

Got something to hide? say it with flowers!

Framing *Nature*

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Explore Lab 30

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a lesson in letting go

the illusion of control
is to let go
- *Seif*

abstract

This is the abstract version of the abstract.

“To let go isn’t to forget, isn’t to think about it, or ignore it. It doesn’t leave feelings of anger or jealousy or regret. Letting go isn’t winning and isn’t losing. It’s not about pride, and it’s not about how you appear, and it’s not obsessing or dwelling on the past. Letting go isn’t blocking memories or thinking sad thoughts, and doesn’t leave emptiness, hurt, or sadness. It’s not giving in or giving up. Letting go isn’t about loss and it’s not defeat. To let go is to cherish memories and overcome and move on. It’s having an open mind and confidence in the future. Letting go is accepting. It’s learning and experiencing and growing. To let go is to be thankful for the experiences that made you laugh, made you tough, and made you grow. It’s about all that you have, all that you had and that you will soon have again. Letting go is having the courage to accept change, and the strength to keep moving. Letting go is growing up. It’s realizing that the heart can sometimes be the most potent remedy. To let go is to open the door and to clear the path and to set you free.” (@briannadawes_ 2020)

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Introduction

This research is a follow up on my thesis *Becoming fuzzy madness at the bottomless bottom of the void in the mesh* (Hoffer 2020) in which I posed the question “When is *Nature*?”. It was a start of critique on the concept of *Nature* and what distinguishes *Nature* from Culture in the apparent dualism, but it was without creating wanted novelty. It is this research that is the start of the “creating” of novelty, bringing the concept back to life. But both the concept of *Nature* and the concept of Culture are still too broad, too vague, and thus both need to be narrowed down, delimited.

Any system has a *limit*, a moment when the notion hold can no longer be held together, it is at this moment that novelty is produced. An event must happen which makes clear the notion being hold is already outdated and needs to transform: it doesn't just happen out of nowhere, something must force the system beyond its limits; which Deleuze calls a *becoming*. The encounter with the current coronavirus exposes such a limit, which will become clear further into the research.

In the constant rush to find a vaccine, to control *Nature*, to become immune to the possible negative effects of including the virus, the encounter forces human beings into a new way of living and thinking, producing a new subjectivity, producing new relations with time, with culture, with work, the immediate surrounding and the body. The virus has not only pointed to our biological weaknesses, but also the political, economical, technological, and architectural. It's this notion of immunity that I want to use, to find a reciprocal relation between *Nature* – as COVID-19, as immunology, and *Culture* – as architecture, as technology, to force the notion of both architecture and technology and thereby the *Nature - Culture* dualism beyond the limit and so to produce novel solutions.

The *Nature - Culture* dualism is not of origin of, but therefore not less responsible for, the problems in facing current, and expected, ecological challenges, so called ‘climate change’ or COVID-19. The dualism is a mere result, an effect of political, social, cultural, and technological developments; it's the limit created by a culture, thus should therefore be the main focus to overcome the dualism, the problems, to force it beyond its limit. This will become clear in the *genealogy* – a non-linear examination of (a probable set of a manifold of) events that lead to the current situation; relations are being traced between immunity, ecology, architecture, and technology.

The genealogy will mostly be architectural in the widest sense; the notion of immunity will not only be limited to that based on biological terms but will be extended beyond it. The notion will be re-conceptualized into a more complex dialectic of relations and becoming a productive one; not only the including of

the virus by the body, in anti-bodies, but also including the virus into our social, economical, technological, political system; the focus is on the relation of immunity and architecture.

The main question I'll be focusing on is a twist on a lecture Cedric Price gave in 1966, in which he provoked by saying "technology is the answer, but what was the question?" in order to question and reconsider the impact of technology on architecture. (Baroncelli n.d.) I want to question the question of Price, and the technological development in relation to the notion of immunity, through my research question:

"If technology is the answer, then what was the problem?"

To overcome than the limit of the *Nature – Culture* dualism – the 'excluding' of architecture – the immunization of architecture; we not only have to strive for a novel architecture but simultaneously also redefine the role of the architect. It's a two-sided approach, not a duality but one of mutual opposition. It's an architecture, as Kousoulas describes it, "as a constant creator of and being created by its environment"; similar to a quantum leap, or as Simondon being quoted says "technological objects evolve in a way that is close to organic development". (Kousoulas 2018, 9)

"One should move from architectural objects to an architectural technicity which operates in terms of *reticularity*: ... the immediate relation of events and actions that occur in a given structure ... understood in terms of its potentials for action ... and has to be studied in ... affective terms." (Kousoulas 2018, 5)

Aiming for a more productive (active) and relational architecture, in which relations become originary – an experiential architecture. I would like to not only focus on architectural design in affective terms, but also starting from it in the research; focusing on how the concept of immunology, technology and architecture affected and changed in relation to, and with, each other.

Keywords: immunity, technology, architecture, *Nature*, culture, dualism, coronavirus, borders, and control.

Chapter 1

to start with non-predictable conclusions

For a long time, we have lived in the illusion of safety, in conformity, living the normal life. Not much happened aside the everydayness with its 'stupid' questions of; what to eat?; who to love?; where to work?; when to meet? In this state of perceived safety, we thought we had subjugated *Nature* and therefore were the masters over it. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) made us all clear it was a shared delusion of safety, it pointed to "our" weakness, our being defenseless, our susceptibility. It therefore hasn't just pointed towards and affected our biological system, but also the political, economical, technological, social, and so on. The encounter with the virus forces a new way of living and thinking, producing a new subjectivity, producing new relations with time, with culture, with work, the immediate surrounding and the body. (Zourabichvili et al. 2012, 9)

"we can't stop the coronavirus, but we can stop the 'loneliness' virus" – King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands (NOS Nieuws 2020)

COVID-19, which is spoken about as being the virus – "by giving it a name, we think we understand it", as for example the quote above – isn't just this "natural thing", it's the event; (among others) the sickness, the staying at home, the social-distancing, the economical effects (e.g. a crisis), the medical care, the reduced air traffic, the air quality, the fake news. (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 264) The event being the hyperobject^A, breaking the illusion of safety and certainty, forces to question certainty and value of and about humans and their culture – or broader the relation between the natural and artificial – in which relations are not a causality, but become originary.

The hyperobject encountered forced an accelerated learning of how to co-exist with it, human-beings have to exclude, become immune, while being inclusive, the cause of its existence; "immunity is the emergency of the inclusive exclusivity" (Sloterdijk 2009, 375) Meme-ing our way through it, seemed the only option to exclude ourselves from the immanent effects. The thought of eradication and subjugation of the Coronavirus soon became an illusionary one: the virus already learned how to co-exist with human-beings, it was already viscous, already "sticky". The event of the reciprocal process of becoming-other already started, we just ignored its invitation.

It made clear the line between *Nature* (the natural, the biological) and Culture (the artificial, the technology) isn't where we thought it was, it isn't that clear. The

technology we need to “survive”, at the same time lacks in its creation, the spread of the virus; the virus is not spreading (itself), its merely reproducing whilst we are spreading it. And yet the technology plots the interobjective effects on *Nature*, the dream of the eco-critics; reduced air-traffic, buying more locally, reduced air pollution, (Demkes et al. 2020) but simultaneously makes possible a (predicted) future of working from home and a need of further automation of production processes due to for example a lack of “healthy working people”.

The fear experienced in this process of inclusive exclusivity, the uncertainty, the breaking of the illusion of safety, the unknown, affects our immune system. When on a longer term our body is in this state, its own capacity of protecting against “toxic outsiders” and healing of it, is being undermined, being decreased. It’s not the goal of a virus to be the toxic outsider, to kill its host, its environment, it merely wants to reproduce, to live, to survive, becoming immune on its own. It wants to become the not-excluded inclusive exclusive, trying to create a house of and for its own. Death of its environment is a mere, and unfortunate, side effect of the event, in this process of becoming-other; it didn’t accept the host of the event.

“[O]ne can no longer tolerate what one had previously tolerated until then, even yesterday. The repartition of desires has changed in us, our relations of speed and slowness have been modified, a new type of anxiety comes to us, also a new serenity” (Zourabichvili et al. 2012, 12)

A change in attitude doesn’t change the behavior, this is a too simplistic assumption. Trying to give a meaning to the fear, by fooling yourself; it being ‘a good moment for mother earth to recover’ or ‘*Nature* reclaiming territory’ or ‘its not as deadly as the seasonal flu, so why all these radical measures?’ – is similar to a state of ignorance. It’s remaining inside the delusion of safety, of stability, being stuck in dogmatic thinking; being inclined to lay down previously tolerated principles as incontrovertibly true. It’s not about how deadly it is, but the deadly potential it has, biological, medical, economical, political, etc. Rather, a forced change in behavior does produce a change in attitude, as it instantaneously shows the effect. (Kroesen n.d.) The event is forcing a change in thought, being most important in the question on the limit of progress, as according to Simondon “it is thought that appears as the principal repository of evolutionary potential in the human species.” (Simondon 2010, p235)

Thought doesn’t just change instantly, it doesn’t just emerge, but the difference is actively produced over a certain duration. I would like to argue that the encounter with COVID-19, and probably any event, has four, more or less, distinct phases, each is one based on its affective terms. The phases will not per

definition appear in a logical order, denial and confusion will occur again if novel solutions do not succeed: first there is conformity, the everydayness of the boring life. Then there is denial while the event is approaching, we didn't invite it so it can't come to our party. As soon as it knocked on the door we are confused, become a fool, and tried to frame a scapegoat. Now we are stuck with the party crasher, it has no plans to leave soon so at least accept the situation and get to know her. Maybe the guest wasn't what we expected, but some actively enjoyed watching the weirdness from a distance, it brought some unexpected novelty. We can't undo the encounter, and the guest will most likely appear again, it now knows where we live, in return we know how we can greet it with a different attitude the next time.

“There is always the violence of a sign that forces us into the search, that robs us of peace ... Truth is never the product of a predisposed good will but the result of a violence in thought” (Zourabichvili et al. 2012, 5)

Progress can thus be enforced by forcing thought beyond its limit, into novelty, by the event called COVID-19 and thus therefore 'novelty' will be the main focus. For us to find novelty from the current encounter, we thus need the whole process of encounter, as Zourabichvili writes “thought does not *want* the true innately but must first be *spurred* to seek it out by encountering a sign whose development or explication the thinker jealously pursues”. It is in this quote that the relation between thought, novelty and the encounter becomes clear; thought is formed, as a delayed result, through a technological development, the pursued explication, produced by an encounter, the sign. The 'new normal' is not the normal we once had, refuge into a memory is only illusionary, it does reside in it though. Memory in reflection is “giving rise to a difference”, leaving us with only the 'new', a new truth, a new serenity. (Zourabichvili et al. 2012, 6) What has functioned up until then, the habitual behavior, can no longer be tolerated, our desires have changed, we are drifting apart.

Chapter 2

Immunity equals community?

“... thought is reflected in organized matter. It is the organization of matter that, in various ways, directly shapes all aspects of human life.” (Leroi-Gourhan 1993, 147)

In his third part of the Spheres trilogy *Foam*, Sloterdijk writes that immunity is historically understood as habitual behaviors enforced upon members of a group by an operational unity. Traditionally the family, but also religion, the political party, the city, and the company, wanted to be the effective operational immune unity. Those who left this operational unity would be seen as traitors and thus be excluded. Immunity is understood as this social given, says Sloterdijk, which since the 19th century is called “solidarity”. (Sloterdijk 2009, 373) On which Esposito, quoted by Clarke, remarks “if the notion of immunity only takes form against the backdrop of meaning created by community [...] how are we to characterize their relationship? Is it a relation of simple opposition, or is it a more complex dialectic in which neither term is limited to negating the other but instead implicates the other”. (Horl 2017, 194)

So how is this relationship, of immunity formed against the backdrop of meaning created by community, characterized as Esposito asks? For starters we have to make a small sidestep to see the importance of this question; the notion of *Nature* being exploited by man. Why? Because Bookchin writes that there is a connection between the emergence of social hierarchy and domination. This in ecocriticism widely used notion of human beings ‘exploiting *Nature*’ does “stem from the very real domination of human by human”, he says. But it’s important, he notes, not to confuse exploitation with domination, as hierarchy is defined as “the cultural, traditional and psychological systems of obedience and command”. The notion of exploitation relates to the idea of ‘class and state’, which are the economic and political systems, and should thus be contrasted to hierarchy. The domination of *Nature* is thus a problem of social hierarchy instead of a mere political or economical. (Bookchin 1982)

Nature is in current day ascribed as the function of an environment, a surrounding, the habitat, in which we can disappear if we want to. But for earlier, preliterate, societies *Nature* was a participant; it gave advise, it told a story, it gave back up in the form of camouflage, and was that that nourished the community. The change from preliterate societies into state societies, the increasing domination of human by human – hierarchy – simultaneously changed the attitude of human into he who is predestined to dominate *Nature*.

Bookchin says the disintegration of a 'unity of difference' into the 'state as social administrator' profoundly changed social life as well as humanity's vision of itself and that we should become aware of "the extent to which domination shapes even the most minute actions of the individual today". (Bookchin 1982, 43)

Hierarchy is, Bookchin writes, not merely a social condition, it is a sensibility towards phenomena at every level of personal and social experience. In preliterate societies hierarchy (domination of the one over the other), a different in kind, did not yet exist, rather a living together based on a difference in degree existed; kinship ties, age groups, sexual division. These groups lived in a 'unity of difference', of interdependency, with *Nature*, non hierarchical, not above nor below it; deriving value from it which influenced their behavior towards interdependent individuals in their communities and the life around them. Within this unity of difference, it also wasn't a question of whether the beliefs of the group were true or not, as long as the whole group believed in the same truth it was beneficial for the survival of the group.

This unity of difference extended into their notions of property and exchange. Our current western definition of property¹, one of the possessive, is not even remotely similar to that of preliterate society – as far as they could or did "define" words and their meaning. Property implied an individual appropriation of tools, land, and other resources, on both the productive as consumptive side, based on the concept of usufruct². This meant that resources and tools could be appropriated solely based on the virtue of using it, without the association of possession, of ownership. The work done with these tools in one's own house was seen as an intrinsic contribution to the community. Whereas in preliterate societies there was only a 'we', "an organic melding of identities that, without losing individual uniqueness, retains and fosters the unity of consociation", in current western ideas the 'I', the individual, is synonymous to (private) ownership. The current notion of 'we' is enforced by use of a contract; "turning an unthinking sense of responsibility into a calculating nexus of aid and an unconscious sense of collectivity into a preening sense of mutuality"; a situation of 'just' ratios and 'honest' balance sheets. (Bookchin 1982)

The notion of domination – domination of the one over the other – is many times ascribed to 'natural phenomena' such as the alpha male of a group of chimpanzees; the primate behavior model. The fallacy in this lies, says Bookchin, in the fact that singular acts of oppression within or between individual animals

¹ Property: (1) "a thing or things belonging to someone; possessions collectively"; (1.1) "a building or buildings and the land belonging to it or them"; (1.2) "the right to the possession, use, or disposal of something; ownership" (2) "an attribute, quality, or characteristic of something." ("Property" 2020)

² Usufruct: "the right to enjoy the use and advantages of another's property short of the destruction or waste of its substance"

based on instinct can hardly be called domination. Animals behave communally as they are somehow interdependent upon each other, which apparently seems to behave as ‘a society’. Instead, domination must be viewed as institutionalized relationships; relations that are literally instituted, created, going beyond inborn patterns of behavior; “as highly, often rigidly, structured around clearly manifest forms of responsibility, association and personal relationship in maintaining the material means of life.” (Bookchin 1982, 29)

Institutionalization gradually emerged from preliterate ‘societies’ until current societies. This institutionalization happened along a much broader development in which the primordial ‘unity of difference’ was broken down into hierarchical systems with social classes, living in villages and cities and finally the usurpation of social administration by the state. These changes over time “profoundly altered not only social life but also the attitude of people toward each other, humanity’s vision of itself, and ultimately its attitude toward the natural world.” (Bookchin 1982, 43) It’s here that we find a, negative, connection between immunity and architecture. An immune system understood as a fighter mechanism killing unwanted viruses and excluding them from the body. The body, may it be the physical human body, or any other body such as a community, is being closed off from the outside, from its environment. It draws a border, one which is possessive, of what is included and what is excluded. This is a community created by likeness, by an equality in habits and thoughts.

Certain biological mutations forced human-beings to live inside caves – then into houses, then cities – as they could not protect themselves anymore from natural influences, and thus an external form of protection was needed. After Pasteur and Koch³ discovered the existence of microbes human beings had to be willing to take explicit measures to live with the invisible, to defend themselves in a preventive way against his now undeniable microbial competitors. It turned into the credo “life is war, pathogenicity is everywhere, and your best friend could be your worst enemy”. (Horl 2017, 196) The fact that one must learn to be suspicious, a learning process that is unparalleled in spiritual history, changes the meaning of everything that was previously called rationality. This is, according to Sloterdijk, becoming the theme of the 20th century; “making the immune system explicit”.

Sloterdijk goes further by saying that “the scandal of modern living” consists in excluding the non-inclusive, the outsider, “by focusing on needs of isolation and behavior of individuals”. (Sloterdijk 2009, 373) After the first becoming explicit of living, the notion of “the cosmos as house” already lost its value. The

³ Pasteur and Koch were the two most important persons in medical microbiology – the medical science concerned with prevention, diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases – during the second half of the 19th century. (Wikipedia Contributors, n.d.)

modern housing is, according to Sloterdijk, the fourth becoming explicit of living, one of the communal and personal immune system. These are places as effective preventive measure of “successful being with yourself” against external disruptions in the shared-self. Houses, but also more broad architecture in general, has become a shelter in which human beings are “focused on the liberation of their everydayness”. The house, the walls of a building, are as a function of separating incoming signals into the important and not-important, and therefore to prevent the psychological implosion when everything becomes or doesn’t become informative. Buildings have become places where uninvited guests almost never enter – stacks of housing boxed on top of one another, as climatic excellent isolated living units; “as a machine of ignorance [ignorantiemachine] and articulates the becoming expressive of immune systems”. The house, Sloterdijk says, is the purest form of proof of the coherence between immunity and spatial enclosure:

“She makes concrete the given that a human world openness is always coupled with a complementary aversion of the world. [...] for the house of immunity the night is crucial – it’s the guardian of sleep – it’s a protected place to rest.” (Sloterdijk 2009, 376)

Chapter 3

The world of essences, values, and excesses.

“Until we rid ourselves of the cafeteria imagery that we must repay nature for its "lunches" and "snacks," our relationship with the biosphere will still be contractual and bourgeois to its core. We will still be functioning in a sleazy world of 'cost-effective trade-offs' and 'deals' for nature's 'resources.'” (Bookchin 1982, 361)

So, the settlement of Neolithic humans into fixed communities, which later became cities – and with that storing grain and start planning for a future – came from the underlying logic of survival. While emerging of these fixed communities, distinctions were drawn; that what is included and that what is excluded, between the human and the non-human realm but also between human beings themselves. We currently still live in the legacy of these historical constructs; “the idea of the environment is a way of considering groups and collectives-humans surrounded by *Nature*, or in continuity with other beings such as animals and plants. It is about being-with.” (Morton 2007, 17)

To live with, or being-with, is a ('western') way of expressing the notion of “possession”, says Morton. Ecological criticism rebukes capitalism being materialistic, being possessive of natural things, being dominative over, of *Nature*. It speaks of guilt over your capitalistic actions, “save the world by not destroying it any further”, “don't just cut down trees out of *Nature*, we need to safe the forest for another day”. It places, or they place, a so-called *Nature* into an aestheticized – and exploitable – thing ‘over there’. But, Morton continues, “capitalism holds no respect for matter, despite the ruthless demystification it imposes on the world. In truth it looks much more like an idealism gone mad.” (Morton 2007, 91) *Nature*, or the environment, is in essence all about, as Morton says, “things that are not identical to us or our preformed concepts”. (Morton 2007, 7)

These current notions of *Nature*, and our human relation to and with *Nature*, holds us back from meaningful engagements, thus we should therefore strive to let go, strive for a different ecological awareness. Since the beginning of the settlement of communities and cities human history slowly became disengaged from natural history, the history of *Nature*. But, Bookchin says, “human history can never disengage itself or disembed itself from *Nature*. It will always be embedded in *Nature*” (Bookchin 1982, 34) Morton adds to this by noting that to write about society is to write about ecology, and vice versa; the ecological

awareness of guilt should turn into an "ecological awareness [as an] awareness of unintended consequences." (Morton 2018, 50)

To write about ideas of ecology is not in the weakest sense to write about social constructs, Morton continues, it is to write about society; to write about the unintended consequences of our actions, which have become clear. Smith argues that a special note must be made here, we must become aware that we tend to interpret these actions and consequences from the point of *visual sensations* or *human activity*; we observe and thereby – think to – obtain the knowledge, (I see a rainbow and therefore think to know rainbows) but this doesn't give us the knowledge of the internal modes of bonding. Or we compare it with the functioning of mechanical machines – levers, pulleys, cogwheels – as pre-programmed building blocks, bricks in a wall. As if the universe is made up of a series of superposed layers, which result in our presuppositions of reduction and analysis. (Smith 2017) Instead, Ruyer says, the universe has "a fibrous structure in time, and each fiber represents the continuous line of an individualized existence". (Ruyer 2016, 142)

This reduction – the building blocks – is the notion that a piece of matter is what it is, unchanging and permanent, and in that 'state'⁴ it acts in various ways to various encounters. But every action, the activity of the production of movement, formation, is not done without reason; it does not *function* in that way, it *forms* for a certain reason, as Ruyer writes:

"It consists in having at one's disposal a domain in which an infinity of virtual possibilities become simultaneously visible, in which space-time is not a network of points-instants tied together step by step but an idea-form in which genuine actions and not pure functionings take place, actions that take place according to a norm and use the virtual possibilities as means." (Ruyer 2016, 144)

Ruyer continues by saying that for human beings this reason, the guiding ideal, is "the world of [organizing] essences and values"; "I" strive, for example, to tidy up my seen-table by referring to an ideal of order; or I strive to maintain my tools in good condition". (Ruyer 2016, 99) This not only applies to human beings, the other example Ruyer also gives is for bees; the bee only sees flowers as reserves of nourishment and the hive as refuge, so as to maintain themselves in a certain [evolving] state. What an atom – but not only limited to atoms, also a piece of matter, the simplest living being up to the more complex organisms – *is*, is the same as doing what it does. Activity is inseparable from a final 'goal'⁵, as

⁴ a piece of matter as functioning 'solid', in a permanent and unchanging nature.

⁵ what it strives to be, or to 'become' (*becoming* as defined by Deleuze).

it *is* about formation, it is never fully assembled; “[it] is incessant activity, it is continually ‘forming itself’ in “a certain prolonged rhythm of activities” (Smith 2017)

In the same article, Smith (Smith 2017) refers to Leroi-Gourhan who argued that technical objects are extensions of the body, a hammer is the extension of the arm and fist, and ‘externalized’ organs, the kitchen stove and oven are an externalized stomach and thus become part of the digestion system. Animals have a similar sort of externalizing of organs, of technicity – spiders making webs, birds constructing nests – these extensions are directly derived from their genetics; an extended phenotype. But, Smith says, Ruyer notes that the specific for human beings is that the externalized “organs become detachable, removeable, separated from the body, to the point where they enter their own evolutionary history”.

While making the first tool, by human beings, evolution bifurcated; organic development has created the possibility of externalized artifacts, which have their own pace in evolution apart from organic development, and both together create new technological bodies. From this we can extract the notion that “bodily organs are technical artifacts” themselves, the organs are developed by the organism itself as specialized tools for a specific ‘function’. To come back at the notion that human history cannot be disengaged from natural history, Ruyer writes that if we would assume a ‘goal’ – the organizing essences and values – to the invention of cooking utensils, we should also assume the same for bodily organs, in this case ingestion, digestion and assimilation. (Smith 2017)

Gourhan explains, in *Gesture and Speech* (Leroi-Gourhan 1993), that the human osteo-muscular⁶ evolution more or less stopped, aside from minor adjustments and variations, from the moment of holding the first tool. The main evolution was taking place in the human neuromotor system – in simple words: the brain – thrust by the evolution of tools. But the actions performed by tools have been relatively simple, mainly focused on the mastery of force, motion, and materials, until somewhere in the nineteenth century. The leap forward came from coal which combined meeting the requirements for steelmaking, thus material evolution, and provided the needed force for operating machine tools, thus the freeing of force from the human body.

This evolution of technology forced the human being into adaptation of new ways of living with the consequences. The externalization of the brain during the 20th century rapidly increased the gap between human evolution – between the hunter and gatherer ancestors and ourselves – and the technological equipment

⁶ or ‘musculoskeletal system’; the system of bones, muscles, joints, ligaments, and soft tissues which together support the body and makes it possible to move.

we have made. As Gourhan says: “the compression of time and distance, accelerated rates of activity, nonadaptation to carbon monoxide and industrial toxins, permeability by radiation – all these facts raise the curious problem of our physical compatibility with the environment in which we must now live”. (Leroi-Gourhan 1993, 252) We should question ourselves whether we as individual human beings are still needed⁷, or if this progress beneficial only to society, to the human species, as whole. The current situation is more collective than only the human individual says Morton, “all kinds of beings, from toxic waste to sea snails, are clamoring for our scientific, political, and artistic attention, and have become part of political life-to the detriment of monolithic conceptions of Nature”. (Morton 2007, 17)

In pre-industrial societies lives of individuals were filled with manual activities, to the extent that it was at least sufficient for survival, now participation still exist but, Gourhan says, “it is exercised via the press or the' audiovisual media: The following of the macrocollective model [...] has no common measure with [pre-industrial participation] [...] and the model's only value is as a purveyor (i.e. provider) of illusions”. (Leroi-Gourhan 1993, 254) Proximity of experience, craft, and result, product, has disappeared, leaving room for social advantages while simultaneously creating room for value judgements about the evolutive process. Socialist ideology attempts to resolve this gap by subordinating society to technology, and “thus seemingly acknowledging the triumph of the hand over the head.”

“The introduction of a dualist moral system of good and evil, of the hidden and the manifest, would not lead one very far. To find real norms in this domain, one must return towards the cognitive schemas that have already been drawn out, and ask oneself how they can respond to the exigency manifested by the pressing incoherence of the affective modalities” (De Boever and Simondon 2009)

We should ask ourselves whether recent technological evolution will move towards a new balance – in which all value will be restored regarding human beings – or whether it is a process of destroying the balance for which the human is physically constituted. Gourhan notes here that “the only option it leaves to us is that of ceasing to be sapiens and becoming something else, something that may perhaps be better but will certainly be different” (Leroi-Gourhan 1993, 253). Simondon advocates a similar kind of view; “a truly technical attitude would be more refined than the easy fundamentalism of a moral judgment and of justice”.

⁷ here I'm not so much interested in the notion of singularity; whether we, as a physical human being, will merge with or be surpassed by technological intelligence.

Bookchin also gives some hope for becoming the different sapiens; modern man's capacity for destruction is paradoxical the evidence of man's capacity to reconstruct. The technological agents we now use 'against' the environment, include many of the same agents we need for reconstructing it. So, as Simondon says, we should not consider the static state of a technical reality, or object, but the *entelechy*; i.e. 'the realization of potential'. (De Boever and Simondon 2009)

“What we crucially lack is the consciousness and sensibility that will help us achieve such eminently desirable goals – a consciousness and sensibility far broader than customarily meant by these terms. Our definitions must include not only the ability to reason logically and respond emotionally in a humanistic fashion; they must also include a fresh awareness of the relatedness between things and an imaginative insight into the possible.” (Bookchin 1982, 19)

To conclude this chapter, I would like to return to the question in the first paragraph of the second chapter; “if the notion of immunity only takes form against the backdrop of meaning created by community [...] how are we to characterize their relationship?” Until now it has been focused on a negative relation, a relation of excluding, of framing, of a thing surrounded by, of reduction and possession. Only more recent the negative notion of immunity changed towards a more 'positive', a non-excluding relationship with outsiders, in which, Hörl says, the body is in an open continuous exchange with its surroundings. The body, the immune system, becomes “a more complex functioning construct that implicates and stimulates the common”, not being the enemy of the common. (Horl 2017, 196)

Chapter 4

Inimical privilege of difference

“a world does not arise from the order of the possible, from a transcendent determinability; on the contrary, it is born of a regime of the impossible immanent to each being.” (Ruyer 2016, 252)

There is another, even more interesting, concept of community; a community of the lost; a community of “the outsiders”, “the others” – a collective of those who have nothing in common. (Grosz 2001, 150) This community of the other Grosz writes about, is one which opens itself to the stranger, to an otherness that cannot be absorbed into commonness. It does this not through affirming one’s forces but by exposing oneself to loss, by sacrificing. She says that the creation of communities does not happen by recognition and generation of binding forces, but by expelling remainders. Why is she so interested in this community of the excess? Because it undermines and problematizes, it has a force for generation of the new through that which is unaddressed, that what is left out. (Grosz 2001)

Whenever it is ignored that human social relations transcend plant-animal relations – which has been the standard in sociology – we will end up, according to Bookchin, in the incorrect bifurcation of two points of view on the apparent *Nature* and *culture* dualism; either we end up in a strict separation of the two, or we end up in a reductionism that dissolves the one into the other. (Bookchin 1982, 31) Elisabeth Grosz writes in *Architecture from the Outside* that in the binary structure, the separation, the privileged term will be defined as the only term and the negative term will be seen as all that is left from the privileged term. In the case of reductionism one term will be incorporated in the other term, nature-oriented, nature-friendly, which still leaves the dualism unquestioned and intact. (Grosz 2001)

Which of the terms is the privileged one is not immutable though. As written before, *Nature* used to be the privileged term in pre-literate societies, and culture the residue. Until recently *Nature* has been disregarded, not worthy of taking into account, before it shifted into what is residue, the left over, of the cultural, as cultural waste. It is *Nature* that is being wasted, being polluted, being taken over by and through culture, a *Nature* as rendered passive. However, this is still affirming relations and transformations between fixed categories, between things that are externally bound, or as Grosz calls it a ‘post-humanist understanding of identity’. Deleuze, however, wants us to question if the ‘constructing of identity’ is needed or desirable:

“any identity is always riven with forces, with processes, connections, movements that exceed and transform identity and that connect individuals (human and nonhuman) to each other and to worlds, in ways unforeseen by consciousness and unconnected to identity.” (Grosz 2001, 94)

Current inability to deal with e.g. climate change, and to give an adequate architectural answer (other than just ‘placing trees on a building’) to this problem, comes from the inability of rethinking the status of the natural; a going away from a fixed identity. We don’t have to create identities to resolve the current problems and to assure a future well-being of humans and their culture. Instead, Grosz referring to Deleuze, *Nature* must be granted the openness to account for the very inception of culture itself:

“The natural, must be seen as the site and locus of impetus and force, the ground of a malleable materiality, whose plasticity and openness account for the rich variability of cultural life, *and* the various subversions of cultural life that continue to enrich it. The natural must be understood as fundamentally open to history, to transformation, or to becoming, as open as culture, as innovative, temporal, and historical as the purview of social, psychical, and cultural life.” (Grosz 2001, 97)

Instead of seeing a substance, or an externally bounded category i.e. ‘identity’, that creates new relations – a process of individuation – she refers to Simondon who argues that the different regimes of individuation are providing the foundation for different domains (matter, life, society). The process of *becoming*, creating states of metastable equilibrium, *Nature*, is the resource for all bodies, for culture. *Nature* isn’t a fixed and immutable domain, Grosz continues, it should be viewed as “materiality in time, whose only destination is futurity, endless [bifurcation]” (Grosz 2001, 100). But, she says, this does not mean that all the cultural – and architectural – is anything but natural; they are consequential of intensive and extensive multiplicities of all modes of ramifications, intertwinings and manipulations. This view of *Nature* moves away from one that is made up by regulative laws, but is rather one of vectors, trajectories, movement, and openness to an unpredictable future – at the same time, this concept also defines the concept of culture, which is an even openness to intensive and extensive multiplicities toward an unpredictable future.

“Evolution is evolution, and its openness functions as such, whether it is cultural or natural.”(Grosz 2001, 101)

These relations are thus a productive force and foremost originary; they are, Debaise says, “neither prior, nor subsequent, to the regimes of individuation⁸, but simultaneous (a praesenti) to them” (Debaise 2012, 7). The (cultural) individuation forms itself and extends elements which are at once physical, biological, technical, and social, and which form a milieu within the individual itself, however, Debaise says, they cannot be reduced to its elements of individuation. Or in more simple words, as Bookchin writes; humanity leaves traces on and transforms *Nature*, while simultaneously *Nature* leaves its traces on and transforms humanity. (Bookchin 1982, 31) *Nature*, Grosz adds, is not a passive, bounded domain, not a standing reserve at either end of cultural production, nor is it a limit to cultural activity; it is what inhabits cultural life to make it grow, making it capable to reorient. (Grosz 2001, 105)

These productive relations inhabit a space, which is not one being bounded itself, being materialized, it is lacking form, that Grosz calls “the in-between”. It’s this space in which things are undone and social, cultural, and natural transformations happen; without this space the future is not possible. Deleuze has (amongst others) granted the us a possibility away from constructing identities, with his notion of the in-between: *difference*. Deleuze is not trying to simply collapsing of identity or replacing it with an alternative; rather the categories “are played off each other [...] and are analyzed [...] so that the possibilities of their connections [...] are established”. (Grosz 2001, 65) The boundary between what is inside and what is outside is not one that is a limit nor must be transgressed; the outside is the transmutability of the inside. *Difference* simultaneously conditions and undermines identity, while also rendering the notion of *space* and *time* as “fragmented, transformable, interpenetrated, beyond any fixed formulation, no longer guaranteed by the a priori”. (Grosz 2001, 95)

⁸ the existence of a system in a state of equilibrium

Chapter 5

The excess, reticularity, and space and time

“when the traditional concept of matter is replaced with the concept of activity, time can no longer appear as an empty and foreign frame; the time of action is inherent to this action as a temporal melody. This amounts to saying that it can only be conceived as the mnemonic rhythm of activity.” (Ruyer 2016, 149)

To move beyond the inhibition of dealing with current problems and moving beyond the solution of ‘just placing trees on a building’, to produce the new, the different, and not so much seeking the latest fad, we have to question how we can open architecture up to its outside. Irigaray, cited by Grosz, states that “in order to make it possible to think through, and lives, in the difference, we must reconsider the whole problematic of *space* and *time*” involving at least reconceptualization as opposite terms of *simultaneity* and *succession*, and how they have historically been associated with *femininity* and *masculinity*, and the modes of inhabitation that each has and makes over the other. (Grosz 2001, 156)

Grosz, following the line of writing by Deleuze as well as Korzybski, writes that until Kant the notion of *space* and *time* were a priori mental, or conceptual, categories. (Grosz 2001, 32) In his lecture *Synthesis and Time*, Deleuze says that according to Leibniz *time* is the order of possible successions, – as a measurement of *Nature*, of the rotation of the earth, the seasons and so on. Within this order of succession, of this step by step process, at every moment ‘matter’ has to be created instantaneous, having no relation to any other point in space and time, as a static “localizable point” (Deleuze 1978); or as Korzybski says that “‘matter’ has a separate physical existence” (Korzybski 1942, 224-235) According to Debaise, cited by Hörll, this is giving the possibility to explain any material separate from any other material, *Nature* as “a multiplicity of localizable points”, is thus an independent phenomenon in itself unrelated to other events. (Hörll 2017, 157-160) Deleuze continues: Kant argued against this notion of *time* that to be able to define time as order of succession, you first already need to subjugate succession as a mode of *time* itself. Therefore, Kant claims that time is not subordinated to movement anymore but movement itself becomes subordinated to time. Kant thus “frees” time, and makes it an “excessiveness”, an empty frame; time “becomes time in itself for itself”. And space, Kant argues, is “the form of exteriority”; everything that appears in space as the exterior to whoever grasps it – it is this way that architects currently understand space –

but, Deleuze argues, it is not exteriority which forms space, it is space which forms exteriority. (Deleuze 1978)

As – might have – become clear in the previous paragraph, and as Grosz argues, *space* and *time* are necessarily connected to corporeal limits^B; “they are a priori corporeal categories, whose precise features and idiosyncrasies parallel the cultural and historical specificities of bodies.” (Grosz 2001, 32) This is exactly why she argues that reconceptualization, to push beyond the limits of corporeal modes, of *space* and *time* are needed to give rise to new concepts of subjectivity, spatiality, and temporality. Without going in to the whole argument Grosz makes – therefore I refer you to the original text, which is well worth reading – she concludes that all “our technological productions are themselves the products of collective fantasies of the body’s forms and functions, its weaknesses and vulnerabilities”. (Grosz 2001, 47) But the problem is, with these technological productions, that they are all representations of the functioning of the male body, which is positioned as the neutral body. The cultural production (of technology and knowledge) can thus be only seen from one point of view, which simultaneously renders women as the male counterparts; the lacking, the passive. Without deeming this good or bad, without attaching a moral and ethical judgement, we should see the potential in it by carefully examining the position of the ‘outside’, the excluded. (Grosz 2001)

As well as the fact that the choice of primate role model is chosen culturally – what suited best our interests – this also applied to ‘division’ of the active, the productive, and the passive, the nurturing. Going back to Bookchin he writes that if labor is the “father”, the active precondition of wealth, the productive, then *Nature* as the “mother”, the nurturing, the life giving, slides into the passive feminine. But the passive feminine *Nature* makes the active, productive, laboring of technics as much possible as it is the emergent. To view any ecosystem – *Nature* – as a given is as shallow as to view human community as a given; instead – to keep with the metaphorical naming of *Nature* – we would be better to regard it as ever changing, as a baby growing up into a child, into youth which is absorbed into adulthood. The growing up of a person has as much a social as a natural as a technical history, who at each moment interact differently, produce novel relations. (Bookchin 1982)

In the introduction of *Architecture from the Outside* Grosz asks herself the question of how – architectural – space can be understood differently, on which she has two directions for how to answer. One of those is the direction of sexuality and sexual specificity. As I wrote above cultural history is produced by the male body, perceived as the neutral, so is architecture part of that history. But as the male body is only one of the (at least) two sexes, she asks herself how to involve the female body – as active producer – into the future history; how to include *Nature* into culture and vice versa. The other direction, she says, is

architectural space seen as the measurable, the reduced and opposite of, time. Time is left out of the design of buildings; “architecture considers time as historical time, or past time, but it has never really thought a concept of futurity” (Grosz 2001, xix); as temporality, as duration, as the outside. So, how to open up the impenetrable unity of the body to the different sexes but also into a more fluid and dynamic one, outside of the Cartesian universe?

For how to think of the concept of futurity in architecture, Grosz mentions Bergson’s notion of duration as a becoming, an openness to the future and evolution. Thereby Bergson not only limits this concept towards human beings, living beings, but also to non-organic, the inorganic. This then grants autonomous development of the inorganic, of technology and the technological, without having to be directly influenced by man, while at the same time inorganic forces can also influence the organic; “not only what man makes – i.e., technology and culture – but also, what makes man – i.e., nature.” (Grosz 2001, 14) We can even take this point further by taking Simondon, cited by Kousoulas in *Shattering the Black Box*, into consideration, who says that technological thinking should not be focused on fixed properties but rather on the temporal – a certain point in the evolution – of the technical object. (Kousoulas 2018) It is Hui that reminds us that from the very beginning it has been an illusion that the human is the master of the world. As soon as we accept and enunciate that “technics is what conditions hominization, not only in its history but also in its historicity” modernity, and the illusion, will end. (Hui 2016, 236)

This still leaves ‘matter’ as a static and localizable point in space, without any reference to time, which in itself also was an empty frame; matter, space and time are disconnected. But, says Ruyer, matter cannot be fully assembled already “there”, matter is not something static and instantaneously, but it continually forms itself; it is “incessant activity”. To overcome the emptiness of time, the concept of matter, following Ruyer, has to be replaced by the concept of *activity*:

“a physical element is nothing [...] if it is not a certain prolonged rhythm of activities. [...] the time of action is inherent to this action as a temporal melody. This amounts to saying that it can only be conceived as the mnemonic rhythm of activity.” (Ruyer, Neofinalism, 149)

For this, Kousoulas citing Simondon, we should see the technicity of these objects as a mode of relation between the human and the world. The relations with a potential for action, in affective terms, made possible by “the immediate relation of events and actions that occur in a given structure”; i.e. *reticularity*. Therefore, architecture can be seen “as basic life expressions, and as exuberant

forms of invention, expansion and transformation”. Organisms are actively testing their environment only to later evaluate the sensory feedback; living beings thus create their environment foremost. (Kousoulas 2018) We should thus not see space and therefore we think we grasp space, but continuing with Grosz, the spaces we grasp as real, function – or better, by going back to Ruyer’s point on fibrous structures, we must say *form* – together, in ungraspable ways, with other spaces; “lived spatiality itself vacillates and transforms between sleep and awakesness; between the indeterminate multiple spaces of infancy and the hierarchized, organized, and bounded spaces of childhood; between the childhood space of the neighborhood and the adolescent space of the city and the adult space of the home” (Grosz 2001, 46) We can add the statement of Kokoula, who makes clear, by citing Martina Löw, that space is – thus – not an a priori setting in which actions take place, but these actions actively shape and reshape space:

“space is as a relational ordering of living beings and social goods. Actions such as the placement of things or the positioning of bodies bring about new spatial formations; stable ones that are iteratively reinforced, but also fluid ones that are prone to constant change.” (Kokoula 2017, 12)

At the end of the second chapter, I referenced Sloterdijk who said that the house is the purest form of proof of the relation between immunity and spatial enclosure, where the walls of a building have the function of separating signals, of what is inside and what is outside; the becoming expressive of the immune system. I have, until now, tried to reason differently to this idea by Sloterdijk. We can still say that the house is the becoming expressive of the immune system, however we must add that it’s the becoming expressive of how we think about the workings of the immune system. But the thing we grasp isn’t the thing in itself. Understanding the working of the immune system differently, it can be said that walls, boundaries, as Gorny says, are to be seen as having a binding function; as the site of producing socio-environmental organizations – social, technical, cultural, economic, and ecological systems – composing flows of exchange. This way, Gorny continues, we can re-conceptualize architecture as “a technology of movement [that] functions topologically, [by] folding relational continua into and out of each other to selective, productive effect”, architecture becomes – instead of a machine of ignorance – a determinative ‘machine’; of what is related to what. (Gorny 2018)

Earlier I wrote about the architecture of the excess by Grosz, it can be summarized in this way: space and time can neither be seen as opposites nor as complements, but as specificities with their own active and passive modalities. They both reside in themselves, while simultaneously also in the other. Space is

inscribed by and inscribes those activities and objects that find place in it. Time becomes visible due to the change of a thing on itself. It is an architecture that isn't a finished object within the cartesian universe, but rather a spatial process as a facilitator of flows. This is not an architecture that connects the outside with the inside, however, by referring to Deleuze, the outside is linked to the real as a virtual condition of the inside, the way that "*time* is the virtual of *space*"; "the virtual is immanent in the real." (Grosz 2001)

"An openness to futurity is the challenge facing all of the arts, sciences, and humanities [...] this openness to the future, [lies in] the promise of time unfolding through innovation rather than prediction" (Grosz 2001, 91)

Chapter 6

to start with the process of endless questioning

“Why is therefore an [affective] account of contemporary, automated architectural practices important?” (Kousoulas 2018, 303)

With the change of perceiving *space* and *time* comes a new place for the role of the architect itself as well. If not prediction in a cartesian universe but the unfolding through innovation becomes important, the architect cannot be in the position of the ‘god-like’ top-down all-knowing being and creating whatever they want anymore. Architecture, says Kousoulas, is commonly seen as provider of solutions to problems, however it should be seen as being occupied with a constant problematization; of constant asking questions. It is precisely with the encounter of the unknown, the new, that new questions have to be asked; not to solve the problems, but to raise new questions as so the grant it the potential of being aggregated. (Kousoulas 2018)

Within the problematics of social hierarchy, the architect as the ‘master builder’, or ‘master craftsman’ can continue to try to provide solutions. Bookchin refers to Aristotle who defined the master craftsman as being distinguished for his apprentices, assistants, and the (operational) worker, because of having more honor, being wiser and acting to knowing. The master could relate to the “why” and the “how” things are created; “a highly sophisticated subject from which all else originates”. Even though modern industrial production functions more in relations unlimited production, focused on “efficiency, quantity, and an intensification of the labor process” (Bookchin 1982, 222), the architect still – thinks to – works within a *black box* with the order of input – black box; something magical happens here – output.

He, or she, designs within the utopic space, a utopia, devoid of a continuity of time. This utopia, says Grosz, is the image of an ideal society, in which time has stopped, the end of one history, and problems suddenly are solved, the beginning of a new history. But, Grosz argues, these utopic scenes have a lack of any future, these imaginations contain the illusion of control over ‘the event’, the new, the unforeseeable, the production of the new and novel relations. It is not the architect only residing in this space, as seen in the first chapter it’s here that humans try to find reassurance in the uncomfortable, the unexpected. (Grosz 2001, 140) As I wrote in the first chapter we cannot reduce the event to singularities – to specific fragments of things happening – and then to understand it; although the event does only happen once, Grosz states, with its own specific characteristics related to that ‘time’ when that event happens, it “will never occur

again, even in repetition. [...] it occurs alongside of, simultaneous with, many other events, whose rhythms are also specific and unique". (Grosz 2001, 149)

The future thus cannot only have to be thought of, and created, just once, it also should not (and cannot) be programmed and planned in advance; 'ideals need to be produced over and over again' Why? The notion of immunity will change, the notion of Nature will change, the notion of architecture will change, the intensive as well as extensive forces will continually change. Architecture should not settle on producing idealistic one time only solution, but should "embark on the process of endless questioning" (Grosz 2001, 149) And this is where *futurity*, *entelechy* and *reticularity* come into being in architecture and the role of the architect.

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Endnotes

^A As Morton writes “Hyperobjects don’t inhabit some conceptual beyond in our heads or out there. They are real objects that affect other objects.” (Morton 2013, 64) In his introduction (Morton 2013, 10) Morton summarizes the concept Hyperobjects:

“Hyperobjects are ‘hyper’ in relation to some other entity, whether they are directly manufactured by humans or not. It is not a function of our knowledge: it’s hyper relative to worms, lemons, and ultraviolet rays, as well as humans. Hyperobjects have numerous properties in common, they are:

- Viscous: they “stick” to beings that are involved with them.
- Nonlocal: any “local manifestation” is not directly the Hyperobject itself.
- Nontemporal: they have profoundly different temporalities than the human-scale ones we are used to.
- Phasing: they occupy a high-dimensional phase space that results in their being invisible to humans for stretches of time.
- Interobjectivity: their effects can be detected in a space that consists of interrelationships between aesthetic properties of objects.”

^B To further deepen the understanding of the notions of *space* and time being corporeal limits I would like to cite Xenia Kokoula.

In the article *Opening up Bodyspace* Kokoula gives a fitting summary of the historicity of the field of architecture: the human body has been the measure of things from the smallest scale to the largest scale; where you’ll have to read ‘the human body’ as the body of the ‘white western male’. This body “is a whole and closed body [an almost sacred and intact locus of agency; an impenetrable unity] surrounded by and enclosed in spatial spheres that are firmly placed in a pre-existing Cartesian universe.” In her article she asks herself the following question; “What would it mean for bodily space and corporeality, if we were to replace the whole and closed, Cartesian body with a more fluid and dynamic one?” (Kokoula 2017)