically, the occupied time feels shorter than the unoccupied time or in other terms, time is running faster when it's not dedicated to waiting. And the number of distractions needed to occupy the minds keeps diversifying: we are seeing nowadays the multiplication of visual displays in waiting places being occupied by moving advertisements aiming to replace boredom with consumerist desires.

184

With the beloved expression *die Sehnsucht* (literally, the research of something desired), the German language offers an alternative to the notion of boredom: adding a nostalgic and therefore poetic understanding to the act of waiting, the *Sehnsucht* transforms the time of the passive wait into an active process, a longing necessary in order to enhance the object of the desire.

The Waiting Dichotomy ///

Furthermore, the act of waiting implies by definition a clear separation and relation of power between the one waiting and the one able to make that waiting end: the waiting body has expectations that the body able to end the wait — becoming the body practicing authority — is supposed to fulfill. Sometimes marked by the presence of a physical border (encounter, glass wall), the dichotomy is strengthened: the separation border — often reinforced by a difference of



A Night at the Airport / Photograph by Joanne Pouzenc

ground level between one side and the other — acts as a spatial disposal to generate a respectful relationship between the one who wants and the one who can. We often ignore the fact that the result of such a wait could be frustration: what happens when on the other side of the border, one can't deliver the object of the awaited desire?

Anger towards the empowered body naturally follows the feelings of boredom and frustration. And in some circumstances — imagine you're a refugee waiting at the border, being the next in the line when the decision to close the border is taken — the frustrated body searches allies to defy the authority by opposing the group as a strength argument, taking advantage of the collective character of the frustration. But in most of the cases, the act of waiting is motivated by a personal survival reaction, where the other waiting bodies can't take the risk of being collectively associated because every single body is in wait of a decision concerning their own waiting/living situation, transforming then the empowered body into the all-mighty. For example, the asylum seeker waiting for its authorization to find a refuge is isolated into a waiting zone — where wait seems to never end — but generally, no other asylum seeker would compromise its own awaited future to defend somebody else's.

Accepted Waiting Spaces ///

In some situations, the act of waiting is accepted as a necessary condition. When the act of waiting is related to the maintenance of discipline and order to guarantee one's security and when that waiting time is generalized to the collective — one is being a part of collective waiting — the condition of waiting is well accepted. The act of waiting is sometimes divided into several waiting times and spaces in order to be more acceptable: one reminds for example the succession of waiting lines in order to reach the top of the empire state building: every single waiting line is thought through in order for the body waiting to be in visual contact with the end of the line. There is first the line to the encounter, separated by a hidden door from the line to the elevator, spatially separated from the 86th floor line to the next elevator, passing by some entertaining disposals all made to make you forget you are currently waiting and to make you constantly think that your waiting time is almost over. The scenography around the goal to reach is made up to make you think it's worth the wait.

But there are some more common examples of this phenomenon of the succession of waiting line: the airport (even though, despite their massive democratization they must still be considered as uncommon spaces due to their access being mainly restricted to middle and high class people).

Successive Waiting Times in Unidirectional Movement ///

In the airports, the waiting periods are clearly identified and known to any traveler. One has to wait first to check-in, then to pass the security checks, then to board until finally getting in the plane, leaving, and finally waiting for that travel to end, somewhere else. The unidirectional aspect of the movement in airports — the differentiation of the ways in and out — helps the traveler through the different filters to accept his situation as it is by definition constantly progressing. Also, the different qualities of waiting spaces — standing in line, standing in movement, shopping while waiting, waiting sitting, etc. — transforms the usually passive act of waiting onto an active process where the bodies unnecessarily in movement follow their path forward.

Moreover, the act of waiting is nowadays in airports produces a valuable asset as airlines use this fact to sell “non-waiting” privileges for a ridiculously high price. In airports, time is money.

Whereas in the 1960s and 1970s, airport design was based on the efficiency of a system and therefore on speed — their forms were adapted at the same time to the plane typologies and logistics and to reduce the displacements of the travelers, who were trying to reach the shortest way possible between the plane and the doors of the airport, whereas their designs nowadays focus on providing the best set-up for mass consumption, using consumption as a tool to transform the passive wait into an active one. The traveler is guided today through a mandatory non-linear (the longest, the better) walk amongst supposedly cheaper duty-free products from perfumes to leather outfits, technology to jewelry, etc. At the same time, the repetition of shopping utilities in the airports is used as the contemporary solution for economical balance: the infrastructure of the airport itself and the numerous and necessary surfaces of the waiting areas are paid partially by the outrageous price of the rent of commercial premises and therefore, their offers are primarily limited to luxurious products.

Waiting in Transit ///

But one part of the airport that is specific enough to look at is the international transit area. Meaning, the somewhere, between where one comes from and your final goal. The only place where it doesn't really matter where in the world you actually are. The place where people from different cultures and different backgrounds are arbitrarily gathered, not sharing the same departure point nor the same arrival one. The place where nobody has apparently anything in common with any other body except the place they are all together at that instant: *T*.

Legally, even though those spaces are located on a national ground under national authority, those transit areas act in fact as a buffer zone in between many national borders: when the border acquires thickness, the interaction within appeals as a fascinating space for exchange and negotiation. It's an in-between space and creates a time suspended in a nowhere / nowhen.

International terminals are not connected with any outside context: there is no weather feeling, no smell, no sound, no clue from the outside. The only hints of local cultural identity appear here and there on certain billboards amongst the ones selling the international dream.

Also, the use of wireless internet is restrained and quantified: airports facilities proposes pricey internet connections for a certain amount of time, giving the opportunity of spending free time on a non-free web. And the time one spends in the transit areas is often relative to the price of your flight ticket: the less you pay, the more you wait.

But what is fascinating in the transit area — and the truly valuable asset of those transit areas — is the variety of people inhabiting it for a short period of time. Whether amenities and facilities orientate travelers towards avoiding social contact, the value of those possible and hazardous encounters is the true richness.

When Time and Space Stop ///

But what if something goes wrong? What happens when for one reason or another you are not able to board and leave? What happens when your wait is longer than it is supposed to be?

Imagine you've come to the airport today in order to fly away. A volcano explosion somewhere in the world, a snow storm in a rather warm country, a sand blizzard, a "situation" comes up, and doesn't allow you to travel as easily as the initial plan written on your boarding pass.

You will start by waiting. More than you planned to. You will first wait among other waiting bodies. And everybody has the same questions and tries actively to find positive answers: "if I can't get on that plane what does it mean?" "When is the next flight?" "Will I get my connection flight?" "When will I arrive?" "What will happen to my luggage/properties?"

At first, the personnel on the ground will try to make you patiently wait by evoking circumstances out of their control or possibility of any control. Then, they will start dividing the waiting time onto shorter periods — as in some other context, they divide the waiting space into a succession of waiting spaces — and they will try to keep you,

geographically, in a controlled space: “the flight to where-you-want-to-go will board in 15 minutes. Please stay in the boarding area for a coming boarding. The airline company thank you for your patience.” Then, they will renew that message, again and again, until finally getting you on board or having to cancel your flight. In fact, if the flight is cancelled, it’s not such a drama: you’re at the departure point: you lost a day. But you may go back home, enjoy your rest and come back the day after once you finally get in touch with somebody at a crowded encounter who is able to redirect you to another flight possibility.

But if the flight is just delayed: you’ve been waiting standing in queuing lines for hours, not able to leave your cabin bag to just even go to the toilet if you don’t want to lose your waiting position. And if it’s winter, you’re dressed too warmly. If it’s summer, you’re not dressed warmly enough for the air-conditioned spaces. The level of discomfort you’re feeling reminds you that once, “standing cells” were used as a powerful tool of punishment and torture. You may finally board and arrive in another city, with the mission of finding out where and when your flight connection to your final destination will be. Another series of queuing lines is ahead. It’s more likely night time, as you already spent the whole day waiting somewhere else. You don’t really know what you have to ask for: a flight? a bed? a dinner? a phone call? help?

You end up understanding that whatever you ask for, you won’t have it: not because somebody doesn’t want to give it but because they’re not able to do so — there is no flight at night. The hotels are all full. There is no possible transportation from the airport as the roads are blocked. The subway stopped working. The shops are closed. The restaurants as well. You are surprised to be able testify to how easy it is to experiment with chaos in a supposedly working system.

And once you are finally feeling hopeless, you have one option: there is a space, somewhere in the airport where fortune beds are settled. You can have earplugs and a bottle of water. But you should hurry: the beds are limited and the crowd has decided to get its own bed even if it means that the crowd will have to run faster, to step on somebody else’s feet, to shout louder, or more simply, to ignore the other bodies. At that moment: you are nowhere, and you have nothing to do. Time doesn’t matter anymore. And neither does space.

Moment of Grace ///

But despite the accumulation of unfortunate circumstances, it is precisely when time and space stop, when the connections — physical or/and immaterial — are cut that we can observe another phenomenon. When time and space don’t matter anymore, some rare

unexpected connections start sparking among the crowd. It's the precise moment that people choose to start talking and actively take some time. And the solidarity coming from the action of taking time for each other bypasses the imagination of what one imagined as the "perfect" non-moment.

I have seen a pilot-to-be anxious about his final examination, a couple of old people flying for the first time to visit their newborn grandchild, a Spanish speaking woman with her child desperate to be misunderstood taken care by a German woman jumping between French, Spanish and English to get things solved, a Romanian gay couple with four women in their early fifties sharing the limoncello they brought back from Italy from their "holidays between girls" while explaining the aftermath of the fall of Communism and the economic consequences of capitalism applied to the industries in their country, a Spanish plumber and a south American Berliner looking for food to sustain the most hungry ones and taking care of a mother-to-be. In that unique context, one can think of a Sartrian "huis-clos" on a giant scale: nevertheless, to reverse Sartre's conclusion of "Hell is other people" to "Heaven is each other," stopping time and space is not enough: it also has to not last too long.

And the day after, the older blind woman looking for her rolling chair — surprisingly not there anymore — finds her way walking alone among the bed skeletons and the rests of the improvised camp. The beds will be cleaned up just after, the space will be cleared, as if none of it never happened.

/// Published on February 15, 2014

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BODIES IN SYMPATHY FOR JUST ONE NIGHT

BY CHRYSANTHI NIGIANNI

I felt wrapped in its atmosphere, folded in its mood. *Toute une nuit* (1982) is a film about what happens between two. Happening as repetition. Repetition as stylisation. A stylisation of affect. Affect as image. Sentimentality as aesthetics. Chantal Akerman's film feels like a choreography of twos, a dance of portraits of intimacy, a diagram of love. 55 dramatic encounters, embraces and separations involving 75 nameless characters, usually couples, lasting anywhere from 30 seconds to five minutes, all arranged in *Toute une nuit*: all night long, all in a single night.¹

If we could find a plot or a subject in this film it would be as Catherine Fowler (2003) comments "love, loneliness, eroticism and insomnia," and throughout its 90-minute duration the film seems to be asking, acting and re-enacting persistently the same question: what is a relation? A question that acquires a heightened tension by being repeated in time, in just this time, in the whole of one night, *Toute une nuit*.

In *Toute une nuit* Chantal Akerman puts at the heart of the act of relating, at the heart of the affection-image, love. The question of love is largely avoided and suspected in the contemporary philosophical terrain although it was once one of the most significant philosophical concepts (Plato's *eros*, Aristotle's *philia* and Augustine's *caritas*). Today, at best, love, if still present (most notably in the psychoanalytic circles), is synonymous with desire, whereas philosophers seem to have little or nothing to say about it. Whereas on the one hand, love is constantly pursued and uniquely desirable, in popular culture, art and literature, on the other hand, it is mainly perceived as conspicuously naïve.

In *Toute une nuit*, Chantal Akerman is not afraid to work with love's naïvete, its clichés and stereotypes and invites us to look again — a

¹ Catherine Fowler, "All Night Long: The Ambivalent Text of "Belgianicity,"" in Gwendolyn Audrey Foster (ed), *Identity and Memory: The Films of Chantal Akerman*, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2003.



Still from *Toute une nuit* by Chantal Akerman (1982)

looking, which is replayed with variation. Love and lust, so banal in the context of human history, are transformed into exciting events when captured in isolated moments and out of the context of a larger narrative, as is the case of this film. With *Toute une nuit* Akerman creates affection-images as snapshots that dismiss the depths and put emotion as motion on the surface.

In her essay 'Pleats of the Mater, Folds of the Soul' Guiliana Bruno revisits Deleuze's definition of the affection-image and opens it up, beyond the microphysiognomy and the face:

In limiting oneself to such a perspective one risks equating affect with the expressions of passions, which is simply one side of the possible manifestations of emotional life. To map the terrain of affect on, and as, a larger surface, one needs to go beyond physiognomy, to look outside the contour of the face and avoid the restrictive enclosure of affect within the close-up.²

What she suggests is to think of affect as an extensive form of contact: a transmission that communicates in different spaces in a tangible way. She thus argues in favour of an affection-image as a landscape of affects, as haptic spatiality. Moreover, Bruno's notion of space widens up to include "'atmospheric' formations such as the play of light and shadow, the use of colour, the design of empty space, the power of the void, and the movement which is nonaction."³ However, in valorizing space and the landscape, time is once more neglected or seen as an extension of space (time and movement subsumed to space).

Toute une nuit gives primacy to time and emotions (rather than space and affect). Bodies in sympathy are bodies in emotional states, the latter experienced as temporal phenomena "intimately related to episodes of affects."⁴ The film's structure and aesthetics seem to engage directly with the issue of time and relationality, and with the issue of oneness and unity, providing us with a different empiricism, thus with another thinking.

The film consists of mini-narratives, snapshots of couples in various phases of a love affair: meeting, parting, running away together; a matching of bodies, looks and gestures, which are repeated with difference. These gestures are central in this film, while the nameless characters and the fragmented mini-narratives function merely as

2 Guiliana Bruno, "Pleats of the Mater, Folds of the Soul," in D.N. Rodowick (ed), *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009, 213.

3 Ibid.

4 Peter Goldie, *The Emotions: A Philosophical Exploration*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000, 12-14, 68-69.

props through which movement is realized. Akerman does not use a narrative in order to achieve continuity and unity; unity and continuity are ensured in the affect: through constant affective change and e/motion that endure throughout the film. By repeating similar gestures (e.g., embraces, kissing, the 'I love you' phrase), meaning gets dispersed and we get immersed into an atmosphere of repetition as variation, a distribution and redistribution of affects and feelings. What is gleaned from each individual image is later taken away through repetition with a difference, variation or contradiction.

Thus the structure of the film (that of repetition and fragmentation) enables the spectator to actually feel and experience change as fluctuation: a variety of emotions, different intensities in kind, the passage from one qualitative state to another. In short, the spectator experiences what Bergson calls a "qualitative progress" that characterises the flow of time itself: not a growing, increasing intensity that simply changes in degree, but "an experience of a variety of feelings, each already announced by the one that precedes it, becomes visible and definitely eclipses the previous one."⁵

Each shot is but one moment of a nameless encounter, of a story always in the middle that does not provide us with any information of what has preceded or what will follow. The moment then is the consummation of past and future potentials, a singular event that falls outside the chronological time of succession and distinction. Time is pausing through fragmentation, and our sense of linear time stops, a halt that causes an emotional charge outside any meaning, or story. "Time will concede for a moment. How else, since people love each other."⁶ Time is absolving and affect gets deterritorialized creating an affective image of a 'could be.' Such an image invites us to look at it with intimacy even though in anonymity.

The film creates a new aesthetics and ethics of the surface: no longer a representing or depicting image, but image as event, a contact by itself. In *Toute une nuit* the gaze is touching rather than grasping, comprehending, or possessing, and desire does not have enough time to culminate, dramatising instead the contractile abilities of emotions in a here-and-now. An affect-image is here not only the folds of space (as Guillian Bruno argues) but the unfolding of time, the stretching of the moment that adds up to the texture of the image — an image whose force is not to be found but on the surface as a plane of durational intensity, as emotional becoming. Becoming as pathos.

5 Henri Bergson, *An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, cited in Suzanne Guerlac, *Thinking in time: An introduction to Henri Bergson*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006, 49.

6 Odysseas Elytis, "The Monogram," in *Eros, Eros, Eros: Selected and Last Poems*, Port Townsend: Copper Canyon Press, 1971.

There are two times in the affect-image of *Toute une nuit*: the time of the bodies, of passions, and actions, which is expressed in the temporal figure of the 'moment,' and the time of love as an incorporeal event borne out of these moments, the multiplicity of connections, attractions and repulsions, from the multidimensionality and simultaneity of actions and passions, of states of affairs (duration as oneness in the sense of synchronicity). The time of love in *Toute une nuit* is similar to the time of a choreography: it is the overarching tempo all gestures and bodies submit to, resonating with each other and inducing a forced movement that goes beyond them. This tempo, this rhythmical time finds expression in the sonorous lines of the melody of a pop song, a refrain we hear every now and then during the film, usually carried across the city by the wind, or by a passing car. According to Deleuze and Guattari, "the song is like a rough sketch of a calming and stabilizing, calm and stable, centre in the heart of chaos" — the sketching of an uncertain and fragile centre within this seismography of moments, within the acented plane of the affection-images.⁷

Far from being the process of accumulating multiple perspectives and storing them into a unifying subject, into one perspective, that of the loving subject or the loved object, the oneness of time in *Toute une nuit* is the result of a posited intersubjective simultaneity — that is, the sum of repetitions of singular encounters that can do away without any individuality (all subjects are nameless, anonymous); a repetition that does not allow any love story to progress in linear fashion, no Law of lack to be confirmed; a repetition that nevertheless provides emotions with a new dynamism and intensity: love as perpetual re-beginning, so that love is what makes the difference (in repetition).

The beloved appears unknown to us, implying, enveloping, imprisoning a world that must be deciphered, that is, interpreted. [...] To love is to try to explicate, to develop these unknown worlds that remain enveloped within the beloved.⁸

To try to make meaning out of an affect, to find a word for a sensation, to develop possible worlds enclosed within the beloved, to liberate the souls implicated in things: it passes through a repertoire of emotions. Emotions are the indecisive between affect and cognition, sensations and meaning. Emotions are bodies' stammering between ... and ... and ...

Chantal Akerman's cinema is a material and temporal capture of what has passed invisible in thought, what Deleuze calls a "darker and more agitated world: bodies and qualities which are also bodies, breaths and souls are bodies, actions and passions themselves

7 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia II*, Brian Massumi (trans), London: Continuum, 2003, 311.

8 Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, Richard Howard (trans), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000, 68.

are bodies.”⁹ Her cinematic image works as the surface that maps the traces of movements, e/motions, encounters, that happen in the depths of bodies. This is a mapping which refrains from teaching any lessons, making any judgment, or producing any theory, and thus we have an image as a new ethics of the surface, as pure contact: “follow the border, there is an ethic of surfaces.”¹⁰

Toute une nuit works as a pure surface (no symbolic elements, no metonymy, nothing to interpret); a surface whose expressivity is the temporal figure of the ‘moment’ and, through repetition, the event as the force of the infinitive ‘to love,’ ‘to kiss,’ ‘to leave,’ ‘to embrace,’ ‘to desire.’ This is a surface that incarnates what Bergson calls ‘inner identity,’ that is, the ‘actual apparent state of the human soul,’ constituted by a series of personal e/motions, which are transpersonal, yet highly singular, since they are constituted by each passing moment in particular. The melodramatic delivery that characterizes the film (burlesque gestures weighted with emotion, a theatricalisation of the body encounters) provides time with a heightened tension, a cumulative effect, and every passing moment as e/motion is a climax:

Time is what interferes and transforms. It is divided in moments. A moment is of course a nothing of time. Still it can contain all the climax.¹¹

This is a climax that does not get resolved since everything returns on the surface and gets repeated somewhere else, in another moment, and all surface events communicate in one and the same event, that of love as a limit-experience, wherein forms become delirious, the sensory-motor schema collapses and anticipations shatter, while affect transforms into emotion, into thinking, and back into affect.

Thus an ethics of the surface, the ethics of the image in *Toute une nuit* is not about relationships but about relating, an ethics of love as symbiosis, which means sympathy: “Sympathy is bodies who love or hate each other, each time with populations in play, in these bodies or on these bodies.”¹² Sympathy as becoming together in pathos, in the “transmission of affect,” in “an intense state of emotion,” from one body to another in the felt moment. Here, sympathy is in partiality and acts as an “inequality of affection,” through intensity and on the basis of differences.¹³ Relating not as contract but as contact that is the condition of all possibility and ideality:

9 Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberiam (trans), London: Continuum, 2006, 47.

10 Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, Mark Lester (trans), London: Continuum, 2004, 9-10.

11 Kiki Dimoula, *Definitions (Time)*, (my translation).

12 Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, 39.

13 Gilles Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1991, 38.

Sympathy is not a vague feeling of respect or of spiritual participation: on the contrary, it is the exertion or the penetration of bodies, hatred or love, for hatred is also a compound, it is a body.¹⁴

The ethics of love in *Toute une nuit* finds its expression in *amor fati*, the will to want the event, to want 'to love', to follow up the event without the body and beyond accomplishment, not in a sense of the Lacanian lack (love as disavowal or a mystification of what is impossible), but in the sense of *extraction* and *counter-effectuation*: extracting dynamic elements from passions and actions, from what is happening between the two, from states of affairs. There is thus a counter-effectuating of the event of love that is beyond the bodies that gave it birth, so that from a pathetic wish 'to be loved,' the energy of the surface produces the power 'to love,'

not an absurd will to love anyone or anything, not identifying myself with the universe, but extracting the pure event which unites me with whom I love, who awaits me no more than I await them, since the event alone awaits us, *Eventum Tantum*.¹⁵

Bodies in sympathy refuse continuity and a linear narrative. They speak through breaths, stammering and im/mobility, through embracing and parting, with gaps, interruptions, in their seclusion, in their companionship, from one image to the next, from one moment to the next and the next. The Whole in one night, for just one night.

/// Published exclusively in this volume

14 Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, London: Continuum, 2006, 52.

15 *Ibid.*, 49.

FRAMING THE *WEIRD BODY* IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN CINEMA

BY INA KARKANI

New filmmaking practices within contemporary arthouse cinema are responding to current socio-political realities with new cinematic images of the human body. They center around grotesque characters embedded within plots of comic absurdity. Particularly, since 2009, a Greek film trend has attracted international attention with the film festival premiere of Giorgos Lanthimos's social thriller *Dogtooth* (2009) and its follow-ups *Alps* (2011) and *Attenberg* (2010) by Athina Rachel Tsangaris. The films have been produced in the midst of, and as a response to, the current Greek social crisis, which involves an economic turmoil of rapid transformation and neo-liberalization in a time of ongoing bankruptcy.

Gilles Deleuze acknowledges cinema's genetic value in its "constituting bodies and in this way restoring our belief in the world, restoring our reason."¹ Moreover, it is through the human body that cinema deserves its philosophical merit and forms its "alliance with the spirit and with thought."² The implication of these arguments carries the assumption that the material human body is essentially political and, according to Deleuze, it is so through its ability to move and to "move us into thinking."³ As such, *Dogtooth*, *Alps* and *Attenberg* prove anew that the human body is a dynamic political and affective force with a high ability to negotiate social politics.

Reverberating with Deleuze's formulation of artistic exploration of the human body, the films deal frankly with social traumas through their on-screen interrogation of physicality. *Dogtooth*, *Alps* and *Attenberg* belong to a young generation of contemporary European arthouse cinema that operates through a strong demand to shoot more acute

1 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (trans), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989, 201.

2 Ibid., 189.

3 Ibid.,



Still from *Attenberg* by Athina Rachel Tsangaris (2010)

issues through formal and thematic experimentations. Their interest in the construction of uncanny images of the performing body that create an aesthetically 'weird' physicality, a weird body, aims at moving the viewer to spaces and situations which lie beyond familiar film experience.

Thematically, *Dogtooth*, *Attenberg* and *Alps* portray the lived experience of everyday characters in absurd situations. They are traumatically affected by the insularity of post-capitalism and the effects of paternalism in various households. In *Dogtooth*, the narrative of the family is used as a metaphor for capitalist violence wherein the oppressive regime of patriarchal power and its mechanisms of manipulation is keeping the characters' obedience at bay; *Attenberg* articulates the betrayal of an industrial promise on the example of a deserted industrial coast town and its effects upon the physicality of the protagonist, while *Alps* negotiates its resulting postmodern symptoms, that is, the physical manifestation of the character's identity loss and dispersion.

However, it is within the aesthetics of these films where the implied critique is more genuinely evocative. The films show an interest in portraying the emotional status of the characters through a *mise-en-scene* that has a preference for disorder. Acoustically hyper-stimulated images that picture the characters' bodies in uncanny clarity, a fragmented cinematography that captures limbs, decapitated bodies and off-screen voices make conspicuous the characters' physical and psychological framing — an overall fragmented image of the body that not only frames weirdness, but leads to exhausting viewing conditions.

In *Dogtooth*, for example, captured by an unstable long-shot frame, the older daughter of a family pushes herself at the wedding anniversary of her parents, into a moment of "performative excess," into crescendos of hysteric dance performances until exhaustion and then devours her dessert. Her madness culminates in a subsequent bathroom scene, where in a diagonal line to the camera, she smashes her face with a dumbbell to knock out a *dogtooth* and then escapes from her family prison. Earlier, a similar unstable psychological condition is established through the camera focusing on the lower body parts of the two sisters who anaesthetize each other while their voices speak off-screen, slashing each other to retaliate and, soon after that, commit incest. In yet another moment, the older daughter enacts a scene from the movie *Rocky 4* and, in a close-up, jerks violently toward and away from the camera, bearing out the strikes of an invisible opponent and loses herself in performative, citational grunts. Almost identical moments create unease and spatial uncertainty in *Attenberg*, when the frame focuses on the characters' partial bodies that drop on all fours, hiss at each other like cats in the heat, or, scratch

themselves like monkeys. At other times, a handy-cam follows them as they break into uncontrollable weird dances of their own invention, or, engage in sex scenes that are unnatural and painfully awkward to watch. In *Alps*, the unstable camera close-ups reveal a linguistically anorexic young nurse with eyes that seldom blink and a face that scarcely changes expression. In yet another moment, we can see her play-acting a dead girl, citing half-remembered script lines to provide comfort for the grieving family. In case of failure or complaint however, she endures violent strokes and loses her mission.

The films have been commonly referenced for their weird premises, eerie atmospheres, absurdist dialogue, grotesque humor and illogicality. The terms *weird*, *eerie*, *absurd*, *grotesque* in this context bear a conceptual synonymity as they find a common degree of aesthetic expression within the films and are therefore subsumed under the blanket term *weird*. Usually, the epithet *weird* refers to films of the horror-genre characterizing what lies beyond the ordinary or normal and, therefore, evokes in the Freudian sense uncanniness, or “unfamiliarity” (*das Unheimliche*).⁴ It is within the same conceptual context that many theorists such as Martin Heidegger, Albert Camus and Jean Piaget locate absurdity, namely as something unfamiliar, “either identical or intimately related to the uncanny feeling.”⁵

Furthering this premise, absurdity in *Dogtooth*, *Attenberg* and *Alps*, as portrayed in the characters’ absurd performances and situations of humor, is magnified through a formal interest in images that generate feelings of disorientation. These aesthetic strategies that bear elements of Deleuze’s “aesthetics of the false,” namely, a cinema that embraces aesthetic diversity by opting for alternative means of representation, serve in *Dogtooth*, *Attenberg* and *Alps* as political ploys to address the viewer’s agency: it calls for a sophisticated viewer response in discerning meaning and value with regard to the film’s critical philosophical agenda in portraying characters and situations of uncertainty, ambiguity and ephemerality.⁶

It is within this absurdist context that Marina’s exaggerated physical choreography in *Attenberg* is to be understood. In matching dresses, she and her best friend Bella work hard to perfect silly walk variations in the streets of her bleak industrial town. Each movement is performed in slow motion, broken down to smaller kinetic close-ups and camera angles, as if pointing to what the naked senses cannot distinguish as separate movements. With a mathematically calibrated

4 Sigmund Freud, *Art and Literature: Jensen’s Gradiva, Leonardo da Vinci and Other Works*, Albert Dickson (ed), James Strachey (trans), Vol. 14: The Penguin Freud Library, London: Penguin Books, 1985, 339-376.

5 Katherine Wilthy, *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009, 49.

6 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 137.

camera sound and an overtly saturated color palette, these repetitive studies of the body are reminiscent of a post-millennium version of Eadweard Muybridge's studies of stop-motion photographs that unconventionally disrupt the film's formal as well as thematic flow.

Physical absurdity in *Attenberg* is furthermore reenforced through camera strategies: when Marina invents elaborate ways of wriggling her shoulder blades, the extreme close-up of the moving bones disconnect the shoulder from the body. This invokes a feeling of absurd uncanniness at work, a deviant appearance of physical activity. Such effects of absurdity and the uncanny are generated in Deleuze's concept of the "affection-image": for Deleuze, the close-up is not a partial object but abstracts the object (such as a face) from all spatio-temporal coordinates. It is not an enlargement that requires a translation of dimension, it is an expression which is to be understood by itself — it staves off the image from its conventional spatio-temporal coordinates wherein even the background loses its coordinates and becomes "unheimlich."⁷ The image becomes an uncanny any-space-whatever, a place that has lost its homogeneity, a space of virtual conjunction.⁸

Steven Shaviro formulates contemporary media-art as "digital technologies, together with neo-liberal economic relations that have given birth to radically new ways of manufacturing and articulating lived experience."⁹ His socio-technological statement finds further voice in Laura U. Marks' haptic visuality as well as haptic aurality as suggested by Jean-Luc Nancy.¹⁰ Both notions describe a form of sensory experience, a haptic perception that renders vision as embodied and material.

Alps, for example, portrays the nurse "Monte Rosa" through varied aesthetic components such as color, light, sound and framing to generate instability, fluctuation and ephemerality. The nurse's emotional fragility is perpetrated through tonal alternation — often her pale contour dissolves into the bright pastel tones of delicate blues

7 According to Freud, the "Unheimliche" or "uncanny" belongs to his theory of aesthetics as a quality of feeling. It is related to something that is frightening because it is not known and familiar, something novel that causes "intellectual uncertainty" doubt, ambivalence. Situations that according to Freud might arouse such feelings are doubts whether an apparently animate being is really alive, as for example automata or the impression of automatic, mechanical process at work behind the ordinary appearance of mental activity. Other situations are fear of castration, repetition of coincidences, the phenomenon of the double. see: Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," in Sigmund Freud, *Art and Literature, The Penguin Freud Library Volume 14*, London: Penguin Books, 1985, 339-376.

8 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, London: Athlone Press, 1986, 89-126.

9 Steven Shaviro, "Post-Cinematic Affect: On Grace Jones, *Boarding Gate* and *Southland Tales*," *Film-Philosophy* 14:1, 2010, 2.

10 Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of The Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and The Senses*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000, 2; Jean-Luc Nancy, *Listening*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2007, 5-7.

that aim at de-saturating her, as if denying her solid presence. The film depicts this overt instability of the performing body as its centre of meaningful action. Screening time is devoted to the staging of her different roles in a plethora of indeterminate settings with various groups of people, of her oscillating and floating between moods and modes of life.

The sound follows this thematic through a digital monotonicity, a haunting 'leitmotif' that hints at her entrapment between these various modes of existence, the betwixt loop of being from which she yearns to escape. As if pending between the Deleuzian movement, and time image regimes, her unrequited becoming other is furthermore mirrored through a fragmented and grainy image that liquefies her silhouette and creates often unrecognizable images, evoking through their haptic and aural quality a disquieting and ominous effect on the viewer.

Similar images are articulated in *Dogtooth* where an eerie sound design frames the characters' physicality emotionally as well as formally: often it seems as if microphone particles replace the very pore of the characters' body to capture every swallow and scratch in uncanny clarity, to create distance between the body and its environment.

Such a phenomenological (Deleuzian) understanding opens the films up to affective, hence sensory, readings that evoke sensorially confusing abstractions of the body. *Dogtooth*, *Attenberg* and *Alps*, in this respect, exemplify how film can experiment with given fictional conventions to open up ever new definitions of the human body as the weird body that, in turn, reconfigures the sensory apparatus, film making practices, performance strategies and not least, definitions of the cinematic medium itself.

BUILDING BODY: TWO BRIEF TREATMENTS ON LANDING SITE THEORY

BY ALAN PROHM

*When the social body is wired by techno-linguistic automatisms,
it acts as a swarm: a collective organism whose behavior
is automatically directed by connective interfaces.*

Franco Berardi¹

The variable that in the end prevents happening, defined as the swarm on-rush of events through presence, from collapsing totally into automaticity, destiny, is landing, the surface and voluming of it, and the voluming full of tentativity and potential that flowers in its wake, imaging along. The degree and mode of awareness (reflexivity, imaging) on the landing as it happens, or you/we have it happen as. And world becomes:

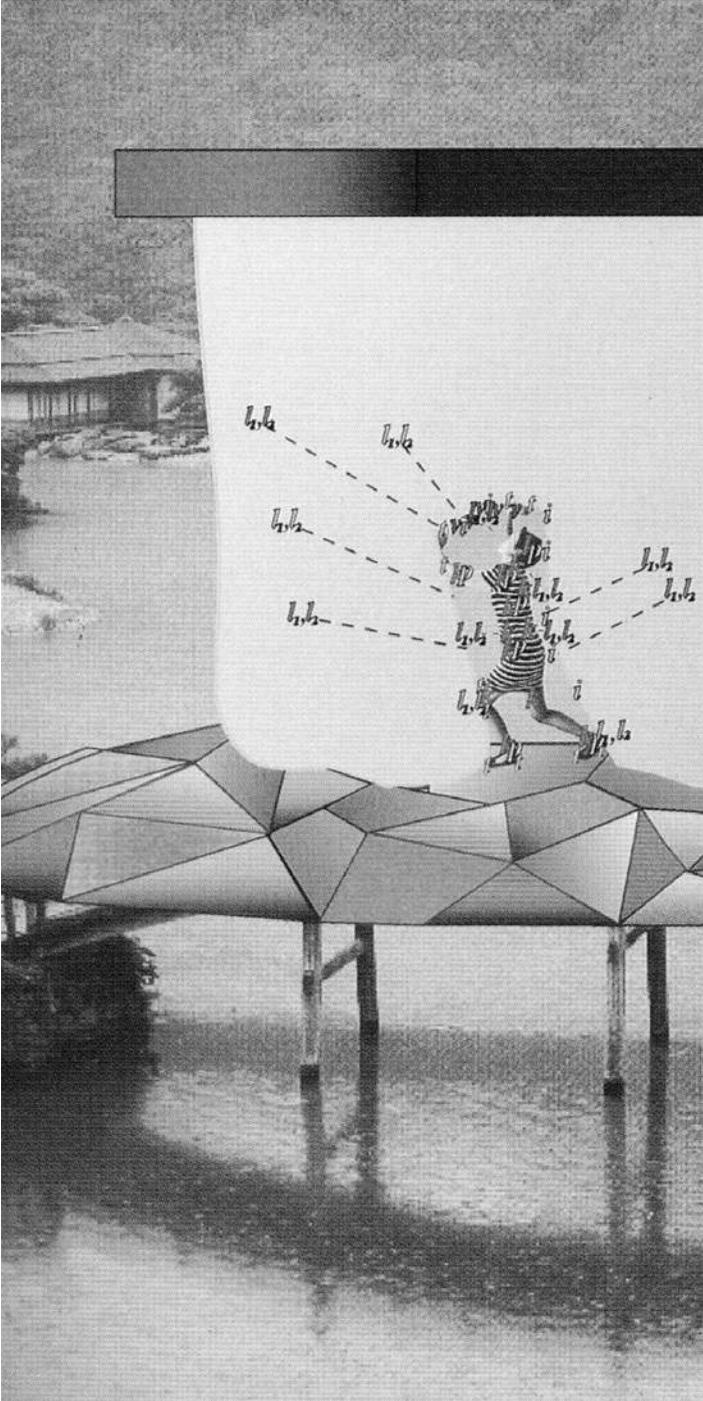
- Perceptual landing site:
visual, tactile, kinaesthetic, auditory, gustatory, olfactory.
- Imaging landing site:
visual, tactile, kinaesthetic, auditory, gustatory, olfactory.
- Dimensionalizing landing site:
perceptual to imaging, imaging to imaging.²

Landing Site Theory (a) — Supercession of Phenomenology, or Some on-the-fly Theory of Everything Happening ///

Landing site theory, thinking the landing and imaging constituting world, is the (more than just a) theory of perception at the core of what artist-theorist-architects Madeline Gins and Arakawa call *biotopology*, an “art-science” defined as less a field of knowledge than a “meadow of knowing,” knowing about/in/as sited awareness, ar-

¹ Franco “Bifo” Berardi, *The Uprising: on Poetry and Finance*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e) (Intervention Series 14), 2012.

² Madeline Gins and Arakawa, Chapter 2: “Landing Sites,” in *Architectural Body*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002.



Ubiquitous Sites by Arakawa & Gins (1987) / Courtesy of Reversible Destiny Foundation

chitectural body, life in sapient-sentience plus the diagramming.³ Biotopology establishes itself as a way of thinking for doing that can address the eventing that is/decides life, and informs the urgent and speculative practice of a procedural architecture, designed to extend it:

If you study hard and always strive to know the full range of the body's capabilities, you will in all probability not have to die.⁴

Landing site theory, at the core of these efforts, staying alive through living as an architectural body, amounts then both to an epistemology, a theory of first-person knowledge building, and to a consciousness practice, a discipline for firming and loosening our hold on landing, happening. Both as epistemology and as consciousness practice, landing site theory is essential for building body. And most probably for not dying. The study of the body, the organism that persons, landing, is the study of how the body can land further, inner, wider, longer, also.

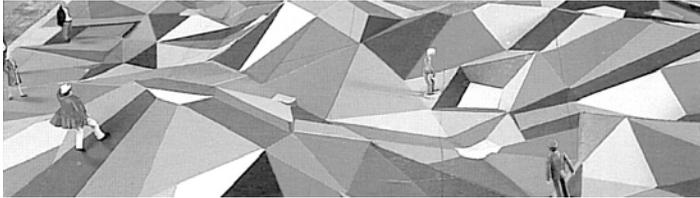
Where its promise seems greatest, is landing site theory's offer of the keys to the secret of holding open the tentativeness of events and everything. Not to stop time, but at least to not die, now, or at any point. With oneself as always the core of one's events, how not to be had by the collapse that happening just passes off as just happening? Not sacrificing active landing to the automatic. Not excluding a single chance or possibility. Holding as many horizons open as far around as necessary, or expedient. Fine insight on/into the acts of fixing and settling that the deciding of events in the end comes down to. Up at the tip of the formation of facts, landing fielding landing into events, we can study the collapse of wide to tight in slowed time with our own eyes and find the points/joints where fate may be made to take the different turn, and as-if Destiny reverses. Help it happen that way. It's all yours.

Reversible Destiny as a project(ile) looks to the extension of consciousness (or sapient-sentience) outward and in every direction, into a more, into a further that is inherent/implicit/potential in the embodied happening of landing and imaging and building. The body has it within itself. Everywhere that isn't disinhabited and lost to the automatic, is living. *Bios* is the cleaving. The topology is a system or knack for keeping track. Procedural architecture is the vision of building for the body in *bios* cleaving, with a topology for staying and staying alive.

3 For more on this "Meadow of Knowing," see Madeline Gins and Arakawa, "Introduction to Elementary Biotopology," in *Making Dying Illegal*, New York: Roof Books, 2006, 56.

4 Ibid., cover.

Through(out) the body, architectural, cast wide, informed by the theorizing of its own landing sites, sapient-sentence's complicity in the infinite visceral intricacy of all the things happening, at once, in line, is strengthened, dispersed and intensified. It is with us, and also within. Everything is more, there is less less. Here all reductions and automaticities run for the hills and hide. Maybe including dying.



Perceptual Landing Sites (II) by Arakawa and Madeline Gins (1981-84)

Body, a having membrane and holding organs, is architectural, is in *Bios*cleaving the cleaving that most supports us being a we, or me being the I that says 'I am.' Body claims its space as sapient sentence shaping personing out of places, and takes, a container containing, life lived out into every eventing as limbs or patches of skin, all of it her, or him, happening. Body is what we have of it, and what we take as us. Like each other. Grow.

So, body is among other things its channels of intake — the more hardwired the more I — what intervenes in the channeling costs and charges — fields collapse from fences and fences grow tight to wire — what does the wiring wins — win the wiring, ladies & gentlemen, that is the only way — and the only way is from within — Out — you are the wiring, ladies & gentlemen, win from within — cast wide. Field. And the fences go flying:

The spreading of the connective modality in social life (the network) creates the conditions of an anthropological shift that we cannot yet fully understand. This shift involves a mutation of the conscious organism: in order to make the conscious organism compatible with the connective machine, its cognitive system has to be reformatted. Conscious and sensitive organisms are thus being subjected to a process of mutation that involves the faculties of attention, processing, decision, and expression.⁵

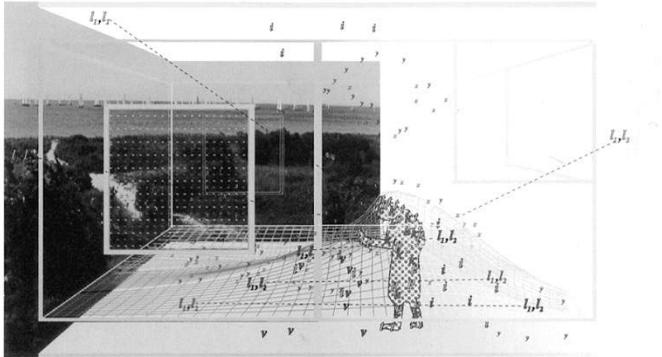
Landing site theory. Allow it to introduce you to the receptive/reflexive texture (landing channeled but untrameled) "this texture that is a distance," "this as-if-woven breathing web of landing sites," through which we/you enter ourselves as the events that seem to contain us, when in reality it is we that field them into place. Beware: the infrastructure that interfaces us is us, Ladies & Gentlemen, including the channels and the diagramming, and currently they, who?, those who own, own a disturbingly large portion of this, us. There is a problem

⁵ Berardi, *The Uprising*, 122.

here. Our *bios*. Their power. Unless ours.
What would it take to grow a body that could stop dying?
Madeline and Arakawa tried.⁶

Landing Site Theory (b) — A Supramodal Science of Active Happening ///

Landing site theory, the core concern of the art/science biotopology, takes the stage of phenomenology and just stands up and starts talking, all on its own accord, at first as a team of two (A+G), using new language with little stop to reference or correlate, new words and ways with words emerging convergent with meeting all the new challenges of this happening actively. How we happen. How to happen. What and how to happen as. This, ladies & gentlemen, is the challenges. And facing such challenges the conscious body wins.



Detail from *Critical Holder Chart 2* by Arakawa (1985-91)

With Arakawa and Gins, landing site theory suddenly comes along in seed form offering to articulate the whole soft interfacing between person-as-organism and person-as-environment. It provides, rule-of-thumb-like, a science of how the happening that's happening appears to happen and how it can be brought to happen actively. It is supramodal in that its base articulations are primordial to the separation of senses and sensory modes, in a dimension of the world-constructing going on within consciousness that all senses draw from and feed into.

Landing locates the initial thinking/eventing, the first of its first philosophy, infra- to the physio-chemico-electric differentiation of sense modalities, in the impact/impulse of anything happening at all in a sensorium, to an awareness. Even the notion of imaging, it must be noted, is supraordinate to the individual modes of imaging as differentiated within the sensory net — and here the word image's general immediate association with visual image, in fact just one of

⁶ Madeline Gins died on January 8 2014, and continues.

its many sub-varieties, must be overcome. Imaging, too, as a term and a force, is beyond the distinction between senses, and points us beyond that, or better *infra*, near-side, *en-deça* of that, to simply the aftering of an impact/impulse of anything happening. What gets built up from there is another story.

The fact of an impact/impulse/tacting/landing/act of happening aftering at all is of course of great importance in the history of consciousness. This is in fact its birth crisis, as some see it.⁷ The capture and seconding of an intake, this, more than just the channeling of physiochemical-electric impulses along the specialized nerve and organ pathways, is the functionality that really makes mind, including body, a quantum leap within the un-foldment of *bioscleave* through organ-ising. Imaging is the retain function that allows for forwarding of any kind and all. So, life, imaging along.



ARCHITECTURAL LANDING SITES

One finds how one's body is situated in the world through contrasting positionings of focal areas of perceptual awareness. Dashed lines show approximations of distances and dimensions, architectural landing sites.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ■ kinesthetic-perceptual landing site | ■ tactile-perceptual landing site | ■ visual-perceptual landing site | ■ indeterminate area or non-landing site |
| ■ kinesthetic-imaging landing site | ■ tactile-imaging landing site | ■ visual-imaging landing site | |



Visualization of Landing Sites by Arakawa and Madeline Gins (1997)

As a phenomenology or the supercession of phenomenology, landing site theory is rigorous about anchoring its construction in the now of current landing, assuring maintenance of the phenomenological reduction, *epoche*, a permanent disclaimer at the basis of any approximative-rigorous thinking practice, holding the world as posited real off in brackets from the alone knowable, the world-in-constitution-as/within-sapient-imaging-along.⁸ In phenomenological terms

7 See Zoltan Torey, *The Crucible of Consciousness: An Integrated Theory of Mind and Brain*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009. The notion of "reflexive awareness," as what distinguishes human conscious thought from animal modes, is based in a mechanism of impression-retention and recallability, permitting "the endogram's accessibility to itself." This conception provides a very important link between Arakawa and Gins's landing site theory and academic neuroscience and theory of mind. See Chapter 6, "Reflection: The Key to Human Awareness," in Zoltan Torey's book.

8 This thinking, on world-constituting, sapient-sentience, imaging along, is articulated most fully in Madeline Gins and Arakawa's still unpublished manuscript, *Alive Forever: Not If but When*.

the point is keeping the needle on noesis.⁹ In landing site theory terms, it is sapient imaging along that never gives up on the landing. The strange flavor of this theory, as some may sense it, is I believe a by-product of it targeting traction on a complexity of within, as Madeline and Arakawa call it, rather than mastery of one from without.

Phenomenology: EGO – NOEISIS – NOEMA
Biotopology: ORGANISM THAT PERSONS – SAPIENT IMAGING
ALONG – BIOSCLEAVE/-ING

What landing site theory lets go of to go forward is the disinterested and hands-off stance in this older mode of thought, and what must be acknowledged as a lethargy common to philosophy quite generally. Phenomenology as a style/profession of theory shows no particular need of going further, toward the realization, becoming lived world, of the better knowing it promotes. Biotopology, as the art-philosophical-scientific project outer-lying landing site theory and underlying *Reversible Destiny*, arises from and carries within it the need to go further, urgently, to actively happening. More. As more architectural bodies. Wider. As organisms-that-person-not-dying.

Landing site theory, which you must build, promises to put this, this short-hand, rule-of-thumb, intuitive, fresh (re-)start phenomenology in your hand, supramodally speaking, of course; so, to undo this reductive metaphor and start over with that sentence we could say: landing site theory puts this less reductive, more more-adducing and acuter mode of knowing in your hand, chest, foot, shoulder, forearm, small of the back, thigh, cheek, liver, tongue, abdomen, base of the skull, left hip, metatarsal tissue, cartilage of the right inner ear, eyeball muscles, soft grey matter, heart, hair, etc., all there, free of charge, ready for you to use. For what? Worlding. That's your job. Where else is it going to come from?

Sapient/purposive imaging takes impressions everywhere of the various parts of the whole it encounters and, in so doing, delivers up world.¹⁰

Landing site theory equips us as worlders, thinkers with a simple set of terms for articulating the worlding we do that way anyway, and for becoming conscious agents within it:

[...] an organism that persons organizes, transforms and redirects bioscleave, countless bioscleavings, step-by-step, by degrees, to constitute world, her world of each moment as imaged.¹¹

9 A helpful, simple text of reference here is by Arakawa and Madeline Gins's good friend, Don Ihde, *Experimental Phenomenology: an Introduction*, New York: SUNY, 1986.

10 Gins and Arakawa, *Alive Forever, Not If, But When*.

11 Ibid.

To catch landing and land on purpose, knowingly, aim. Sapience in the sensing. Sentience as the active intelligence of perceiving. Perceiving to world. A theory of perception will allow you to explain how impressions are taken in. A theory of landing sites empowers the knower/thinker/body to create the world more consciously by embodying it into place. Procedurally. Because the difference between a world happening as it happens and a world happening as you have it happen, better, forever, is procedurality.

And the difference between a world built to happen, and one built to support you from every angle and at every step in having it happen, happening it more, is procedural architecture:

Architecture will come into its own when it becomes thoroughly associated and aligned with the body, that active other tentative constructing towards a holding in place, the ever-on-the-move body.

[...] an architectural surround that is procedural, a tactically posed surround, fills an organism that persons with questions by enabling it to move within and between its own modes of sensing.

The body must either escape or “reenter” habitual patterns of action — habitual actions that have customized life into only a few standard patterns. Upon the body’s mastering new patterns of action, *bioscleave* emerges reconfigured.¹²

Procedurality as an enterprise and a tool involves architecture taking this challenge to build for bodies’ ability/agility to catch landing and imaging as they land, and handle the happening that landing that way advances. It is using this handy/leggy/torsoey/etc., jargon to think then build the happening of the world in event/acts of landing and imaging in their full range of modalities. And to make more life. The premise/promise of this art-science — behind procedural architecture biotopology, and behind biotopology landing site theory — is that procedurality in the activity of happening, supported architecturally, activates the body to greater life and longer. In landing and imaging actively, in constituting world on purpose. Building world by being a body architecturally. Fill it out, and be. More.

So, let's. Yes thank you.¹³

/// Published on May 5, 2014

12 Gins and Arakawa, *Architectural Body*, 62.

13 For the extended version of this text, in homage to Madeline Gins at the time of her passing, see the online version on The Funambulist, <http://thefunambulist.net/2014/05/05/the-funambulist-papers-53-building-body-two-treatments-on-landing-site-theory-by-alan-prohm/>.

43/

A.V. (ANTHROPOCOSMOGONIC VASTUPURUSHAMANISM)

BY DAN MELLAMPHY

*Bottle him!
Have you bottled her?
Samuel Beckett¹*

*He sat naked in his rocking-chair
of undressed teak.
The corner in which he sat
was curtained off from the sun.
Seven scarves held him in position.
Only the most local movements were possible.
Samuel Beckett²*

“The first volume of *The Funambulist Papers* is almost published, and I was coming back to you to know if your text for the second one will still be ready to be published around December as we originally talked about,” wrote Léopold Lambert in an October 2013 E-mail. “Taking the risk of being a bit redundant,” he continued, “I’d like to insist on the importance of addressing the question of the body, [...] as the essays will come from very different people and it would therefore be great to have [one] object of investigation with so many different approaches.”³ *Also sprach der Seiltänzer*: thus spoke the tightrope-walker, and in this way — *ambulatorily*, via *agchibasien* — was the *funis* (‘thread’) furnished for the present foray (this very brief essay).⁴

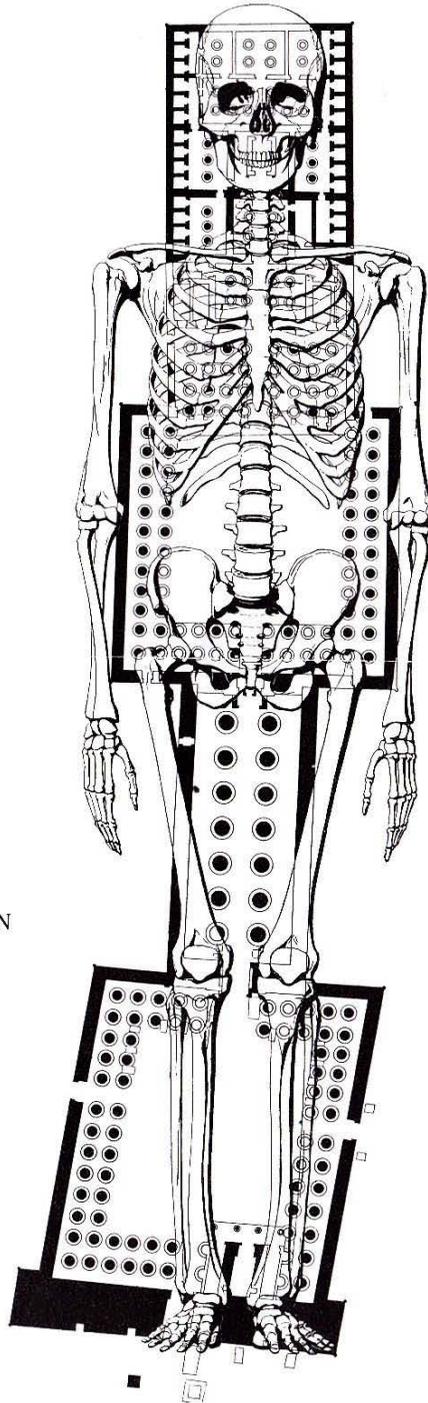
Let us begin, then, by binding the body with a tightrope, the better to parse its particular parts and inspect its peculiar prospects, as if submitting the latter to the hands of Hans Bellmer, perverse *belle-mère* of this *essai* qua *petit papier* (this *petit traité* akin in some

1 Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*, New York: Grove Press, 1958, 10-24.

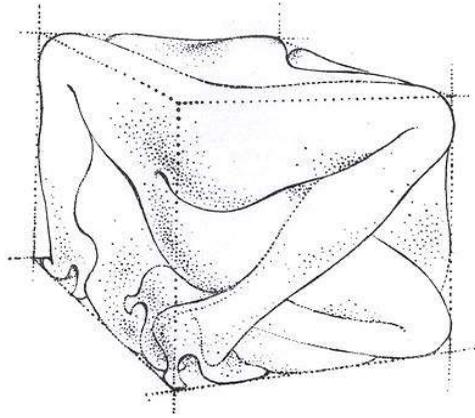
2 Samuel Beckett, *Murphy*, London: George Routledge & Sons, 1938, 1-2.

3 Email conversation with Léopold Lambert (October 2013).

4 Heraclitus, *Fragments*, Brooks Haxton (trans), New York: Penguin Classics, 2003, 123.



ways to Bellmer's *Petit Traité* and *Petite Anatomie de L'Inconscient Physique*).⁵ The binding of the body in the works of both Bellmer and Francis Bacon is like that (the binding) of a butcher, or more frightening still of a murderer ('sacred,' or 'profane', sacrificial or straight-out homicidal). Writing explicitly of this webbing, constricting or binding in the work of Bellmer, Peter Webb wove together the following concrete and conceptual coordinates of these cases/encasements:



In Paris in 1946 [Bellmer] had made studies of women in relation to his [Donatien Alphonse] Sade and [Georges Albert] Bataille projects. Soon after that he had taken photographs of [...] Unica Zürn naked on a bed and in a chair, tied up with string which creates extraordinary folds and shapes in her flesh.⁶ The inspiration for these images

5 Samuel Beckett, "Who now?"... "Where now?"... "When now?" [...] Unquestioning," in *The Unnamable*, New York: Grove Press, 1958, 3. We shall turn to the question of Who [What] Where and When below.

6 Compare this with the opening description in Samuel Beckett's first published novel, *Murphy* (a novel having to do with its titular protagonist's Greek homonym, *Μορφή* — *i.e.*

comes from the photograph of a murder-victim described in [his *Petite Anatomie de L'Inconscient Physique*]: 'A man, in order to transform his victim, had tightly bound her thighs, shoulders and chest with tight metal wire, criss-crossing in all directions, causing blisters, irregular spherical triangles running along the folds of the flesh, unsavoury lips, creating multiple breasts in unspeakable settings.'⁷

Switching for a moment from this Webb excerpt to an excerpt from a study by Peter Kollar,⁸ one could note here that this binding is the *bindu* (बिंदु), the *point*, of architecture — or more precisely the architectural *gesture*: its *pointing* (in this case its pointing *toward* — to *ward* and *precinct* — 'man'). "Architecture 'takes hold' of man, whereas other forms of art have to be 'taken hold of' by him," writes Kollar, condensing in one line a whole thread from the *Vastu-Shastra*.⁹ A binding or building-like 'hold' that, at first glance, might appear more *loose* and *à-l'aise* than the bindings of Bellmer — but that is in fact just as *rigorous* (nevermind rigorously mortal), as Gilles Deleuze amongst others has shown — "the 'cage motif' which Bacon employs in the form of a glass box or podium, as a shrine [or contemplative temple], as bed-posts or simply as cordoned-off space" ("motifs such as ropes, cages, podiums, glass boxes, curtains or rondelles") is and are used both "to isolate" a body "loaded with emotionality, pain, existential fear and psychological depth [that would otherwise overwhelm — indeed destroy — the work]" and to conduct all "attention" — indeed transduce all tension[s] — "with regard to the essential figure" being figured.¹⁰

"It is a very simple technique," states Deleuze ("*elementary*, my dear Watson," as Holmes-sweet-Holmes ne'er did say): "putting the Figure inside a cube, or rather, inside a parallelepiped of glass or of ice; sticking it onto a rail [...] as if on the magnetic arc of an infinite circle; or combining all these means — the round area, the cube and the bar — as in Bacon's strangely flared and curved armchairs."¹¹ This architectural technique, the *yantra* ("literally the 'vessel of yoking', [...] [the] device, sacred diagram, [...] [that is] the foundation of the temple" according to the *Vastu-Shastra*), "do[es] not consign the Figure to immobility but, on the contrary, render[s] sensible a kind of progression, an exploration of the Figure *within the place* or upon *itself*."¹² Deleuze's use of an

with *form[s]* and *formation[s]*, with [*meta*]morphosis and *morphogenesis*), an excerpt of which appears as an epigraph of the present paper.

7 Peter Webb, *Hans Bellmer*, London: Quartet Books, 1985, 232.

8 Peter Kollar, *Symbolism in Hindu Architecture as Revealed in the Shri Minakshi Sundareswar*, New Delhi: Aryan Books, 2001, 7.

9 See for instance Dvijendra Nath Shukla's translation, *The Hindu Science of Architecture*, Lucknow: Vastu Vanmaya Prakashanshala, 1958, 454-465.

10 This by means of "a picture within the picture": Barbara Steffen, "The Cage Motif," in Wilfried Seipel, Barbara Steffen and Christoph Vitali (eds), *Francis Bacon and the Tradition of Arts*, New York: Saint Martin's Press, 2003, 176.

11 Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, Daniel W. Smith (trans), London: Continuum Books, 2003, 1-2.

12 Kollar, *Symbolism in Hindu Architecture*, 88-89.

uppercase F in 'Figure' (and here, in addition, scare-quotes¹³) serves to distinguish it from normative figuration[s]; an important distinction, since the 'Figure' in this case is, as Gilbert Simondon — formative influence (speaking of *forms* and *formation*) on monsieur Gilles Deleuze — puts it in his treatise *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, "the [F]igure of a [G]round," as opposed to a figure *distinct* and *distinguished* from ground (hence we have here a "distinction" by way of *indistinction*, or again a "clarification" by *blurring*).¹⁴

The 'Figure' here is, in its figuration of the ground or ground-figuration, an indistinct "*quidam quelconque*"¹⁵: "[a] quidam, [an] 'unknown,'" which might be described as "a vast pre-individual field,¹⁶ an omnipresent yet essentially amorphous figure [...] that, like the [in]famous 'compound ghost' of T.S. Eliot's fourth and final *Quartet*, is both 'intimate and unidentifiable.' Identities emerge from this field 'only in specific contexts'," with and in the specific confines of *ropes, cages, podiums, glass boxes, curtains* or *rondelles* (as above,¹⁷ so below¹⁸), each one "but a fragment, a particular façade, of the larval being" qua quidam quelconque "hovering vastly over the[ir] shoulders."¹⁹ In the *Vastu-Shastra* this 'Figure' is the *Vastupurushamandala*, the subject of the present essay and of Stella Kramrisch's landmark treatise *The Hindu Temple*.²⁰

"The *Vastupurusha* is the *Anthropocosmos* [qua Pharaonic *pr-aA*]"²¹ wrote Schwaller in "The Hindu Temple" subsection of *The Temple of Man*.²² Although anthropoid, this 'Figure' (the *Vastupurusha qua pr-aA* or *Anthropocosmos*) is not human — hence Schwaller's observation that it "is anthropomorphized but *never humanized*;" Kollar calls it

13 The scare-quotes (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/scare_quotes) that suggest the existence of a ghost in the shell (押井守).

14 Gilbert Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, E.N. Mellamphy, D.A. Mellamphy and N.B. Mellamphy (trans), 2010 (available online at <http://archive.org/details/Simondon--ModeOfExistenceOfTechnicalObjectsInProgress>).

15 Lifting this phrase from Samuel Beckett's, *How it Is*, New York: Grove Press, 1964, 9..

16 See footnote 19 below (re: a related quotation from Bellmer's *Petite Anatomie de L'Inconscient Physique, ou L'Anatomie de L'Image*, Paris: Terrain Vague, 1957, 29).

17 See the epigraphs at the beginning of this essay.

18 Hear 'here'.

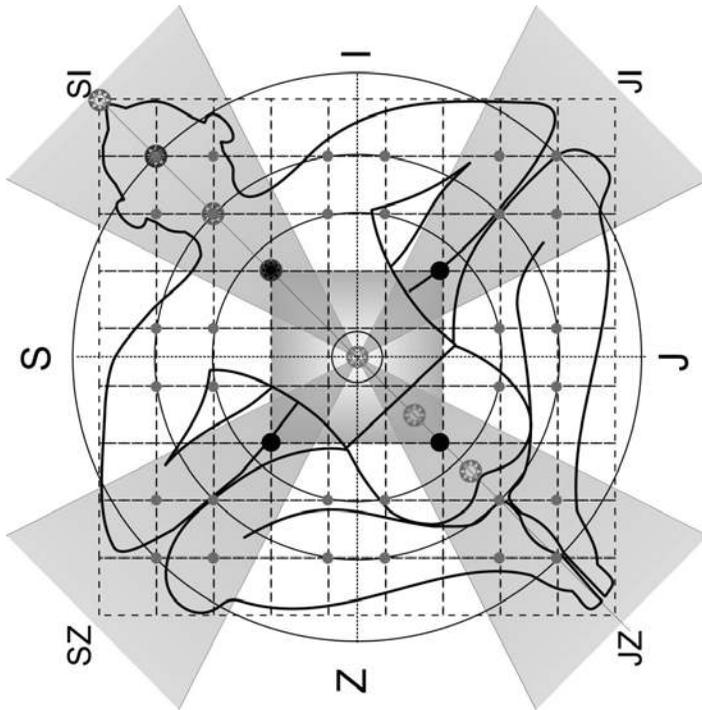
19 Dan Mellamphy, "Alchemical Endgame," in Aaron Cheak (ed), *Alchemical Traditions from Antiquity to the Avant-Garde*, Melbourne: Numen Books, 2013, 636.

20 Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Calcutta: University of Calcutta Press, 1946. René Schwaller provides the Greek translation and explores the Egyptian manifestation of this Vedic conception in his equally monumental study, *The Temple of Man*, cf. Chapter 8, "Du Temple Hindou," in *Le Temple de L'Homme: Apet du Sud à Louqsor*, Paris: Éditions Caractères, 1957, 726-734.

21 The word Pharaoh (*pr-aA*) literally means 'Great House', i.e., an architectural principle; it is the principle (according to René Schwaller) of the *Anthropocosmos* qua *Vastupurusha*.

22 Schwaller, *Le Temple de L'Homme*, 728.

"superhuman," and indeed it is in many respects *Übermenschlich*.²³ "This is the *raison-d'être* of [architectural] symbolism in traditional civilizations, where the main preoccupations are directed toward [...] the knowledge and the attainment of certain states which are 'superhuman': symbolism is used to communicate, as far as this is possible, the nature of the states in question."²⁴ "In civilizations where the tradition is no longer effective or has become largely unrecognizable, symbolism is lost," argues Kollar, "or what is worse, is subverted, since the chief preoccupation of the people shifts to the strictly human, even to the base-material or 'subhuman' level; traditional symbolism hence becomes 'superfluous' since all that is 'worth' communicating can be communicated in human terms."²⁵



The *Übermenschlich Anthropocosmos* qua *pr-a\|Vastupurusha* is, according to the *Vastu-Shastra* a primal, primeval and pre-individual unity (what Simondon would call a "primitive magical unity").²⁶ "Ac-

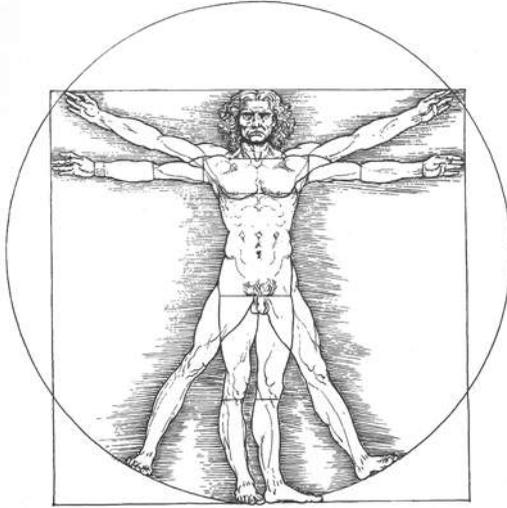
23 Ibid., 27, emphasis in the original. Kollar, *Symbolism in Hindu Architecture*, ix.

24 Kollar, *Symbolism in Hindu Architecture*, ix.

25 Ibid.

26 Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 99; cf. Part III ("The Essence of Technicity") Chapter I ("The Genesis of Technicity"), Section i ("The Notion of Phase Applied to Becoming: Technicity as Phase"), 99-102, *METO III.1.i* (available online <http://archive.org/details/Simondon--ModeOfExistenceOfTechnicalObjectsInProgress>).

ording to the many myths of Hindu tradition, the fall from *unified being* into *separate existence* — or to wax Levinasian, from existence to *existents*²⁷ — “has something frightening, *asuric* and undetermined in its nature. ‘Once there was some existing thing not defined by name, unknown in its proper form in blocked heaven and earth; seeing that, the *Devas* seized it of a sudden and laid it on the earth face-downward. In the same position as they were when they seized it, the *Devas* stayed on it where it lay. Brahma made it full of gods and called it *Vastupurusha*’. [...] Only after this can ‘the existing thing undefined by name, unknown in its proper form’ receive its name, *Vastupurusha*, and its proper form, the square, [fourfold, or quadrature].”²⁸



Here we have a mythic recounting or accounting of “the fundamental procedure from unity to quadrature,” from formless (i.e. unformed) *chaos* to a formal, four[fold]-element *cosmos*.²⁹ The diagrammatic form (*mandala*) of the existent (*vastu*) entity (*purusha*) reflects the quaternity of its elemental existential composition qua deposition — being *fourfold* like the four *chymoi*, *stoicheia*, *purusharthas* (humours, elements, “[anthropological] ends”) etc. — but in a ‘man’ner distinct from the later post-Pythagorean/post-‘Pitha-guru’ and more importantly post-Purushan — hence *human-all-too-human* — models/*mandalas* such as those of Aristotle, the Stoics, and the whole Patristic Tradition that followed in the[ir] aftermath.³⁰

27 Emmanuel Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, Alphonso Lingis (trans), The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978; (re: Alphonso Lingis — translator of *Existence* — and the existent author [of the present essay]).

28 Kollar, *Symbolism in Hindu Architecture*, 49-50.

29 Ibid., 52.

30 See Joseph Rykwert, *The Dancing Column: On Order in Architecture*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996, 69.

Whereas figures such as those outlined by Marcus Vitruvius Pollio in *De Architectura* (his *Ten Books on Architecture*, circa 15 BC — specifically section 1:2-3 of *Book Three*, the book on temples and architectural orders), made famous after its revival in the Renaissance by Leonardo's *mandala* (viz. 'Vitruvian Man' by Leonardo da Vinci, circa 1490), are based on a body with outstretched arms and legs, limbs extended to their maximum range (e.g., "the so-called 'metrological relief' in the Ashmolean Museum" which "shows the top-half of a man's body with his arms stretched-out full"³¹), the V^2 or Vedic Vision by contrast is compact, compacted, confined by (rather than configuring) the *mandala* as such — unextended, in other words, rather than in a state of extension. Extension in the Vedic Vision (the V^2 *Vastupurusha mandala*) gives rise to the building that is based on, and grows out from, the basic *mandala* — a building that stands, according to Schwaller, as an extensive "symbol" of the latter; the *mandala* itself remains purely intensive (hence its association in this essay with the bound figures of Bacon and Bellmer, not to mention Beckett).³²

Extension in the Vedic Vision takes the form of a *dismemberment* moreover, following Book Ten of the *Rig Veda*: as Rykwert explains, "the ninetieth hymn of the *Rig Veda* suggests the creation of the cosmos and of society through a sacrificial dismembering of *Purusha*, the first man."³³ The creation of the cosmos and of society is in other words (in the words of T.S. Eliot, author of *The Waste Land*, during the composition of that poem, in an essay for *The Egoist*) "a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction" of *Purusha* — *Avast!* — into a *Vastu*: an existent form, an existent formulation. *Purusha* as such is a pre-existent, pre-individuated "impersonality": an "impersonality [...] surrendering [indeed *sacrificing*] itself wholly to the work to be done."³⁴ A *Vastu*, then, is its "objective correlative, in other words, a set of objects, a situation [or] a chain of events which shall be the formula for [its] *particular* [manifestation]" and its manifested *Grundstimmung*: its ultimate architectural effect qua affect.³⁵

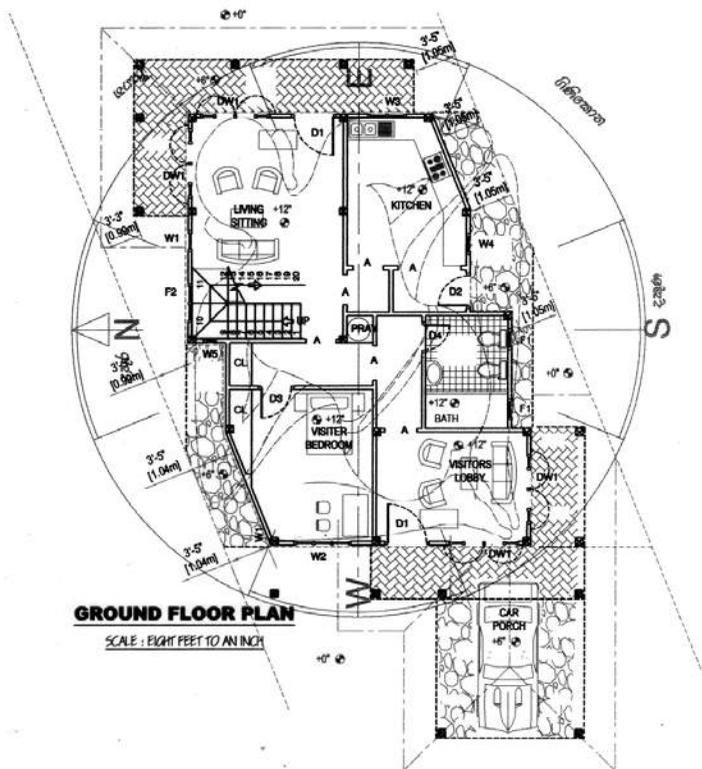
31 Ibid., 99.

32 Architecture in both the Vedic and Pharaonic traditions is "symbolic" according to Schwaller; that is, it is a matter of making symbolic structures—"symbols" as such—that articulate a vast synthesis, manifesting manifold dimensions of the diagrammatical *Vastupurusha*. At the beginning of his treatise on *The Temple of Man*, Schwaller confesses that within [t]his text he is obviously "obliged to use words, which, although they define the idea, are by that very fact misleading. Indeed to speak of the esoteric is necessarily to be exoteric. [...] So, what can we do? We have to use words, but our aim is much higher; only the symbol can translate the synthetic sense of thought. It is a question of evoking that which can no longer be defined. It is thus a 'feeling' that we must bring into being, an 'unexpressed intuition', a 'certainty' for which the word-that-would-not-limit-it is lacking." Schwaller, *Le Temple de L'Homme*, 16.

33 Rykwert, *The Dancing Column*, 72-73; or, quoting Kramrisch, "the *Purusha* sacrifices itself into existence": "it spends itself in an ever renewed, ever proceeding sacrifice by which the universe [and its existents] subsist[s]." Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 68.

34 T.S. Eliot, *The Egoist* 6:4 (September 1919), 54-55.

35 T.S. Eliot, in *The Athenæum* (September 1919), 940-941, emphasis in the original.



Following the diagrammatics of the *Vastupurushamandala*, the particular manifestation and particular architectural affect effected by the individualization of objective correlativization “[is] such that” when all of the facts (“which must terminate in sensory experience”) “are given,” the latter affect and manifested effect “strike us” as if they were the inevitable outcome[s] of the initial gesture (the initiating diagram-*mandala*). Eliot likens this to the trajectory of all great tragedies (as did Nietzsche, in a way, throughout his *Philosophy in the Tragic Age*

This is moreover the symbolic crux of Marshall McLuhan’s movement, in his work, from Typographic Man to [what we might here call] Hieroglyphic Man (cf. Nandita Biswas Melamphy, “Nietzsche’s Pharaonic Thought: Hieroglyphic Transduction,” in *Ozone: Journal of Object-Oriented Studies* 1:1, 2012), based on the architectonic of Edgar Allan Poe and reflected in the principles put forward by Baudelaire, Eliot, and long before them, Leonardo. “Baudelaire and Valéry,” he wrote, “recognized in Poe a man of the Leonardo da Vinci stature. Poe saw plainly that the anticipation of effect was the only way to achieve organic control for the creative process. T. S. Eliot, like Baudelaire and Valéry, gives his entire sanction to Poe’s discovery. In a celebrated passage [...] he writes: ‘The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an ‘objective correlative’; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion’ or affect-effect. “Poe set this method to work in many of his poems and stories”: this “method of artistic [architectural] perception. [...] Such is also the case in symbolist poetry.” Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*, University of Toronto Press, 1962, 276-277.

of the Greeks: his *Philosophie im Tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen* of the late 1870s); for example in the “most successful tragedies” of William Shakespeare “you will find [for instance] that the state of mind of Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep has been communicated to you by a skillful accumulation of sensory impressions; [and] the words of Macbeth on hearing of his wife’s death strike us as if, given the sequence of events, these words were automatically released by the last event in the series.”³⁶ The difference in the case of the *Vastupurushamandala* is that the evoked “state” or *ground-mood* (*Grundstimmung* / “mood” / “mode” / “state [of mind]”) correlates not with an initial human impulse, impetus or catalyst, but rather with a gesture that — although “anthropomorphized” — is ultimately “never humanized” and that accords instead with what Kollar calls the “superhuman,” with the *Übermenschlich Anthropocosmos qua pr-aA|Vastupurusha*.³⁷ This is the conundrum of Hamm in Beckett’s *Endgame* and of Hamlet in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*: the correlations in these cases are beyond the bounds of the *human-all-too-human*, “in excess of the facts as they appear [to the latter]” and a matter instead of architectural gesture — architectural *gesture, gestation* and *suggestion*.



Each [architectural] structure, as the outcome of an [architectural] gesture, is according to Schwaller “an analyzed moment of the *synthesis* [or *associated milieu*]”³⁸: one that arises as a ‘Figure’ — in the Deleuzo-Simondonian sense, hence the uppercase F³⁹ — from what

36 T.S. Eliot, in *The Athenæum* (September 1919), 940-941.

37 Schwaller, *Le Temple de L’Homme*, 27; Kollar, *Symbolism in Hindu Architecture*, ix.

38 Schwaller, *Le Temple de L’Homme*, 44.

39 “The [F]igure of a [G]round” as opposed to a figure distinct and distinguished from ground; Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 113-114.

Kramrisch calls “the Germ of the temple.”⁴⁰ The ‘Figure’ in some respects “hooks” and “catches” the background, bringing [an aspect or aspects of] this background “blackground” to light as this b[l]ackground (“Ground”) in a sense *flings it forth*.⁴¹ Architect and theorist Paul Virilio touched on these ideas in his *Architecture Principe* and *Aube Crépusculaire* when he spoke of the concordant discordance and conjunctive disjunction of *the hook and the whip*, or *brake-pedals/decelerators* and the gear[s] of whip-lashed/far-flung acceleration.⁴² The fact that Virilio, in discussions with Deleuze, found the crossing of flinging/flailing whip and harnessing hook in the ‘Figure’ of Pharaonic metempsychosis (which Virilio then extended to Papal and Pontifical avatars) accords rather remarkably with the statements in Schwaller’s architectural study.



“Ten years ago I did this big exhibit on speed at the Cartier Foundation in Jouy-en-Josace,” Virilio explained to Sylvère Lotinger in *Crepuscular Dawn*; “and what image did I use at first? The Pharaoh. Why? Deleuze and I discussed it quite a bit.”⁴³ It is a matter of *allowing* — indeed *fostering*, *promoting*, *propelling* — given gestures, given movements, while also *engaging* — hence *harnessing* or *capturing*

40 Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 10. A quote from Bellmer: “le germe du désir est avant l’être, le faire avant le moi, le moi avant l’autre” (“the germ of desire is [there] before being, hunger [there] before the I, the I [there] before the other”); Hans Bellmer, *Petite Anatomie de L’Inconscient Physique, ou L’Anatomie de L’Image*, Paris: Terrain Vague, 1957, 29.

41 See Robin Mackay and Reza Negarestani, “Editorial Introduction” *Collapse: Journal of Philosophical Research and Development*, Volume VII, 2014, 33; re: this background blackground qua “b[l]ackground”. cf. Gerard Manley Hopkins (where “each hung bell’s / Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad it’s name”), quoted in Aaron Cheak (ed), *Alchemical Traditions from Antiquity to the Avant-Garde*, Melbourne: Numen Books, 2013, 600-601.

42 See, for instance, Paul Virilio, *Crepuscular Dawn*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2002, 65, where these are likened to the Pharaonic coffin/afterlife-raft complete with crossed arms bearing both whip and hook.

43 Ibid.

— them by hook or by crook, flailing and cracking the whip. Simply *harnessing* or simply *fostering*, simply *catching-hold-of* (be-getting) or simply *letting-go-of* (letting-be) would “be” ([be-]get/let[-be]) of no avail: nothing new would come of it. The Pharaoh with “the two hands crossed on his chest [...] holding on the one side a hook, and on the other a whip” (*ibid.*) is in this sense, like “the Pope [with his] hook or the Bishop [with his] cross” (*ibid.*) and like “Innocent X” — speaking of Popes — ‘X’ed or crossed by curtain-like lines, hooked by rope-rails, caught-up as was Beckett’s Murphy in the *Μορφή* (“Figure”) of a chair (chair = flesh in French) in Bacon’s ‘Study after Velazquez’s Portrait of Pope Innocent X’, what Deleuze describes as the “non-representative, non-illustrative, non-narrative” THERE IS (*L Y A là, ici*) of a [matter-of-⁴⁴] ‘fact’ [qua *quidam quelconque*]:⁴⁵ here (*ici*) there is (*il y a*) a ‘Figure’ flung from the ‘Ground’ as well as a ‘Ground’ flung forth and held there — hooked there, given place there — as a ‘Figure.’

“The relation of the Figure to its isolating place defines a ‘fact’: ‘the fact ...,’ ‘what takes place is ...,’” writes Deleuze.⁴⁶ In a sense, this is what makes Bacon’s Figures (not to mention those of Bellmer and/or Beckett) akin to Egyptian sculpture and/or architecture: “[indeed] there are many things that make Francis Bacon Egyptian” [and we might add here, Hindu, *mightn’t we? oui, bien sûr!*], states Deleuze.⁴⁷ Bacon *himself*, notes the latter, publicly declared “his love for Egyptian sculpture” (and perhaps privately also that of the Hindus⁴⁸) what’s more. “A painting by Bacon has an Egyptian look to it” — *all the more* so because its anthropoid forms are inhuman: or rather, because *their relation to “humankind is an accident”* rather than an “essence.”⁴⁹ The essential is not the *human-all-too-human*: the latter is an *after-effect* — albeit an after-effect that brings into being the “analyzed moment” and its analytical monument. What gives rise to this moment and this monument is that “magical diagram” or “yantra” described at length in *The Hindu Temple* for instance, and *The Temple of Man*, while only very briefly touched-upon in the present essay, as the yantra of the Vedic *Vastupurushamandala* and Pharaonic *pr-aA* qua inhuman (pre-/post-human) *Anthropocosmos*.⁵⁰

/// Published on November 21, 2013

44 What’s the matter here? (namely the hitherto-unnamed ‘matter’ qua ‘matrix’ in play: that of the now-named hence so-called *Vastupuruhamandala/pr-aA/Anthropocosmos ‘man’/fested* — i.e., ‘individuated’ — in-the-flesh*-and/or-stone, or thrown on the throne*).

45 Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 100-2.

46 *Ibid.*, 2.

47 *Ibid.*, 123.

48 (insérez ici un clin-d’œil crépusculaire) ;-)

49 Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 135.

50 Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Schwaller, *Le Temple de L’Homme*, 27.

51/

GHOST IN THE SHELL-GAME: ON THE *MÈTIC* MODE OF EXISTENCE, INCEPTION AND INNOCENCE

BY NANDITA BISWAS MELLAMPHY

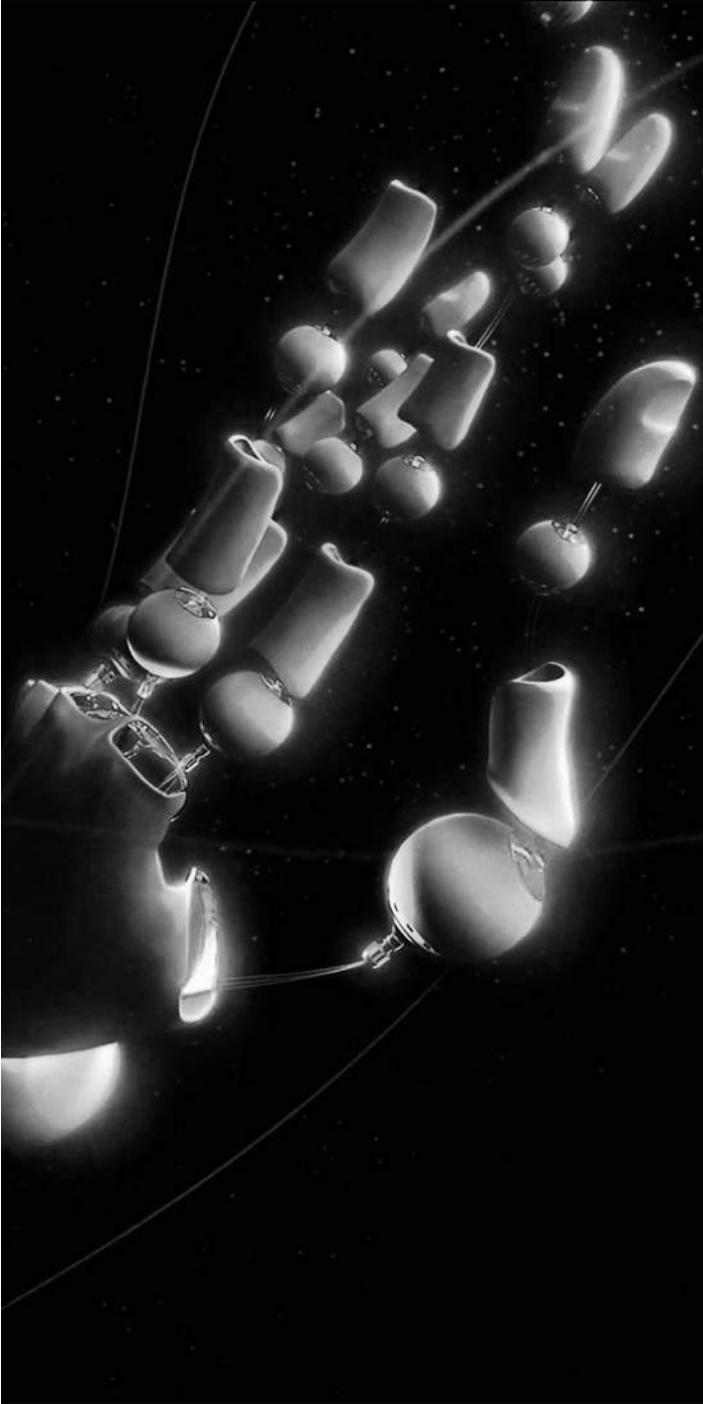
I begin, then, properly, in and with the proper voice (that of Pierre Ménard).¹ To begin, then, anew:

The purpose of this study is to create an awareness of the significance of technical objects. Culture has become a system of defense against technics; now, this defense appears as a defense of man based on the assumption that technical objects contain no human reality. We should like to show that culture fails to take into account that there is a human reality in technical reality and that, if it is to fully play its role, culture must come to incorporate technical entities into its body of knowledge and its sense of values. Recognition of the modes of existence of technical objects should be the result of philosophical thought, which in this respect has to achieve what is analogous to the role it played in the abolition of slavery and in the affirmation of the value of the human person. The opposition established between culture and technology, between man and machine, is false and is not well-founded; what underlies it is mere ignorance or resentment. Behind the mask of a facile humanism it hides a reality that is rich in human efforts and natural forces, a reality that constitutes the world of technical objects, mediators between nature and man.² In Mamoru Oshii's *Inosensu* (a.k.a. *Ghost in the Shell 2*),³ the inextricability of human and technical realities suggests that the established opposition between

1 Jorge-Luis Borges, "Pierre Ménard, autor del Quijote," in *Labyrinths*, Daniel Yates (ed), New York: New Directions, 1962, 36-44.

2 Gilbert Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, E.N. Mellamphy, D.A. Mellamphy and N.B. Mellamphy (trans), 2010, (available online at <http://archive.org/details/Simondon--ModeOfExistenceOfTechnicalObjectsInProgress>). This passage, however, is not "quoted" here, in the name, again, of Pierre Ménard.

3 Footnote 13 of the previous chapter; this essay, in certain respects, emerges from (and extends) that footnote, as well as (emerges from and extends) an early essay by that very same author, written when the latter was about to begin his *mètic* master's degree (M.A.).



Still from *Ghost in the Shell 2 Inocensu* by Mamoru Oshii (2004)

culture and nature, human and machine, is not only easily subverted, but ultimately so falsifiable that it can be technically manipulated so as to shed light on a dimension that remains indiscernible to humanism: that it is by way of technical objects and technical existence that human beings most authentically relate to their living milieu and to living processes. Humans play with dolls/automata/avatars and wear masks (faces, façades) as part of their everyday lives, but they are ultimately blind to the technical connectors that animate them: "Life and death come and go like marionettes dancing on a table. Once their strings are cut, they easily crumble."⁴



Still from Mamoru Oshii's *Inosensu* (2004)

Echoing Kleist's riveting claim that puppets are like gods, in Oshii's film the technical object is, on the one hand, the tragic protagonist that must be liberated (very much as Simondon had envisioned in his introduction to *METO*),⁵ and on the other, already more liberated than the human.

the definition of a truly beautiful doll is a living, breathing body devoid of a soul [...]. The human is no match for a doll in its form, its elegance of motion, its very being [...]. Perfection is possible only for those without consciousness, or perhaps endowed with infinite consciousness.⁶

And yet humans use and abuse them, enslave them without a second thought. Humans have even transferred this logic of abuse onto other humans; according to the ancient Greeks, for example, the slave was an animal machine (this idea was later modified by Descartes) and therefore not governed by political laws and philosophical principles.⁷

4 Dialogue in Mamoru Oshii's *Inosensu* by Batô

5 Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*.

6 Dialogue in Mamoru Oshii's *Inosensu* by the renegade Kim.

7 Book One of Aristotle's *Politics*, New York: Dover Publications, 2000, Chapters iv-vii; Georges Canguilhem, Simondon's teacher, incisively articulates the set of questions that

Humans get rid of robots as soon as they are superfluous or obsolete. When constantly exchanged for newer models, some of these machines find themselves abandoned, lost, and without proper maintenance, they degrade and degenerate [...]. 'Humans are different from robots': this is as obvious as saying 'black is not white' or simply that 'man is not a machine' [...]. But why this obsessive idea humans have to want to re-create themselves? [...] In every age, children are excluded from the norms of human behavior (insofar as we consider 'human' a being having its proper identity and acting autonomously). But then what is a child that endures the chaos preceding maturity? — It differs profoundly from 'human' beings while nevertheless possessing human form. A young girl who cradles her doll does not cradle a thing replacing a baby, nor an object of maternal apprenticeship.— Neither does she imitate a mother raising its child. No: she undergoes an authentic experience; she experiences the profound nature of what it means to raise children. Raising children is the simplest way to realize an old dream of humankind: that of creating life artificially.⁸

This is perhaps the 'reality' that is masked by the longstanding opposition between humanity and technicity, a reality that is supposed to constitute both the world of technical objects as well as the world of inner memory and subjectivity. "If the essence of life is information carried in DNA, then society and civilization are just colossal memory systems, and a metropolis like this one, simply a sprawling external memory" (*Inosensu*). In this view, the organic — including such metaphysical concepts as intentionality and identity — can no longer be conceived as separate[d] from its technical articulation and individuation. It is not that the body disappears in Oshii's rendering; it is almost as if sexualization and gendering become 'wearable' technologies that can be tactically manipulated and recoded to produce further (often monstrous) avenues of individuation.⁹

arises when considering the opposition between nature and culture, human and technical object, master and slave as developed by the ancient rationalist tradition: "The slave, according to Aristotle in the *Politics*, is an animated Machine. This is the crux of the problem to which Schuhl only alludes in passing: Did the Greek conception of the dignity of science lead to their disdain for technique and the resultant paucity of inventions? And did this in turn lead to the difficulty of applying the results of technical activity to the explanation of nature? Or, rather, did the Greeks' high regard for purely speculative science and detached contemplation explain the absence of technical invention? Did their disregard for work cause slavery, or did the abundance of slaves due to military supremacy explain their low regard for work? Are we obliged to explain the ideology in terms of the socioeconomic structure or, rather, the socioeconomic structure in terms of the ideology? Did the ease of exploiting human beings make it easier to disdain the techniques that would allow them to exploit nature? Does the arduousness of exploiting nature justify the exploitation of man by man?": Georges Canguilhem, "Machine and Organism" in Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter (eds), *Incorporations: Zone 6*, New York: Zone Books, 1992, 49.

8 Dialogue in Mamoru Oshii's *Inosensu* by Haraway.

9 It is well-known that Oshii was inspired by the grotesque dolls of Hans Bellmer. See Steven Brown, *Tokyo Cyberpunk: Posthumanism in Japanese Visual Culture*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Outside the schema of the *logos* — of *words, reasons, rationalizations*, standard *measures* — established oppositions between ‘nature and culture,’ ‘humanity and technicity,’ ‘spirit and body,’ *et cetera*, find themselves reticulated (inter-connected) as elements within a ubiquitous technical network of ongoing modifications, which Simondon characterizes as being in a constant and constitutive process of ‘transduction.’ Technical objects are ‘mediators’ (mediations) between ‘man’ and ‘nature’ not only in an ‘instrumental’ sense but also in an altogether ‘constitutive’ sense; from this vantage (as Oshii, for instance, suggests), rather than ‘bodies’ and ‘souls’ we see instead ‘shells’ and ‘ghosts’. In Oshii’s *Inosensu*, death is not the cessation of life; rather, bodily life is the technical animation, individuation and articulation of death (inertia). *Life* (*æmæth* in the Hebrew text at the heart of *Inosensu*: the animating ‘truth’) is portrayed as an artifice of *death* (*mæth*) embodied in the *ningyō* — literally ‘human-shaped figures,’ anthropoid forms — without consciousness. “By inscribing *æmæth* upon the Golem’s brow, the clay man lived, drawing energy from the word for ‘truth’. But simply removing the *æ* to form *mæth* or ‘death’ returned the Golem back to inanimate clay” (Hebrew Kabbalah paraphrased in Oshii’s *Inosensu*). Only the puppet truly experiences both life *and* death: life as the animation of death (something impossible for human self-consciousness). “People die simply because it is inevitable. But death is a condition of life for a doll.”

Whereas *Inosensu* explicitly questions the value of consciousness for an understanding of the human and humane (e.g. the most ‘human’ relationship in the film is between a cyborg and a cloned canine!), Christopher Nolan’s film *Inception* suggests that although consciousness is limited (that is, ill-equipped to process all the data streaming into it), it too functions by way of technical manipulation and artifice. Our world is full of *gaps, blank areas, dead-spaces, blind-spots*, and the latter tend to be problematic for humans conceived in intentional and rational terms; but this is not the case for non-conscious/non-human operators, which in Oshii’s film are masters of *métic métis-sage* (i.e. able both to *make* and *maneuver* in the ‘gaps,’ ‘blanks,’ ‘dead-spaces’ and ‘blind-spots’ of what could be called ‘aporetic architecture’). Just as Oshii’s anthropomorphic *ningyō* explicitly allude to Hans Bellmer’s dolls (which themselves transgress the human/machine boundary),¹⁰ so also Nolan’s depiction of the manipulability of consciousness in dream-states is inspired by the gestural art/artifice of Francis Bacon (“bringing us back by a commodius vicus of recirculation” to the last chapter): “I quite like the paradoxical nature of the [fact that] [...] the less [Bacon] tells you about what’s there, the more I find myself thinking about [it]. [And] Because you never have the resources to fully create the world that you’re creating, you are leaving a lot of void — you’re leaving a lot of gaps — and so part of what you start trying to do is use those necessary gaps intelligently,

10 Brown, *Tokyo Cyberpunk*, 23.

so that where you're not showing something, it's helping you rather than [giving you a] feeling [of and for] the limitations of the world you're creating."¹¹

The kind of *intelligence* to which Nolan alludes here is not mobilized through intentionality, logical thinking, or the framework of *logos* (or indeed the search for capital-*T Truth*: a Truth beyond all deception[s]); instead it *conducts*, *transducts*, and *instructs* itself via randomness, *aporia*, *kairos* and *mètic hexis* (crafty cunning, mechanisms of manipulation). Throughout the labyrinthine twists and turns of the latter lies the question — and *quest* — of artifice (truth as deception, or if you like: “truthiness” — as the *mètic* master of and on televisual media, Sir Stephen Colbert, might have said):

They say we only use a fraction of the true potential of our brains [...] but they're talking about when we're *awake*. While we *dream*, the mind performs wonders [...]. *In a dream* your mind continuously does that: it creates and perceives a world *simultaneously* — *so well*, in fact, that you don't feel your brain doing the creating. And that's why we can short-circuit the process [...] by taking over the creating part.¹²

There is no “*Inception*” without *deception* in Nolan's film; not only can consciousness be deceived, it is *always* being deceived. The dream-state in Nolan's film is a stochastic ‘field’ or ‘plane of immanence’ (and the “stochastic intelligence” described in Sarah Kofman's treatise on *Poros* and *Mètis*¹³): one which, as in Oshii's vision of unconscious (‘pre’- and/or ‘post’-conscious) anthropomorphism, operates as a “perfect” and “dangerous” field of possibilities.

Cunning intelligence, or the *mètic* mentality, is a mode of dissimulation (involving risk and play) that proceeds by way of skillful handling or manipulation, rather than by way of *logos* or ‘logical measures’ (e.g. logical speech and rationality); by “*tricks* [rather] than by general methods.”¹⁴ This manipulation must always involve an artfulness — a ‘gaming,’ even ‘gambling’ instinct — that creates opportunities out of the gaps and weaknesses in environmental informational resources: “challenging the fatalism of the moralist, the gambler is he who, in the face of no matter what situation, thinks that *there is always something he can do*.”¹⁵ For the *mètic* player, there is no ‘knowledge’ without the gaming ‘skill’ and ‘instinct’ of ruse, of cunning, and of

11 “Film Meets Art: Christopher Nolan, Inspired by Francis Bacon,” on youtube.com (November 26, 2013).

12 Dialogue in Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010) by the con-artist Cobb.

13 Sarah Kofmann, *Comment s'en sortir?*, Paris: Éditions Gallilée, 1983, 14.

14 René Thom, *Modèles Mathématiques de la Morphogenèse*, Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1974, 300.

15 *Ibid.*, 297.

acting at the decisive instance (indeed in the stance /movement-space and decisive-moment/instance) in order to accomplish a trick or *truc*.¹⁶ This is the attitude of the con-man who uses *sleights of reason*¹⁷ to perform *sleights of hand*: “that which, in the last analysis, justifies the gaming attitude is the fact that the only conceivable way of unveiling the black box, is to play with it.”¹⁸ These gaming skills are also the same used by the skilled hunter: corporeal agility including quick-wittedness (e.g. the *dromikos* of a skilled runner, the *agrupnos* of the vigilant watcher, the *stochazesthai* or keen eye of the great marksman) and skills of dissimulation (“the art of seeing without being seen” in the words of D tienne and Vernant).¹⁹



Still from Mamoru Oshii's *Ghost in the Shell* (1995)

M tic mentality is thus intimately involved with bodily conditions (*hexeis*; singular *hexis*; synonymous in many respects with the Sanskrit *vastu*) which are themselves “indistinguishable from habits and practices.”²⁰ Dissimulation here is synonymous with dissimulative bodily states: “thought does not just happen within the body, it happens as the body.”²¹ *M tis* always involves a *m tissage*,²² a [ghost-in-the-]shell-game involving pretense, the mixing and mixing-up of

16 A *truc* in French” is “a tricky little ‘device’, ‘gizmo’, ‘gimmick’ or ‘thingamajig.’

17 See Mary Beth Mader, *Sleights of Reason: Norm, Bisexuality & Development*, New York: SUNY Press, 2011.

18 Thom, *Mod les Math matiques de la Morphog nese*, 298.

19 Marcel D tienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Les Ruses de L'Intelligence: La M tis des Grecs*, Paris: Flammarion, 1974, 35-36.

20 Debra Hawhee, *Bodily Arts: Rhetoric and Athletics in Ancient Greece*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004, 58.

21 *Ibid.*

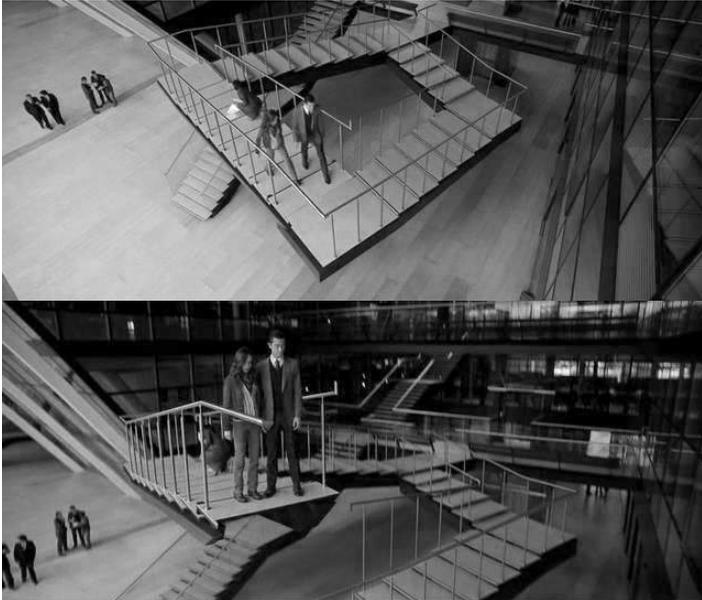
22 Dan Mellamphy, “YOU, the U-Bomb, or ‘YOU-bomb goes Kabloom’: An Essay on Anonymity, Risibility and Quantum Subjectivity,” *The Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* XXIII:ii, 1996, 426-455.

appearances and consistencies, corporeal quantities and qualities in order to be able to do something that gains advantage. Thus cunning intelligence since Greek antiquity has involved the ability to deceive by way of the *technical* manipulation of appearance and multiplicity (*i.e.* abilities to alter and morph *bodily conditions* or bounded *physical states* of any kind). The countless cunning conceits (*polyMètis*), streaming series of stratagems (*polymèchanos*) and ubiquitous ‘U-turns’ (*polytropos*) of Ulysses, attest to the artfulness of a *mètic* mathematician who invokes the mathesis of *Mètis* and its *métissage*[sse] when faced with “a puzzling local situation” for which ‘universal reason’ (*logos*, the logistics of ‘logic’) proves inadequate: “All the major achievements of mathematicians are due at the outset to ‘artfulness’: a paradoxical situation, for in mathematics — a science of exemplary rationality — progression is accomplished more by *tricks* than by *general methods* of great weight.”²³

Articulating itself techno-mechanically (as *polymechanoi*) via cunning chthonic twists and turns (*polytropoi*) that *polymètically* pull[s]-into-being-or-action what which would otherwise remain mere *potential*, the architecture and architectonics of deception in *Inception* make technical use of *traps*, *tricks*, *gestures*, *suggestions*, *forgeries*, *impersonations*, mirror-reflections, staircases, labyrinths and other sorts of hooks and/or bait that play with the limitations of physical boundedness. The team of technicians qua assembled con-artists consists of agents whose functions in Nolan’s *Inception* are those first of confusing *construction* (for “the architect” Ariadne, the *web-spinner*), second of drug-*decoction* (for “the [a]chemist” Yusuf, le souffleur), third of *impersonation* (for “the forger” Eames, the *not-what-(s)he-seems*), fourth of the watcher and gatekeeper (for “the watcher and gatekeeper” Arthur, *rounding-out* the four-square round-table), and fifth — *quintessentially*, as the *pempte ousia* in the midst of the previous four-square/round-table — of “*Inception*” and/or of “extraction” (for “the Inceptor” and/or “the Extractor” Mr. Cobb, a husk of a man who manages to infiltrate — incept-and/or-extract — other men’s husks in this splendid shell-game). The “*Inception*” or “extraction” always begins with an aporetic architectural diagram/*yantra*, in this case that of a circular maze: a labyrinth explicitly situated outside the domain of *logos*, as the character Cobb confesses to the architect Ariadne (these deceptive designs and their *mètic métissage* are “not, strictly speaking, legal,” he tells her).

Deception is embodied from the outset in that aporetic architectural *design*, *diagram*, *mandala* or *yantra*, which is *gestural* in that its aim is less that of *representation* and *expression* than that of *suggestion* and *impression*. “This architectural technique, the *yantra* (‘literally the ‘vessel of yoking’: [the] device, sacred diagram, [that is] the Foundation of the temple’ according to the *Vastu-Shastra*), ‘do[es] not con-

sign the Figure to immobility but, on the contrary, render[s] sensible a kind of progression, an exploration of the Figure *within the place or upon itself*," writes Dan Mellamphy in the previous chapter (referring in this passage to Stella Kramrisch, Gilles Deleuze, the *Vastu-Shatra* and *The Logic of Sensation*). Like Oshii's sublime puppet animated by its strings (strings that intertwine its 'Figure' with its milieu and/or 'Ground'), *mètic* mentality is corporealized in the tricks and traps of paradoxical or aporetic architecture. 'Body' becomes the interface of Figure and Ground, at times appearing distinctly as Figure, and at times remaining indistinguishable from Ground (hence becoming its associated milieu).



Stills from Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010)

In a dream you can cheat architecture into impossible shapes" explained Cobb at the outset of *Inception*. "That [fact] lets you create closed loops, like the Penrose Steps, the infinite staircase, [...] paradox[es of all kinds]. A closed loop like this helps you disguise the boundaries of the dream you've created.²⁴

The *mètic* mentality relies on its technical finesse, on its ability to invent ways out (*poroi*), ways of getting out of *aporias* (spaces in which there are no apparent ways out):

Where indeterminacy (*apeiras*), reigns [there is] the absence of limit and direction — obscurity; where you are trapped, surrounded, prisoner of inextricable entanglements, it is *Mètis* that intervenes — inventing strategies, expedients, tricks, ruses, machinations, *méchanè*

²⁴ Dialogue in Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010) by the gatekeeper, Arthur.

and *technai*, in order to go from absence of limit to determination, from obscurity to light.²⁵



Stills from Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010)

Within *logos*, reality is understood to be involved in a complex dynamic of appearing and disappearing making 'truth' a process of 'unconcealment'; the pursuit of 'truth' becomes synonymous with the systematic separation and exclusion of deception from knowledge. But from the *mêtic* perspective, the complex dynamic is understood completely differently; it is the perspective required of the hunter/gamer who must survive not by logic but by cunning. Consciousness, intentionality and experience 'turn out' to be constructs within a fundamentally deceptive environment of asymmetrical conflict between predator and prey.

Dissimulation, the "ability to see without being seen,"²⁶ depends entirely on seizing decisive moments (not on *chronos* or *æon* but on *kairos*) and on making them tactical weapons, moreover, within a theatre (or network: a 'net') of predatory operations. In *Inception*, the *mêtic* operants act as 'hunters' within a *mêtic* theatre of operation — the target's subconscious — but the *mêtic* operant must also see *itself* as "hunted,"²⁷ as bait for the traps of other *mêtic* operators within

25 Kofmann, *Comment s'en sortir?*, 16.

26 D tienne and Vernant, *Les Ruses de L'Intelligence*, 36.

27 This is a point also made by Gr goire Chamayou: "hunting presupposes a form of empathy with the prey: to track prey effectively, one has to put oneself in its place." The hunt is "not a fight among equals": Chamayou, *Manhunts*, 65.

a magical milieu (e.g. in *Inception*, the weaponizability of the subconscious and the ever-threatening “projection” of Mal, Cobb’s dead wife — yet another ghost amongst shells). In the dream-state, any awareness or self-consciousness is always constituted by deception and illusion, and so self-consciousness is haunted and tainted by self-deception and the mentality of traps: are ‘you’ who ‘you’ think you are? How are ‘you’ lure or bait for something else? The mode of existence of technical objects is *mètic*. *Inception* plays out a *mètic* view of asymmetric war between deceptive operants in a deceptive milieu of operation.

Although it employs and deploys both military and political tactics, the *mètic* model of asymmetric war (based on predator/prey ecology) is not inherently military or political if one considers the close relation between *agon* and *logos* in occidental thought (the struggle — *agon* — between equal opponents being the basis both for the military and the communicative/political model of ethics). The face-to-face contestation between equal opponents in war is also the tendency of political association that enables the intertwining of various *logoi*, and hence making possible public *dia-logoi* or dialogue. *Logos* governs the logic of war and political association in the history of the occident. *Mètis*, in contrast, is the mode of intelligence that belongs not to war or the city but to technics, namely the machinations of hunting and trapping (not symmetrical and *agonistic* but asymmetrical and deceptive).

One of the problems in the study of warfare today is that it has identified elements of asymmetry in the paradigm of war that cannot be understood within ‘the governing logic’ of war as ‘symmetrical’ and ‘*agonistic*,’ and yet it does not know how to make sense of asymmetric warfare outside of the *logos*-driven framework of occidental thinking;²⁸ asymmetry outside the laws of war is simply called “terrorism.”²⁹ But, as I argue here, the very *mode of existence of technical objects* is *mètic*. As such, it is not simply that *mètic* warfare “makes use of” ruse[s]:³⁰ *mètic* wars are *designed* and *conducted* as (i.e., in *terms* of, along the [twisted and turning] lines of) ‘ruse,’ ‘rebus,’ ‘riddle,’ and cunning conceit[s] (in this sense, the mythic sphinx’s riddles can be seen as an example of *mètic* warfare) such that any possible solution to a problem of (and in) war is discovered only through the twists and turns — labyrinthine lines — of technics rather than straightforward logics/logistics. Moreover, whereas the aim of dialogical persuasion

28 This is notable, for example, in light of the absence of any mention of the concept of ‘cunning intelligence’ in Grégoire Chamayou’s recent work on predation and warfare in *Manhunts: A Philosophical History*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012

29 Take for example the concept of ‘asymmetric enemy’; see Gal Hirsch, “On Dinosaurs and Hornets: A Critical View on Operational Moulds in Asymmetric Conflicts,” in *RUSI Journal*, (August 2003), 60-63.

30 Chamayou, *Manhunts*, 71.

is to change another's thinking — this is the point of *dia-logoi* — *mètic* persuasion aims directly at changing bodily conditions (*hex-eis*), thereby automatically changing the target's thinking process. “For Empedocles says those who change their bodily conditions (*hexin*) deem to change their thought (*phronesin*).”³¹

The persuasive techniques of *mètic* war would thus be found not in deliberative/communicative political models and strategies, but instead in the manipulative tactics of marketing and public relations.³² *Mètic* warfare, which manipulates the boundaries of classical warfare (e.g. the military logic/logistics of defining a ‘theater of war’) thus plays on *æsthesis* and depends on *manipulative, technical tools* rather than on *logical/dialogical* principles (be these in the guise of military ‘reason’ or communicative ‘ethics’). Where *logos* sees ‘minds’ and ‘bodies,’ the technics of *mètic* war (like the marionettes of Kleist and Oshii) see[s] ‘shells’ animated by ‘ghostly strings’ that are inextricably bound to a broader (albeit obscure or occluded) associated ‘machinic milieu.’ To consider war and politics from the perspective and on the basis of such *mètic* mentality is to discern it from a technically *anthropomorphized* but never quite *humanized* (human-all-too-human) perspective.

/// **Published on December 4, 2013**

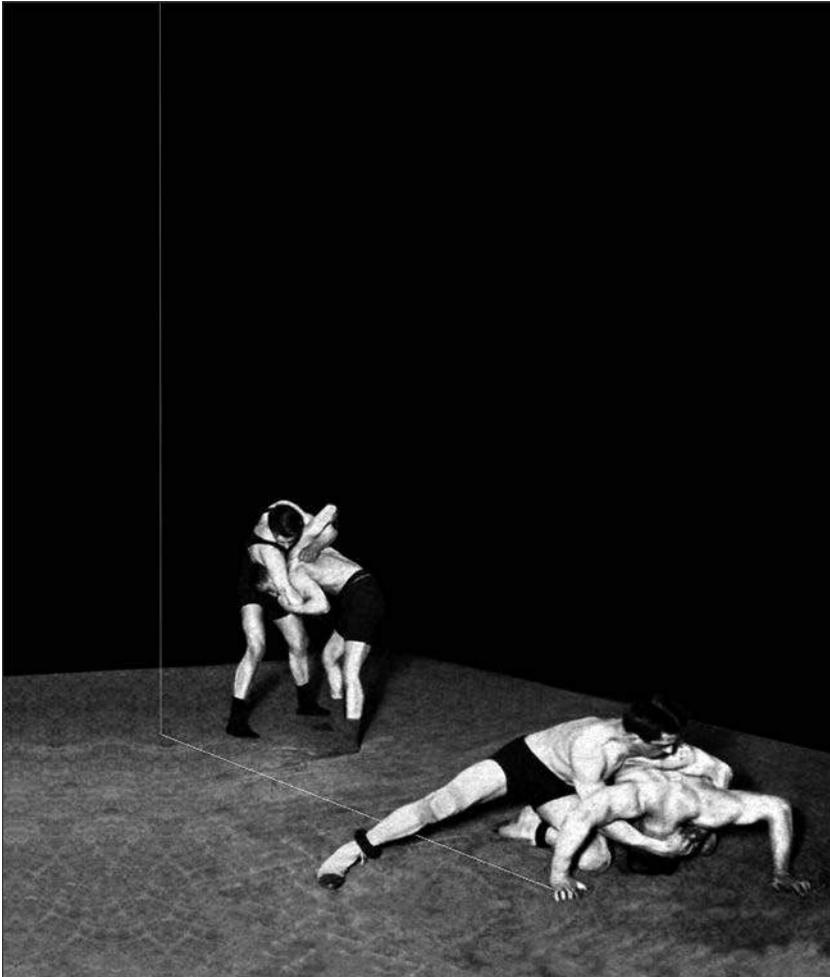
31 Hawhee, *Bodily Arts*, 57.

32 In my current book manuscript *The New 'PR': Post-human Rationality in War, Cognition & Culture*, this is the basis for what I am calling *the New 'PR'* of Post-human Rationality in contemporary modes of technical persuasion

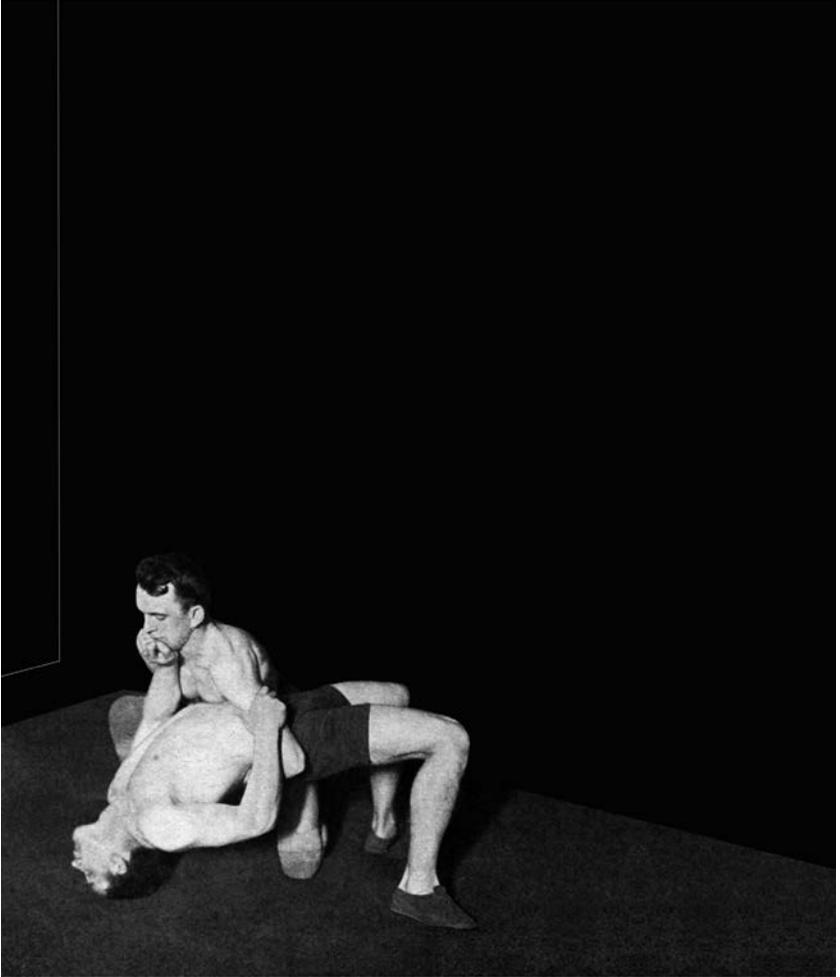
PORTFOLIO/

BODY WEIGHT

BY SEHER SHAH



Portfolio of 5 archival giclee prints, 7.5 x 8.75 inches each, 2013.
Image courtesy Jhaveri Contemporary and the artist.









APPENDIX/

PRESENTATION OF THE CONTRIBUTORS

Though **MIMI THI NGUYEN** still believes that punk saved her life, some of her greatest life lessons are learned from the movies. These are: *be excellent to each other; fair is fair; and I'm perfect, but nobody in this shithole gets me, because I don't put out.*

PHILIPPE THEOPHANIDIS is doing research on the ideas of community and inoperativeness. In this regard, his efforts are successfully not working. He likes to wear an old t-shirt bearing the inscription "Qualities are for losers," even though he feels he's not qualified to do so. When asked to introduce himself in a casual, if not funny way, he replied that he would rather not. When pressed, he tried and failed, and tried again, and failed again. Hopefully, he managed to failed better.

HANNA BAUMANN has boundary issues.

SOPHIA AZEB has a fraught relationship with her dentist owing largely to her (several) terrible habits, including but not limited to tobacco-smoking, pen-chewing, and single-handedly emptying London (and often Marseille) of its sugar stores with her morning coffee. She still has all her own teeth, however, and flosses regularly.

DEREK GREGORY's first love is the theatre, but he consoles himself with the thought that lecturing means you get to write the script *and* grade the audience

STUART ELDEN is interested in territory and geopolitics and enjoys cycling. Sometimes he is able to combine these, such as on a hot June day in 2013, when he rode round the sea of Galilee, starting in Israel, and traveling across the Jordan river, through the occupied Golan Heights, through a cleared minefield, very close to the Jordan border, and back to the town of Tiberias.

GASTÓN GORDILLO particularly enjoys the spatial intersection of land and sea, where matter changes its texture and becomes liquid and swimmable. He is drawn to that spatial and material threshold

colloquially called the beach to read, write, and of course also to swim, particularly but not necessarily in the summer. His beach toolkit always includes swim goggles and a Moleskine notebook.

PEDRO HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍNEZ hates architecture but, also ... he loves architecture! One could say that he suffers from agoraphobia, an irrational fear of being trapped, which forces him to struggle in order to escape, attacking and destroying architecture and the ideas that established it.

TINGS CHAK doesn't like borders, and borders of all sorts. She believes in the freedom to move, freedom to stay, and freedom to return for all migrant people, and spends a lot of her time drawing, disrupting, and shit-disturbing.

ALEX SHAMS has always been obsessed with traffic and crowds. He is especially interested in the strange sensation of other people's sweat imprinting itself onto his body while he is holding on for dear life in the Cairo metro. Other times it's the way sweat moves between bodies at Iranian shrines that fascinates him, including but not limited to that particular moment when the love and lust for saints and gods overwhelms and produces not only tears and moans but also extremely dank under (and over) shirts.

As a child **SOFIA LEMOS** was never truly present, and she would read and reenact historical events always adding to it a pinch of salt. Lemos is interested in radical political imaginaries thereby using speculation as a tool to critically unfold history and render alternative understandings of the body and its agency. Growing up brought about the here and now, and today she revels in being a cultural organizer and researcher.

GRÉGOIRE CHAMAYOU currently admires kangaroos for their sound ability to summarize, which can be watched here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFWUIObSgn0>

RENISA MAWANI lives and works in the busy port city of Vancouver. Due, in part, to her spatial location, she thinks a great deal about bodies in motion: human (migrants), nonhuman (insects), and objects (ships). Though she is fascinated by oceanic movements, her body restricts her from making her own....she has yet to acquire sea legs.

NICK AXEL is generally skeptical about the appearance of things, which can sometimes lead to a performance of the devil's advocate. He look into things. Not at them, over or around them, but through them, always searching to evoke the latent potential of what we have at hand.

As a kid, **SARAH CHOUKAH** was fascinated with science fiction stories and movies. Her favorites depicted how machines, cyborgs or space aliens would threaten one day to take over the world. That kid is still secretly disappointed we didn't bring back carnivorous dinosaurs in a clever feat of bioengineering just yet. There's nevertheless a lot to figure out when it comes to the potential biosciences and biotechnologies have in shaping a certain sense of ourselves, and vice versa. Just in case.

ANDREAS PHILIPPOPOULOS-MIHALOPOULOS is a philosopher who pretends to be an artist who pretends to be a legal academic who pretends to be a theorist who pretends to be a writer who pretends that he is not pretending. This is why he has recently taken to seeing the world from up there, usually on an airplane. Very little margin to pretend up there.

ERIN MANNING has three cats, a cat-toad and a step-son. The oldest cat left home at about the same time as the step-son, both of them signaling that better food was to be had elsewhere. They both still visit on occasion. When the cats aren't deciding where she can sit, she writes, paints, sews and dances.

ADRIENNE HART once spent a year living in one of London's last untouched factories from the 1800s. Sleeping rooms were small white pods slotted next to one another in varying formation, the smallest only wide enough for one body to launch itself into. She always had the best nights, sleep in that pod, and somehow her claustrophobia did not apply.

Although **ELENA LOIZIDOU** is a Reader in Law and Political Theory, her research and interests lay primarily outside the field of law. She is interested in finding out whether anarchism offers an art of living that runs parallel to the one provided and cultivated by neoliberalism, and she loves the minimalist sounds of John Cage, spring sun rays and drawing. She lives in London and dreams of warmer climates.

If there is something **JOANNE POUZENC** has trouble learning, it's the art of waiting. She can not do nothing. And even if you think she actually does nothing, she is probably analysing the details, imagining someone else's stories, picturing the moment and trying hard not to forget it. Because there is just one thing she's sure about: time exists, and so does everything within.

CHRYSANTHI NIGIANNI often finds herself in world-weariness. She thinks philosophy is a mood rather than discipline. She likes the type of psychoanalysis that makes philosophy suffer. She feels trapped in the body of knowledge and seeks instead darkness and ignorance. This is where she can start writing. Whatever she starts writing about, it ends up being about love.

INA KARKANI is fascinated by anything that frustrates and dares our routine of being boring human bodies. Weirdness in cinema is one part of it. She loves philosophizing about living entities, human or not, that perform gorilla dances, wiggle with their shoulder blades and hiss like cats in heat.

ALAN PROHM considers inquiry a full-bodied experience: if you never work up a sweat, it's not worth thinking. He believes all the arts can be talked like one language, in space, at power, and is on a hunt for the levers leveraging the aesthetic for more radical efficacy. Start now.

DAN MELLAMPHY, also known under the name of Yhpmallem Sawsib Atidnan, is a Borgesian Bharatnayam Blackbelt or 'Maeterlinckian triple-B{ee}' with an assortment of degrees adding up to the five Pythagorean polyhedra or 'Keplerian panchatantra.' He keeps the latter degrees stuffed in a 'panch'ing bag, (पांचबैग) at his neighbourhood gym (a gymnasium coincidentally named after the chapter on gymnosophy from Sarane Alexandrian's primer on occult physics and metaphysics). In Year Zero he married a Bengal-Donegal 'Bhean Gual' named Nandita (see Nandita Biswas Mellamphy).

NANDITA BISWAS MELLAMPHY, also known as the Yhpmallemnad, was born on the Ring of Kerry at a well-named wishing-well: the Spring of Sauron. As a child, she worked on the infamous Bengal-Donegal Express in the role of Engine-Room 'Bhean Gual' (coal-girl) and has always, as a result, had a fascination with fire (and, of course, soot). On one of the Express Trips, she was scouted by a Bollywood Movie-mogul and cast as a young pre-cog in Hrishikesh Mukherjee's नामुमकनि. With the proceeds from that film, she became a struggling academic, met her husband Danananda Mahalamfi and secured, shortly after that, a primo professorial position.

SEHER SHAH is interested in the ambiguous relationship of objects and landscapes. She uses the basic elements of architecture such as the wall, grid and column to examine various formal and visceral qualities of particular moments in architectural history. Using historical and personal iconographies, her interests use constructed landscapes, the X-large or mammoth sized object, erasure, Corbusier and courtyards to explore through drawings, prints, photographs and sculptural objects.

Although **LÉOPOLD LAMBERT** founded the Funambulist, he would fully experience corporeal pain if he were to attempt tighrope walking. Similarly, his obsession for questions related to the body should not make him forget that sitting at a desk does not qualify as fully embracing his existence as a body in the world! As always, he is thankful to count so many talented friends and colleagues, who enrich his clumsy understanding of this world.

THE FUNAMBULIST is a blog written and edited by Léopold Lambert since 2007. It approaches architecture through its political and narrative implications, borrowing concepts from other disciplines. In 2013, The Funambulist, Punctum Books and the Center for Transformative Media Parsons The New School for Design published the first volumes of *The Funambulist Pamphlets*, a series of small books collecting articles written on the blog, organized by themes: Spinoza, Foucault, Deleuze, Legal Theory, Occupy Wall Street, Palestine, Cruel Designs, Arakawa + Madeline Gins, Science Fiction, Literature, Cinema & Weaponized Architecture.

THE CENTER FOR TRANSFORMATIVE MEDIA, Parsons The New School for Design is a transdisciplinary media research initiative bridging design and the social sciences, and dedicated to the exploration of the transformative potential of emerging technologies upon the foundational practices of everyday life across a range of settings.

PUNCTUM BOOKS: spontaneous acts of scholarly combustion is an open-access and print-on-demand independent publisher dedicated to radically creative modes of intellectual inquiry and writing across a whimsical para-humanities assemblage. punctum books seeks to curate the open spaces of writing or writing-as-opening, the crucial tiny portals on whose capacious thresholds all writing properly and improperly takes place. Pricking, puncturing, perforating = publishing in the mode of an unconditional hospitality and friendship, making space for what Eve Sedgwick called “queer little gods” – the “ontologically intermediate and teratological figures” of y/our thought. They seek to pierce and disturb the wednesdayish, business-as-usual protocols of both the generic university studium and its individual cells or holding tanks. They also take in strays.