Telos and Technique

Craftsmanship as a Cross-agentic Negotiation

Crevels, Eric

Publication date
2024

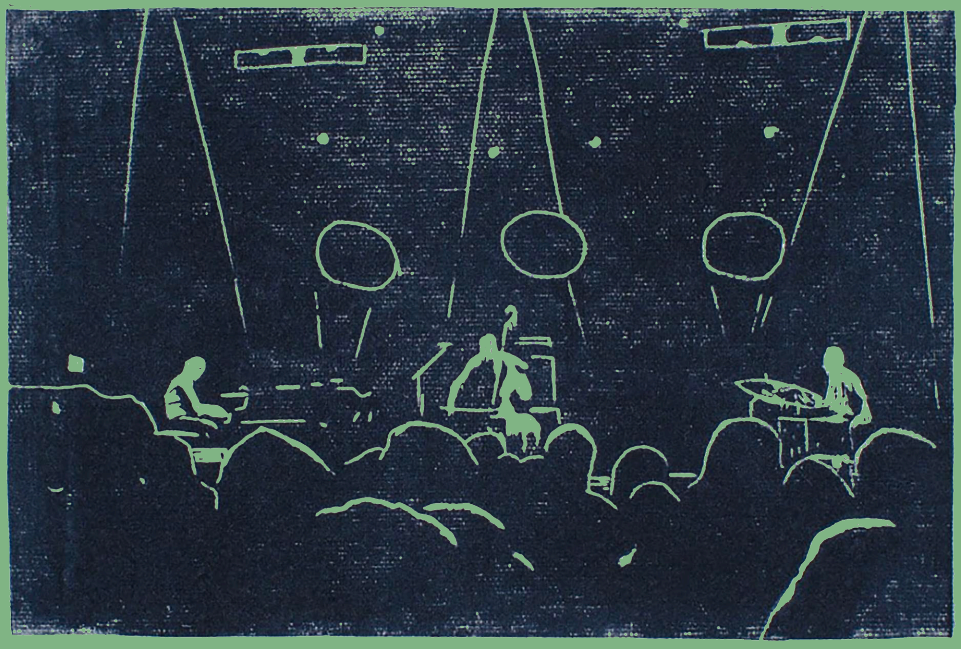
Document Version
Final published version

Published in
Noetics Without a Mind

Citation (APA)
Crevels, E. (2024). Telos and Technique: Craftsmanship as a Cross-agentic Negotiation. In S. Kousoulas, A. Radman, & H. Sohn (Eds.), *Noetics Without a Mind* (pp. 55-63). TU Delft & Jap Sam Books.

NOETICS WITHOUT A MIND

Stavros Kousoulas, Andrej Radman, and Heidi Sohn, editors



Ecologies of Architecture Book Series

TU Delft OPEN

JAP SAM BOOKS

Colophon
Noetics Without a Mind

Open Book Series
Ecologies of Architecture

Series Editors
Stavros Kousoulas, Andrej Radman, Heidi Sohn
Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, TU Delft

Volume Editors
Stavros Kousoulas
Andrej Radman
Heidi Sohn

Copy Editor
Heleen Schröder
Layout Editor
Lena Galanopoulou
Text and Illustrations

Cover Illustration
Ivan Radman

Electronic version of this book is available at https://books.open.tudelft.nl/home/catalog/series/ecologies-of-architecture

The *Ecologies of Architecture* Book Series is published by TU Delft OPEN Publishing and Jap Sam Books in collaboration with the Architecture Philosophy and Theory Group, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, TU Delft, PO Box 5043, 2600 GA Delft, The Netherlands
ecologiesofarchitecture@gmail.com

The hard copies, back issues and subscriptions are published and arranged by Jap Sam Books at
www.japsambooks.nl
Copyright clearance made by the TU Delft Library copyright team

DOI: https://doi.org/10.59490/mg.120
ISBN: 978-94-93329-24-9
www.japsambooks.nl

Book Abstract
Addressing the intricate socio-techno-environmental dimension of noesis within the current climate of social and urban challenges necessitates a transdisciplinary approach. In pursuit of this objective, NWM incorporates contributions that delve into sense-making processes involved in the individuation of humans, technologies, and their affective environments. These contributions offer diverse perspectives that critically examine the production of sense and its heterogeneous potentials for transindividuation. Key questions include: What transductive relations emerge in the entanglements between technology, affects, and the production of our (offloaded) memories and desires? How do these relations shape the sensible apprehension of our lives and the lives of our milieus? In what ways can they be expressed beyond the conventional, Western, ocularcentric, and annotational fixations of generic sciences? What new senses are required to navigate the complexity of the present? And, collectively and technologically, how do we sense the effects of our actions? Drawing inspiration from Gregory Bateson, how can we cultivate a different sensory perspective to foster a transformative mode of thinking?

NWM provides a platform for thinkers who boldly traverse disciplinary boundaries, encompassing a diverse range of fields. These include, but are not limited to, affect and affordance theories, architecture, art and cultural studies, philosophy and philosophy of technology, (digital) media studies, feminist theories, film theory, social sciences, and literature.

Keywords: Architecture, Affordances, Technicities, Philosophy, Pedagogies

Series Abstract
The *Ecologies of Architecture* Book Series promotes a transdisciplinary approach to architectural thinking and doing by extending its interest to topics that bring together the three ecological registers, namely the environment, the social and the individual. Such an approach accounts for what the built environment will come to be, and speculates about who will become alongside it. The series focuses not only on the why, what and how of architecture, but also on the who, who with and for whom.

Telos and Technique: Craftsmanship as a Cross-agentic Negotiation

Eric Crevels

American sociologist Richard Sennett's *The Craftsman* is possibly the most influential work on craft and craftsmanship in recent decades. Sennett's arguments, different from previous studies on craft, are constructed with a focus on people. He defends craftsmanship as present not only in the products of craft, but primarily in the way people perform their practice, envisioning an outcome marked by excellence; in his terms, a desire to 'make things well.'[1]

However, the fundamental premise that craftsmanship is related to an innate desire is, philosophically, rather simplistic. The ontological nature of Sennett's claims denote a short-sighted approach to the human condition, and ultimately reduces the question of craftsmanship to an unprovable and almost meritocratic individual entrepreneurship. By associating it with a sort of natural impulse, Sennett loses sight of the material and cultural implications of making things and the epistemological nature of craft. The result is that, despite the eloquence of its definition, his concept of craftsmanship is diminished in explanatory and critical potential.

Unsurprisingly, Sennett's interpretation has done little to demystify this concept that is so important, and yet remains so mercurial in craft theory.[2] If anything, craftsmanship is uniquely associated with the things of craft, and such a scope puts in question the necessity of a differentiated concept. The specificity of craftsmanship as a 'quality of something skilfully made', noted by dictionary definitions, puts forward a provocative question.[3] What is unique about the

products of skill that warrants the need for a specific quality or character to explain it? To remedy this lack of proper definition and address the above question I believe a better path to conceptualising craftmanship lies neither in people's inner desires, nor in the substance of crafted objects, but in the relationship established between artisan and materials in the act of making.

Trevor Marchand argues that craftwork is centred around problem solving.[4] In craft, he suggests, problems appear 'while learning technique, and alongside experimentation, improvisation, and innovation.'[5] The autobiographical story told by Benvenutto Cellini is a good example of how improvisation is an essential part of craftwork as well as a rational, intentional employment of skill. Showcasing instances where both invention and the knowledge behind it surface in the face of struggle, it makes explicit the kind of awareness and versatility one must perform when actively working with a particular material:

> I noticed that [the bronze] did not flow as rapidly as usual, the reason being probably that the fierce heat of the fire we kindled had consumed its base alloy. Accordingly I sent for all my pewter platters, porringers, and dishes, to the number of some two hundred pieces, and had a portion of them cast, one by one, into the channels, the rest into the furnace. This expedient succeeded, and every one could now perceive that my bronze was in most perfect liquefaction, and my mould was filling.[6]

As Cellini's insightful (and sometimes comical) story makes clear, the tasks of crafts are rich in 'rationality', as Adorno would put it, since 'the means have their own logic, a logic that points beyond them', meaning the connection with an objective, concrete reality that has to be addressed in every instance of making.[7] For Adorno, this is the particular reality of craft, as it cannot be understood only as 'stereotypical formulas' or simply 'practices ... supposed to spare the energies' of the artist, because 'the uniqueness of each concrete task excludes such a formalization.'[8] In other words, craft is not reduceable to a mere mechanical operationality that simply realises conceptual ideas into material forms, because its operations are constantly grounded in a complex reality that cannot afford the kind of simplification the concept implies. Even within a singular process, such as sawing a plank, repetition is a not a simple mechanical reproduction. Ingold compares it to walking, as 'just as no two steps are quite the same, so too, every stroke is a little different.'[9] While driving the handsaw, the carpenter faces slight changes in her perceptive-bodily engagement with the material, and 'the force, amplitude, speed and torque varies, albeit almost imperceptibly, from stroke to stroke, as does the posture of the body and the muscular-skeletal configurations of

tension and compression that keep it in balance."[10] This 'rhythmic' quality, in which movements are 'felt',[11] indicates that, as Viveiros de Castro argues, the 'knowledge of the artisan is in the hand (and the flesh)' rather than coalescing in a set of rules and representations, in the sense that 'the body is the territory and the measure of the process."[12] That is, a process in craft is understood, or 'read', by the 'sensual and sensorial feeling that it provokes."[13] Linking the example of the carpenter with Deleuze and Guattari's theories, Ingold develops a similar interpretation:

> For the carpenter himself, however, who is obliged to follow the material and respond to its singularities, sawing is a matter of engaging 'in a continuous variation of variables, instead of extracting constants from them' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 410). The carpenter who has a feel for what he is doing is one who can bring the many concurrent variations with which he must engage more or less into phase with one another. This calls for continual correction, in response to an ongoing perceptual monitoring of the task as it unfolds.[14]

Given their immediacy to the body, materials and things can be understood as having a sort of reaction that does not require intentionality. When engaged, the world has a friction that makers need to deal with, and that can be seen as a form of agency.[15] In other words, the material world, in its very constitution, possesses affordances that influence how is can be perceived, signified, or acted upon.[16] Makers, as Ingold puts it, 'have to work in a world that does not stand still' and with materials that 'are not necessarily predisposed to fall into the shapes required of them."[17]

A good example of how central the question of agency is to craftsmanship is the relationship makers have with tools. For Dutch archaeologist Maikel Kuijpers, tools can be understood as bodily extensions that allow the maker to get a 'sensate understanding' of the material in relation to the intended action.[18] As such, they mediate craftwork by providing a form of perception that is directly linked with the possibility of transformation: a chisel allows one to 'feel' the wood in the way it splits; a hammer, to 'feel' the steel in the way it bends upon a blow.

According to the affordances of the processes in which a tool is active, and the kind of engagement it makes happen, however, tools can also be seen as external elements, to whose subjectivity the craftsperson must relate, or even belong. This expression is present in the relation between a particular group of fishermen from Northern Brazil and their fishing hooks.[19] Contrarily to fishermen in the nearby lakes, to whom the hook is an extension of the arm, coastal fishermen

of Amapá address their own body as a part of a larger technical object – the fishing boat.[20] In it, artifacts such as the hook can work together as 'partners', or 'betray' the fishermen.[21] As Carlos Sautchuk argues, this differential relationship with tools implicates different notions of personhood and agency. Without any change in their function, form or technological formation, the hooks have different meanings according to their mode of action.

Moreover, the relationship with tools exposes the dynamism of a craftsperson's body and agency. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro's maxim that the 'body is a habit' in the accounts of perspectivist and animistic Amazonian indigenous peoples presents a world of agency in which entities are fluid, and bodies are transformed according to the tools employed.[22] The use of animal hides by shamans is perceived as a literal change in their bodily affections and capacities. In this framework, tools perform an activation of powers belonging to realms commonly outside the one defined as human. Entering an activity with tools is an incorporation and activation of different capacities. It allows one to 'function as another', to momentarily become another.[23]

Common to all three interpretations is the idea that the subject-object relationship between workers and tools is not solid, universal or unidirectional. A possible conclusion, nonetheless, is that tools make possible the establishment of a relationship between agencies. In the process of making, agencies are established and a complex inter-subjective relationship is negotiated. In this relationship, perception, as Merleau-Ponty would put it, is organised 'by the characteristic structures of the human world: tools, language, culture, and so on. Not originally encountered as things or ideas, but rather as "significative intentions" embodied within the world.'[24] This interpretation allows an understanding that the experience of the world is contiguous to it, in the sense that it is constructed over and with the categories found there. Moreover, these categories are primarily understood not as objects, 'things', but as potentials. The reflexive constitution of experience is woven from intensities that possess directionality – flows of forces, not solid, fixed entities.

In the reality of material production, these intentions, tendencies, resistances or affordances – here clustered under the umbrella of agency – are indeed real. They are real insofar as craftspeople have to compete with contending forces, when engaging with the materials, tools and other entities of production. From the point of view of the maker, the act of making is a struggle with more or less inertial constellations that are coaxed into a purposeful disarray, and from there into a new state. Materials do not fall neatly into a desired shape; tools and instruments have their own stubbornness and can perform in disagreement with one's intention, in more dramatic cases mauling their operators; and even the

maker's body resists a mechanical regime of movement. As Farleigh phrases it, 'the craftsman is being guided by his medium as much as he is guiding it', but the relationship is not always to the benefit of the maker's intention.[25] Rather, what defines the success of the craft endeavour is precisely the question of how the subjectivity of the material transformation taking place is negotiated; in a manner similar to Viveiros de Castro's theory regarding cosmological predation among Amazonian indigenous people, this is an instance of dispute for the first person pronoun, 'I'.[26] In craft, subjectivities are volatile, and the positions of subject and object can be flipped, to the detriment of the maker's will.

Making is an event of simultaneous merger and tension between the maker and the entities of her world of practice – her craft. Since every craft appears as a particular network of agency, there is not one mode of relationship between maker and what is made, but countless. The craftsmanship of the artisan involves the mediation of this network – which does not mean that craftsmanship is outside it. It is by actualising the dimensions of a socially established production that craftsmanship comes to be. Through the employment of a perceptive and transformative entanglement in the activity itself, craftmanship emerges from the network of agents in a particular morphogenetic assemblage.

Understanding that the production performed in crafts has to respond to a complex reality through the coupling of perception and the possibilities of action, craftsmanship can be understood as the enactment of skill; if skill is what affords action, craftsmanship is the realisation of action in a particular way. In a process of intersubjective encounter, the virtuality of action provided by skill becomes the actual; craftsmanship is the actualisation of this relationship. Therefore, craftsmanship is neither a self-standing thing, nor an autonomous quality or capacity that exists in a latent state prior to its development. It is not located in the subject, as something waiting to be revealed or put into practice, but emerges in the moment of practice, in the encounter of objective and epistemic entities that constitute making, and is actualised there. Craftsmanship is an emerging phenomenon, only real in the moment it is performed, in the actual engagement between the maker and the process.

Notes

1 Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman* (London: Yale University Press, 2008).\" Richard Sennett maintains that the computer programmer, the doctor, the artist, and even the parent and citizen engage in a craftsman's work. Craftsmanship names the basic human impulse to do a job well for its own sake, says the author, and good craftsmanship involves developing skills and focusing on the work rather than ourselves. In this thought-provoking book, one of our most distinguished public intellectuals explores the work of craftsmen past and present, identifies deep connections between material consciousness and ethical values, and challenges received ideas about what constitutes good work in today's world. The Craftsman engages the many dimensions of skill--from the technical demands to the obsessive energy required to do good work. Craftsmanship leads Sennett across time and space, from ancient Roman brickmakers to Renaissance goldsmiths to the printing presses of Enlightenment Paris and the factories of industrial London; in the modern world he explores what experiences of good work are shared by computer programmers, nurses and doctors, musicians, glassblowers, and cooks. Unique in the scope of his thinking, Sennett expands previous notions of crafts and craftsmen and apprises us of the surprising extent to which we can learn about ourselves through the labor of making physical things.",author":[{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Richard","given":"Sennett","non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],"id":"ITEM-1","issued":{"date-parts":[["2008"]]},"publisher":"Yale University Press","publisher-place":"London","title":"The Craftsman","type":"book"},"uris":["http://www.mendeley.com/documents/?uuid=ddd7a872-78a1-47c2-9660-f44cd222eec5"]}],"mendeley":{"formattedCitation":"Sennett Richard, The Craftsman (London: Yale University Press, 2008
2 Glenn Adamson, *The Craft Reader* (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019).
3 'Craftsmanship', in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/craftsmanship.
4 Trevor Marchand, *Craftwork as Problem Solving: Ethnographic Studies of Design and Making* (Farnham: Ashagate Publishing Limited, 2016).
5 Ibid.
6 Benvenuto Cellini, *Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini*, trans. John Addington Symonds (New York: Collier and Son Corporation, 1938) .
7 Theodor W. Adorno, 'Functionalism Today', in *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory,* ed. Neil Leach (London: Routledge, 2005).
8 Ibid.
9 Tim Ingold, 'The Textility of Making', *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 34, no. 1 (2009): 91–102, https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/bep042.by an agent with a design in mind. Against this hylomorphic model of creation, I argue that the forms of things arise within fields of force and flows of material. It is by intervening in these force-fields and following the lines of flow that practitioners make things. In this view, making is a practice of weaving, in which practitioners bind their own pathways or lines of becoming into the texture of material flows comprising the lifeworld. Rather than reading creativity 'backwards', from a finished object to an initial intention in the mind of an agent, this entails reading it forwards, in an ongoing generative movement that is at once itinerant, improvisatory and rhythmic. To illustrate what this means in practice, I compare carpentry and drawing. In both cases, making is a matter of finding the grain of the world's becoming and following its course. Historically, it was the turn from drawing lines to pulling them straight, between predetermined points, which marked the transition from the textilic to the architectonic, debasing the former as craft while elevating the latter as technology. ",author":[{"dropping-particle":"","family

":"Ingold","given":"Tim","non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],"container-title":"Cambridge Journal of Economics","id":"ITEM-1","issue":"1","issued":{"date-parts":[["2009"]]},"note":"It appears that Ingold is quite a heideggerian himself.\nIn this text, Ingold is a bit lacking - he is not as bright as he usually was. But regardless, it still have some of the important concepts and ideas that i will deal with.\n\nThe problem of both Ingol and Collins is that they try to address their question by simplifying it (although in different and rather opposite ways

10 Ibid.by an agent with a design in mind. Against this hylomorphic model of creation, I argue that the forms of things arise within fields of force and flows of material. It is by intervening in these force-fields and following the lines of flow that practitioners make things. In this view, making is a practice of weaving, in which practitioners bind their own pathways or lines of becoming into the texture of material flows comprising the lifeworld. Rather than reading creativity 'backwards', from a finished object to an initial intention in the mind of an agent, this entails reading it forwards, in an ongoing generative movement that is at once itinerant, improvisatory and rhythmic. To illustrate what this means in practice, I compare carpentry and drawing. In both cases, making is a matter of finding the grain of the world's becoming and following its course. Historically, it was the turn from drawing lines to pulling them straight, between predetermined points, which marked the transition from the textilic to the architectonic, debasing the former as craft while elevating the latter as technology. © The Author 2009. Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the Cambridge Political Economy Society. All rights reserved.","author":[{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Ingold","given":"Tim","non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],"container-title":"Cambridge Journal of Economics","id":"ITEM-1","issue":"1","issued":{"date-parts":[["2009"]]},"note":"It appears that Ingold is quite a heideggerian himself.\nIn this text, Ingold is a bit lacking - he is not as bright as he usually was. But regardless, it still have some of the important concepts and ideas that i will deal with.\n\nThe problem of both Ingol and Collins is that they try to address their question by simplifying it (although in different and rather opposite ways

11 Ibid.by an agent with a design in mind. Against this hylomorphic model of creation, I argue that the forms of things arise within fields of force and flows of material. It is by intervening in these force-fields and following the lines of flow that practitioners make things. In this view, making is a practice of weaving, in which practitioners bind their own pathways or lines of becoming into the texture of material flows comprising the lifeworld. Rather than reading creativity 'backwards', from a finished object to an initial intention in the mind of an agent, this entails reading it forwards, in an ongoing generative movement that is at once itinerant, improvisatory and rhythmic. To illustrate what this means in practice, I compare carpentry and drawing. In both cases, making is a matter of finding the grain of the world's becoming and following its course. Historically, it was the turn from drawing lines to pulling them straight, between predetermined points, which marked the transition from the textilic to the architectonic, debasing the former as craft while elevating the latter as technology. © The Author 2009. Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the Cambridge Political Economy Society. All rights reserved.","author":[{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Ingold","given":"Tim","non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],"container-title":"Cambridge Journal of Economics","id":"ITEM-1","issue":"1","issued":{"date-parts":[["2009"]]},"note":"It appears that Ingold is quite a heideggerian himself.\nIn this text, Ingold is a bit lacking - he is not as bright as he usually was. But regardless, it still have some of the important concepts and ideas that i will deal with.\n\nThe problem of both Ingol and Collins is that they try to address their question by simplifying it (although in different and rather opposite ways

12 Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, 'Os Pronomes Cosmológicos e o Perspectivismo Ameríndio', (Cosmological pronouns and Amerindian perspectivism) *Mana* 2, no. 2 (1996): 115–44, https://doi.org/10.1590/s0104-93131996000200005.

13 Ibid.

14 Ingold, 'The Textility of Making'by an agent with a design in mind. Against this hylomorphic model of creation, I argue that the forms of things arise within fields of force and flows of material. It is by intervening in these force-fields and following the lines of flow that practitioners make things. In this view, making is a practice of weaving, in which practitioners bind their own pathways or lines of becoming into the texture of material flows comprising the lifeworld. Rather than reading creativity 'backwards', from a finished object to an initial intention in the mind of an agent, this entails reading it forwards, in an ongoing generative movement that is at once itinerant, improvisatory and rhythmic. To illustrate what this means in practice, I compare carpentry and drawing. In both cases, making is a matter of finding the grain of the world's becoming and following its course. Historically, it was the turn from drawing lines to pulling them straight, between predetermined points, which marked the transition from the textilic to the architectonic, debasing the former as craft while elevating the latter as technology. © The Author 2009. Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the Cambridge Political Economy Society. All rights reserved.","author":[{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Ingold","given":"Tim","non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],"container-title":"Cambridge Journal of Economics","id":"ITEM-1","issue":"1","issued":{"date-parts":[["2009"]]},"note":"It appears that Ingold is quite a heideggerian himself.\nIn this text, Ingold is a bit lacking - he is not as bright as he usually was. But regardless, it still have some of the important concepts and ideas that i will deal with.\n\nThe problem of both Ingol and Collins is that they try to address their question by simplifying it (although in different and rather opposite ways.

15 Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), https://doi.org/10.1525/var.1998.14.2.101.

16 Harry Collins, *Tacit & Explicit Knowledge*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010)

17 Ingold, 'The Textility of Making'by an agent with a design in mind. Against this hylomorphic model of creation, I argue that the forms of things arise within fields of force and flows of material. It is by intervening in these force-fields and following the lines of flow that practitioners make things. In this view, making is a practice of weaving, in which practitioners bind their own pathways or lines of becoming into the texture of material flows comprising the lifeworld. Rather than reading creativity 'backwards', from a finished object to an initial intention in the mind of an agent, this entails reading it forwards, in an ongoing generative movement that is at once itinerant, improvisatory and rhythmic. To illustrate what this means in practice, I compare carpentry and drawing. In both cases, making is a matter of finding the grain of the world's becoming and following its course. Historically, it was the turn from drawing lines to pulling them straight, between predetermined points, which marked the transition from the textilic to the architectonic, debasing the former as craft while elevating the latter as technology. © The Author 2009. Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the Cambridge Political Economy Society. All rights reserved.","author":[{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Ingold","given":"Tim","non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],"container-title":"Cambridge Journal of Economics","id":"ITEM-1","issue":"1","issued":{"date-parts":[["2009"]]},"note":"It appears that Ingold is quite a heideggerian himself.\nIn this text, Ingold is a bit lacking - he is not as bright as he usually was. But regardless, it still have some of the important concepts and ideas that i will deal with.\n\nThe problem of both Ingol and Collins is that they try to address their question by simplifying it (although in different and rather opposite ways.

18 Maikel H. G. Kuijpers, *An Archaeology of Skill: Metalworking Skill and Material Specialization in Early Bronze Age Central Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2018), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315196022.

19 Carlos Emanuel Sautchuk, 'O Que a Rede Nos Ensina Sobre o Pescador?', (What does the net teach us about fishermen?) *Revista Coletiva* 1 (2010): 1–4.

20 Gilbert Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, trans. Cecile Malaspina and John Rogove (Paris: Univocal Publishing, 2012).
21 Sautchuk, 'O Que a Rede Nos Ensina Sobre o Pescador?'
22 Castro, 'Os Pronomes Cosmológicos e o Perspectivismo Ameríndio.'
23 Ibid.
24 Ted Toadvine, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2023 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2023/entries/merleau-ponty/>
25 John Farleigh, 'The Crafts: Their Past, Present and Future,' *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 96, no. 4757 (1947): 28–37.
26 Castro, 'Os Pronomes Cosmológicos e o Perspectivismo Ameríndio.'

Noesis should not be mistakenly identified with cognition. It is essential to steer clear of conflating cognition with re-cognition, which involves a stagnant affirmation of sameness or a repetitive process lacking in heterogeneity. In contrast, noetics shares a common root with noema, translating literally as 'meaning' or, in a broader sense, as 'sense.' However, it is important to note that sense is not pre-existing; its production is inherently embodied, embedded, enactive, extended, and affective (4EA). The transdisciplinary volume 'Noetics without a Mind' (NWM) expands on the 4EA approach of noesis by introducing a crucial technological dimension.

A NWM perspective on generalised noetics delves into sense-making processes shaped by the organisation of bodies, assemblages, and material environments. This includes the involvement of more-than-human entities and technical objects, onto which thought, memory, and desires are increasingly offloaded. The individuation processes, both psychic (personal) and social (collective), are intricately linked with technical evolution. By incorporating the concept of technicity, NWM posits a reciprocal relationship in the individuation of humans, technology, and their affective surroundings. The simultaneous process of transindividuation nurtures an ecological understanding that transcends a purely logo-centric or inter-individual perspective. This evolution, occurring 'by means other than life', prompts speculations on non-apodictic pedagogies, emphasising sensibility and its potential for significant pre-individual affective amplifications. The volume thus explores both a knowledge of the sensible and a sensible form of knowledge.

NWM provides a platform for thinkers who boldly traverse disciplinary boundaries, encompassing a diverse range of fields. These include, but are not limited to, affect and affordance theories, architecture, art and cultural studies, philosophy and philosophy of technology, (digital) media studies, feminist theories, film theory, social sciences, and literature.

9 789493 329249

Ecologies of Architecture Book Series

TU Delft OPEN

JAP SAM BOOKS