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Infinite Manual

THE TRANSVERSAL
NAVIGATION pt.1



PART ONE

Strange Homelessness: Dreaming as Real Praxis

Let's for a while consider waking life and dreaming together.
We dream for a single reason, and that is to access reality.



On strange homelessness (Aleš Čermák)

Let's for a while consider waking life and dreaming together. If our dreams were duly interconnected, so that every night the same people and the same circumstances returned, we would be unsure as to what is waking and what is dream. And so, if we speak about a waking state, we must also include a state of dreaming. We dream for a single reason, and that is to access reality.

17 February (2021): To have no other dream – but this one!

We close our eyes and dissolve in blackness. We do so without fear because that which we call our 'I' disappears. We feel we are in direct contact with outside reality, but that is naive. Dreaming is likely something which happens in a dream, and not something we do. Within the seemingly infinite world of dreams we begin to exist. We lose our sense of self and find it again. In the morning, we wake up and continue in our real life although, in a way, we continue to dream. Just like at night, during the day we are plunged into the same dream as well. We move – we travel, in the same medium.

I'm an artist, a writer and the founder of A-B_HPP (Ausdruck Books Hybrid Publishing Platform – which connects authors and performers interested in researching hybrid thinking and writing). Throughout the last years, I have been deeply involved in researching hybrid praxis in the field of performative conduct, social choreography, collective action, care and writing.

What happens when dreaming becomes explicit? Will it shake the foundations of that which seems real? What happens when an overabundance of dreams is applied to reality? We're already there. Is there an optimal method of dreaming which would make the world a "natural reality"? What regularities might we find in this intoxicated world of dream if we wake from a dream and return back to reality?

Intense, focused attention can dismantle reality and put an end to the dream – cease fascination and stop the world.

I am interested in the unstable, unpredictable, processual, maybe even alienated subjectivity. This method of thinking prompts me to conceive of processes which are rather coherent and autonomous, and which are oriented towards constructing a more profound understanding of a given theme. I am interested in the temporary methods of mutual cohabitation which are afforded by given social conditions. The participant undergoes the risk of weakening their sense of selfhood without completely dissolving.

When the word is a dream, it becomes accessible to techniques of dreaming. It is said that all human beings carry within their natural essence an infinite source of potentialities and qualities. In one dream we can recollect ten, a hundred or thousands of our past lives. Another proof that we are dreaming is that we can wake up. It is a strange form of homelessness. One of the aspects of homelessness is also a certain form of alienation which is also an integral outcome for The Transversal Navigation project. There is nothing more real than a dream...

As part of my praxis, I had the option to collaborate with diverse communities of people from all parts of the world. From working with professional actors and performers, through



groups of volunteers of all age groups and religions, with migrants, children, students of art and non-art, mentally and physically handicapped groups, etc. A fundamental aspect of my work is that it isn't intended for professional artists, audiences or art institutions, but rather that it be accessible to both artists and non-artists. Throughout the last years, my work has been so open that it can include almost anyone who wishes to take part.

Everywhere I feel as if I were in a dream. That is a different state of being within the same world. If I manage to develop this skill, then we can say that maximal consciousness is a series of clear awakenings. A fall from one dream into another. We understand this when we find out that our regular waking life is just as unreal as a dream.

The Transversal Navigation project is conceived as a distributed experimental praxis, a coherent flow of experience within which the human is exposed to a vaster and ever more complex configuration of consciousness, while experiencing the incessant observation of things again from tiny, improbable places and perspectives. The transversal navigation is a collaboration of the environment – an ecology of praxis.

Formation of the body happens unconsciously. And each waking means falling asleep somewhere else. Let's return to our dream and adjust its space.

- 1 Transversality is a dimension which allows the transgression of limits within which the mind has been inserted.
- 2 Transversality is neither vertical nor horizontal.
- 3 Transversality has neither center nor periphery.
- 4 Transversality is a thin line – it cuts in a single stroke.
- 5 Transversality is that which allows anything to become anything.
- 6 Transversality questions any limits.
- 7 Transversality transcends individuals, creators, authors, their function and opens heretofore closed pathways of movement and perception. It is an open articulation.
- 8 Transversality is the ability to evade, overcome, but also protect oneself.
- 9 Transversality creates a whole new constitution for both institution and group.
- 10 Transversality is beyond any collective, although it begins with what appears to be one, it always tends towards maximum (radical) openness (sensitivity).
- 11 Transversality creates its own concepts and affirms the singularity of all in the group.
- 12 Transversality consists in the interchangeability – haziness – blur – transparency of roles.
- 13 Transversality looks for no cure but integrates everything in its relation to the environment.
- 14 Transversality cuts through both text and matter. It cancels out polarity.
- 15 Transversality is processuality. The movement between the perceivable and the almost imperceptible.
- 16 Transversality projects the new, but it is not a new method.
- 17 Transversality is an immortal force which rejuvenates life.
- 18 Transversality has pedagogical (and also political) potential for expanding the conditions of a given praxis.
- 19 Transversality occurs when we are conscious of how we move and act in a space, but not as individuals, but rather as a gathering of human and non-human, material and immaterial perceptions.
- 20 Transversality is a total welcome of all possibilities.

Formation of the body happens unconsciously. And each waking means falling asleep somewhere else. And so, each body has its own type of dreams and each night enters a wholly unknown world (when we close our eyes and dissolve in blackness).





Transversality as Medium: On the Profound Being of Human and Non-Human Objects (Jakub Albert Ferenc)

"But we see the actual movement of moving figures, and moving pictures give us something equivalent to this, where the need for explanation is circumvented by the technologies of representation [...] we always have to infer what others are feeling on the basis of cues furnished in expression and behavior [...] If there was something effectively equivalent to feeling their feelings, that would be an example of this sort of representational progress."

¹ DANTO, 88.

The work of art philosopher Arthur Danto is among the most influential bodies of thought in the field of art. In his works "The Artworld" (1964) and "The End of Art" (1984), Danto focuses on what makes art into art. In the former text, Danto frames the field of his research by means of two dominant modes of art creation. In the first mode, the telos of art consists in imitating nature, or *mimésis*. In this mode, the quality of the visual work is evaluated on account of how the work corresponds to reality. The dominance of mimetic representation in art has persisted throughout the Renaissance, up until the dawn of modern art, after which the theory of art-as-*mimésis* became inadequate. Within the context of representational theory, the works of Impressionism, action painting, Malevich's Black Square, Reinhardt's "Ultimate" Paintings, but also the happenings and performances of Joseph Beuys or Marina Abramović would all be considered a failure, or at most a Dada curiosity. Although Danto affirms that art-as-representation carries a number of advantages – as we can fairly objectively assess art's development towards increasingly accurate representation – this theory of art ultimately reached its apex before the advent of the new media of photography and film, which can both be considered as representational art par excellence. Representational theories also carry other problems. For example, they cannot explain the limit cases, such as Duchamp's ready-mades or Warhol's Brillo boxes.

² NEZNAL, 78.

That is also why Danto, along with Vít Neznal², considers the re-presentation of the world's phenomena by means of some finite conventional art medium as inferior to the generation (presentation) of new artistic shapes, states, as well as new strategies of seeing the world. These new shapes and ways of seeing the world cannot be immediately considered as art objects all of their own. Not every urinal or Brillo box has the status of an artwork, although their material form might be identical to Duchamp's urinal and the Brillo boxes which Warhol exhibited in the gallery. On what basis are we then to distinguish art works, objects and performances from everyday objects and interactions with other people?

Danto offers a possible solution. For Danto, art is art only when there exists an art theory which can interpret and contextualize it from within art history and integrate it into what Danto calls "The Artworld". From an ontological perspective, the artwork is thus subject to art theory (philosophy) as, in the last instance, only it can imbue the things of the world with the ontological status of an artwork. That is why in his Hegelian essay "The End of Art," Danto assumes that the philosophy of art will finally consume art production, because the historical development of art is a history of methods, theories and approaches to a reflexive definition of what art is. Although artworks will continue to be produced even after the end of art, from the perspective of art history these will be like echoes frozen in time which will have failed in understanding that the problems they attempt to frame and resolve have already been resolved within philosophy.

This theory of Danto's is problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, we notice that Danto conflates actual art production with thinking about art production, which means that all artistic methods which create new forms and ways of seeing must be reducible to verbal propositional



utterances about art works. But this brings Danto back to where he started from: he rejected a representational theory founded on the correspondence between an artwork with the real world, and instead invents a new representational theory in which all artistic works are re-mediated to the one meta-medium of human language, and so, with enough wit and intelligence, everything which we can see and express can, be transformed to its original word form.

In the field of media theory, Canadian theorist Marshall McLuhan in his later years developed a similar theory of grasping the mediality of artefacts. According to McLuhan, all human artefacts, including art works and genres, “each of man’s artefacts is in fact a kind of word, a metaphor that translates experience from one form into another” and that it does not matter whether we analyze material artefacts like media technologies, or more ephemeral systems, or artistic tendencies in painting, poetry, theater or music, as all of them exhibit a verbal structure.³ McLuhan’s media theory then places emphasis on the fact that employing new media is never a passive or neutral event, but that media, as an extension of man, have an inherently descriptive and transformational effect on our consciousness, and they thus create new modes of perception and new modes of Being, which frame the spectrum of answers to the fundamental questions of human existence, ontology and noetics: analytic geometry and linear perspectives (which can be considered as cognitive technologies in themselves) have depicted a world which can be framed within a mathematical matrix, finding their apotheosis in Newton’s physics and the theological vision of God-the-geometer. Digital technologies, the internet, and instant communication present a vision of the world as discrete units of data, where the parameters of time and space are absent and the only thing we notice is an apt interface providing us access to data. McLuhan’s own example from 1964 points to the fundamental influence of the adoption of the phonetic alphabet in classical Greece, which then played a large role in the habituation of the individualist, analytic and deductive thinking within the Western mind – thanks to the alphabet, a person could get used to separating the sound of a verbal utterance from its visual form, and gradually also to the separation of form and meaning which, for McLuhan, decoupled the individual from the totalizing collective tribal consciousness.

³ MCLUHAN AND MCLUHAN, 3.

If we compare Danto’s understanding of the absorption of art in philosophy and McLuhan’s media theory, we see that both privilege the word. On the other hand, the fact that for McLuhan all human artefacts, including art works, have an underlying verbal structure does not mean that we can reduce each artefact to an intellectually transparent, clear and detailed philosophy, as in Danto’s framework. Quite the contrary, for McLuhan each human artefact has two dimensions which he terms, following gestalt psychology, the ground and the figure: the *figure* is a surface, a perceivable aspect of the artefacts, while he considers the *ground* of the artefacts as a largely invisible layer, one which is phenomenally inaccessible despite the fact that it affects us. And it is this invisible, artefactual environment which primarily transforms and determines the bodily, psychological and social milieu of humanity and society. *This inaccessible, yet transformational background of artefacts is a source of great trepidation for McLuhan.* The media background is invisible to us, and so the average person has a minimal chance of resisting the effects and logic of media, insofar as it is forced upon us, thus, following McLuhan, “amputating” all alternative sensorial and perceptual possibilities of seeing the world and the people in it. McLuhan warns us that we shouldn’t try to observe these effects of media through the lens of technical determinism. People always have the option to act otherwise. Media are however never wholly passive and are subject to socio-cultural influence. Media have the force to influence us and to show agential features also because the materiality of media cannot be reduced to mere discourses and the ways people talk about them. McLuhan defines media as everything which can



extend our mental and social environments, and he writes that they always leave a surplus in their ontological layer to which people will never gain direct access, neither by direct perception nor through some form of representation.

Here, McLuhan departs from Danto who (see opening quote) retains the naive phenomenological idea that the being of objects or people can be exhaustively described by a fitting medium of representation (film, hologram, performance, dynamic model), which thus eliminates the need for subsequent interpretation or reflection. Danto for example writes that in the perception of figures, *“moving pictures give us something equivalent to this, where the need for explanation is circumvented by the technologies of representation.”*⁴ Although Danto mentions in this excerpt that *“we always have to infer what others are feeling on the basis of cues furnished in expression and behavior”*,⁵ he believes in a “technological fix” which will allow heretofore non-existent types of future media to mediate the emotional states of others: *“If there were something effectively equivalent to feelings, that would be an example of this sort of representational progress”*.⁶ We cannot rule out that a technology will appear which will be able to represent electrical signals from the brain of feeling the emotions of one person for another, as Danto would most likely wish to have it. But it would tell us about the emotional states of a given person about as much as looking out the window and seeing someone cry or laugh on the street. We only see the outside “figure” of the person experiencing the given emotion, or perhaps a future electrical signal which will evoke in us the figure of laughter or sadness without any deeper context. The whole complexity of emotional experience, all the relevant life events which have led, in this particular example, to laughter or to crying, remain in the undisclosed depths of a person’s being. The question is whether we will ever have, at least in theory, access to them, or whether we are left only with indirect access, as McLuhan would have it.

⁴ DANTO, 88.

⁵ DANTO, 88.

⁶ DANTO, 88.

Contemporary authors influenced by phenomenology, such as Graham Harman, Dan Zahavi or the Czech philosopher Alice Koubová, either directly or indirectly agree with McLuhan and his belief in the inaccessible depth of the being of objects. But contrary to McLuhan, who worked in the context of media theory and human artefacts, Koubová and Zahavi apply this inaccessibility also to the intersubjectivity of human relationships and to the question regarding the possibility of knowing the mental content of other people. According to Koubová and Zahavi, the impossibility of having direct access to minds and mental states in intersubjective relationships is not something which we need to struggle against. Quite the contrary, it is the very condition for establishing communication and human interaction. According to Koubová, a certain form of alienation is a necessary condition for expression. In order for us to be able to establish interaction with someone else, we need to reduce their being to something which the average person’s human mind and perceptual apparatus is able to comprehend. In other words, just as narrating one’s life story cannot present all the experienced events at the same time, we need an interface which presents to us the other person in a complex enough fashion to avoid slipping into caricature, while remaining simple enough to be able to process the perceptual data. Despite the being of an other remaining hidden to us, *“this differentiation is not the problem of our inability and inferiority, but rather a constitutive aspect of a relation to another person: only in this way does an Other become a real person to us.”*⁷ Koubová and Zahavi quote Levinas, reminding us that a human *in its inaccessibility, otherness, absence becomes present as the other*. In the context of performance analysis, Koubová adds that another person is *“visible in their expression when they are in a certain sense invisible, when they are inaccessible, when we do not grasp it immediately, but yet we somehow understand their expression.”*⁸

⁷ KOUBOVÁ, 26.

⁸ KOUBOVÁ, 26.

Apart from McLuhan and Heidegger, the contemporary philosopher and speculative realist Graham Harman considers the American art theorist Clement Greenberg as a proponent of on-



tological depth, and he builds on his work in order to develop his Object Oriented Ontology (OOO). He holds that the ontological layers of surface/depth can be applied not only to media and the intersubjectivity of human relation, but that we must apply the dialectical relationship of surface/depth or visible/hidden to all objects we encounter – from atoms to black holes, from personal relationships to artistic works. In his essay “The Third Table,” Harman argues that there previously existed two methods through which we grappled with the inaccessible depth of objects. In the first instance, they were reduced “downward” to the smallest possible elementary particles, also through the description of their characteristics and interactions. In the second case, Harman speaks about reduction “upward”, which he ascribes to the human sciences, which study the effects of objects on the human mind from the perspective of everyday existence.⁹ This dichotomy between natural and human sciences is not new. Harman himself mentions the famous concept of “two cultures” of C. P. Snow and builds on Edison’s parable of two tables: where the natural sciences say that the table consists of elementary particles and empty space, for the humanities the table and its effects on people and other objects is just as real, if not more, than the scientific table. Harman believes that both versions of the table are equally wrong. Instead, he speaks about a third version of the table which exists directly between the original two. Objects cannot be reduced neither to physical laws, nor to the social relations and functions ascribed to them by the socio-cultural context in which they appear. For Harman, as well as for McLuhan, Zahavi and Koubová, objects exist in their autonomous register and announce their presence to us through their “face-interface” in the form of facial grimaces, materiality, social function, and so on. Because the two preceding versions of the table are firmly connected with their given cultures, Harman asks what culture corresponds to the third version. He reaches the conclusion that it is the culture of *art* and *philosophy*. These fields are not trying, according to Harman, to present a clear answer about objects, but rather approach objects indirectly and through various metaphorical strategies. Yet they manage to say something new and important about objects. What might that be?

⁹ HARMAN

In the past, McLuhan called artists “antennae’s of the race,”¹⁰ as because of their training focused on the senses makes them uniquely equipped to see better and farther than a non-artist. For McLuhan and the context of media, this means that artists are able to see through established stereotypes and clichés which dominate the given epoch and society, while most people consider the way things *are* also the way they *must be*. According to McLuhan, one of the major strategies artists use for this purpose is the creation of an *anti-environment*. By this he means the creation of situations and contexts in which a regular person with untrained senses might be able to recognize a realer state of existence for objects, and reflect on the contingency of the established orders, systems and hierarchies. In the anti-environment, media are stripped of the mask given to them by the automated and unconscious everyday, allowing even regular people can instead gain a more honest and authentic relationship to objects through processes of defamiliarization and a “transversal” crossing of contexts. If we agree with Koubová and Zahavi, they can also relate better to other people without assuming complete knowledge of them, as the capacity to be seen and universally understood by the human mind and its cognitive operations is predicated on the existence of the hidden remainder.

¹⁰ MCLUHAN AND MCLUHAN, 6.

In this context, I equate properly generated anti-environments with the transversal strategies of Aleš Čermák. By creating unusual situations, he constructs encounters among diverse, heterogeneous and socially disparate individuals in non-familiar spaces. The



meeting of the participants which actively engage in the performance's construction does not attempt to represent pre-defined meanings or situations. Instead, Čermák works within a tradition which seems similar to what Alice Koubová defines in the book *Myslet z druhého místa* (To Think from an Other Place), where she uses the quote from German phenomenologist and philosophical anthropologist Max Scheler regarding an *expressive phenomenon*: "A phenomenological treatment of the expressive phenomenon also has to do with the topics of dramatic expression, the existence of visibility on the scene, the experience of acting and performance. The expressive phenomenon combines the visibility and invisibility of the human in specific ways. Invisibility here does not assume the negation of visibility, its absence, but rather an aspect of visibility."¹¹ The concept of an expressive phenomenon places more emphasis on the way people express themselves through their external properties, perhaps giving it more import than they themselves thought. The core of the individual's human being is not accessible to others but, according to Koubová, as well as other authors focused on the cognitive, phenomenological or psychoanalytic discourse, we must take stock of the fact that our internal being is not accessible to us either, as our unconscious always contains more than we are able to consciously describe in explicit verbal expressions. The expressive phenomenon thus says nothing less than that our expression, our facial expressions, our embodiment are *constitutive* features of intersubjectivity, as they uncover parts of our internal world to other people and, through feedback looping the reactions of others, recursively co-constitute the expression of what we are and what we can become. Goffman's theory that we are all playing theater should in no way be understood in the negative sense, but rather should be taken as an unavoidable fact where, by means of expressivity and performance, we open ourselves to others so that they might help us co-define ourselves. That is the consequence of intersubjectivity in phenomenology and the embracing of the thesis that we will never be wholly transparent, neither to ourselves nor to others, but rather that we, other people, media and objects in general contain a surplus which can never be fully represented, but which must be accessed indirectly. In the case of McLuhan and Harman, this role is filled by artists and their creation of anti-environments. In the work of Koubová and other phenomenologists, the constitutive aspect of the expressive phenomenon is also considered to be powerful, and thus a potential source of danger. That is also why the transversality of established intersubjectivities which can truly disrupt our phenomenological understanding of ourselves and our relationship to others presents an ethical challenge. It thus requires the necessary trust that it is safe to experiment with alternative modes of personal expression in heretofore invisible depths of one's inner world, and in the gradual alienation and the finding of new expression of one's 'I'. This is a challenge for experienced artists, one which requires enough empathy, but it also constitutes a fertile ground where performative art and philosophy can further explore their given philosophical, phenomenological and psychological modalities and determine whether it might be possible to achieve what Graham Harman terms "Philosophy as rigorous art."¹² If philosophy will never gain direct and complete access to the being of objects, it must find a fitting method for indirect contact. And artistic practice seems to be the better alternative in comparison to verbal propositions which only play at science. This would thus constitute the exact opposite of what Danto speculated upon: art in Harman's ontology is wholly complementary with philosophy and, under certain conditions, is in fact able to comprehend it.

¹¹ KOUBOVÁ, 37.

¹² HARMAN



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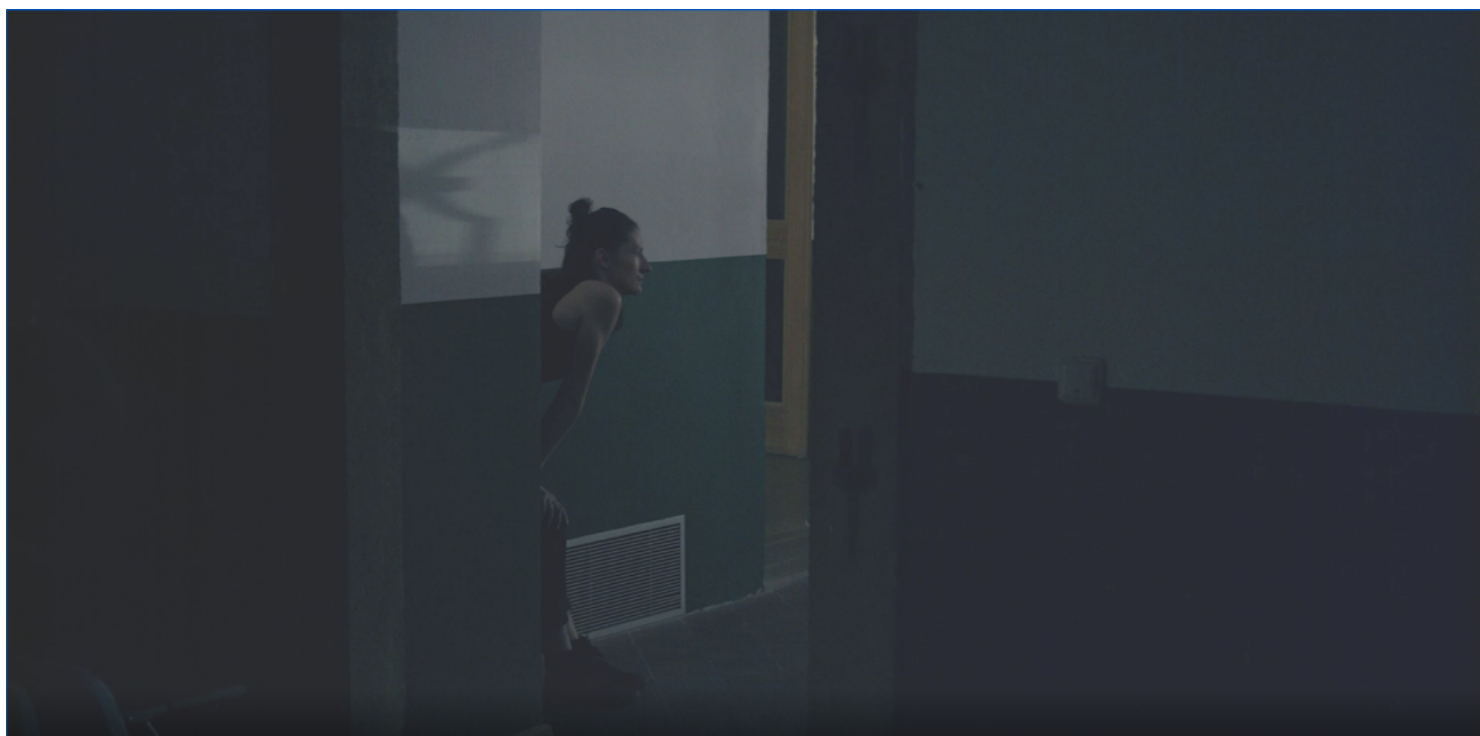
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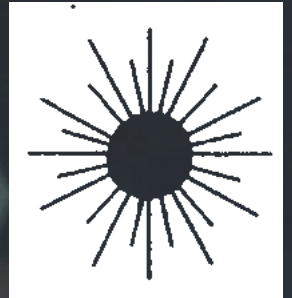
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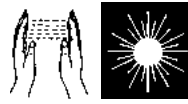




PART TWO

We've in Fact Stopped Communicating with the World Long Ago

Hands and other limbs are considered part of the body.
Why then couldn't all beings who possess a body be considered
as part of a single being?
There is no such thing as a disabled body, but only disabled
socioeconomic systems.



We've in Fact Stopped Communicating with the World Long Ago (Aleš Čermák)

*Sin realized how fragile this world was, like a beautiful soap bubble floating through
blackberry bramble. One passing touch and it would disappear.*

— Remembrance of Earth's Past

*We live in an interconnected world, with porous boundaries, much more like living
membranes than inorganic walls.*

— Michael Marder

A: Is the SARS-COV-2 epidemic an example of radically expressive love?

It is us who have failed, as we are unable to think beyond ourselves. Every illness is a guest in the architecture of the one previous.

The history of architecture is, to a large degree, an attempt at controlling contamination and its largely subtle racial codes. When the emergency measures recede, people start being afraid that they will return. There thus remain many ambivalent people, passively expecting a return to the previous state (of normalcy), but this full return to a previous state will most likely never occur.

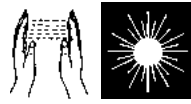
Note: When they were preparing for the SARS-COV-2 pandemic in, for example, Pakistan, it was said that it was necessary to wash one's hands and somehow self-isolate. But what if we aren't able to do either of those things? Washing your hands with soap a few times a day for the span of 20 seconds sounds pretty simple. But there are still many people who for example live in settlements or slums, where this activity is virtually impossible. Access to water is very different there. The idea of repeated use of water for washing hands is a huge luxury. If our lives become more interconnected, without properly resolving these issues the entire city comes under threat.

Hands and other limbs are considered as parts of the body. Why then couldn't all beings who possess a body be considered as parts of a single being? There is no such thing as a disabled body, only disabled sociopolitical systems.

From the perspective of the other, being slow needn't be considered a weakness, and the weak/weaker needn't be slow/slower – they merely achieve a different speed than the speed of the medium which they inhabit at a given time. Sickness does not go away, and that is why it needs constant care. To accept one's vulnerability and fragility in order to reorganize – reprogram relationships, not only towards oneself, but also within a broader social context.

Are our bodies this dangerous biological factor? Is the body itself at the core of this crisis? Do we only start paying attention to bodies once they become sick?

{input and output rituals}
{lack of touch – we suffer for sharing breath}
{we observe the distance between bodies}



The body can fall sick and spread disease to others. There exists a general suspicion towards the bodies of others, but also towards our own bodies. Generally (in Western society), we focus only on the visible bodies. But what about invisible bodies? What is their protocol? How to care for invisible bodies? Are there more types of invisibility? What does it mean to stand next to or near an invisible one? Try to imagine.

Note: Some forms of invisibility are concentrated into one moment. Others plague us for a longer time. Some are provisional. Others still are more resistant to that which tries to penetrate their field of vision. For some, it is enough to discover them by turning on the light or lamp. Others need more sophisticated instruments. Invisibility escapes everyday experience, which it is also able to dissolve through its passing. Sometimes invisibility is unbelievably close. And what role does sight play in all this?

Are we safe when the weaker ones are able to isolate themselves? Where to fix the boundary between our own bodies and those of others? Do we start paying attention to bodies only after they fall sick? What form of care could we imagine?

Note: A "sick" person needn't mean "visibly sick." Sickness also includes that which has not yet been recognized, and which is treated as if it weren't sick at all.

In other words, who are we taking care of and on what do we base our choices? How does this form of caretaking – care for others, which takes place through asymmetries – translate into practice of chaotic situations? How does the idea of the body's integrity (untouchability) relate to the way we imagine a body, experience it, represent, or define it? Can care be construed differently, rather as a process of mindfulness which extends solely to properly existing phenomena? Sensorial awareness? Testing relationships? A boundless ethics?

[... in order to not pay attention merely to those in similar life situations as those in which we find ourselves].

It is not just about healing the body, but rather about returning to the body and recreating a healthy environment where it might thrive.

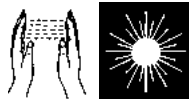
Note: The SARS-COV-2 pandemic is an x-ray image of awareness, but also a pressing call for mutual understanding. It calls for a leveling of imbalance which is closely connected to services functioning within (urban) infrastructure. These "invisible" bodies constitute somewhat of a critical part of any functioning city.

B: Is the SARS-COV-2 epidemic a form of radically expressive love?

Mental states follow one another, and each erases the previous. There is no cause, as nothing is ever forgotten. Touch forces us to face the reality that we are mortal, that we are mutually lost.

How to become untouchable?

A: Losing someone about whom we have cared makes this person untouchable. That which we had considered to be a part of us has become separate.



B: To become untouchable = isolation or complete solitude.

The presence of touch needn't necessarily mean understanding its influence. Touch itself is an impossible feat, but also necessary for becoming an actor in a world of experience.

Touch = a turn towards at least a partial understanding of action.

Trust can in this sense become an unavoidable condition which fosters an openness to touch. To touch means to acquire. If touch expands us, it also reminds us of our finitude. Touch is not given. It stems from contact with the world. It is a process through which the body learns and develops. The specificity of contact is that which is produced – and this fosters diversity. Touch amplifies and multiplies other related effects.

Skin = An active, living surface which becomes a territory for new possibilities.

Touch creates and develops the world. As if human sight suddenly became unreal. That means that people and things are commonly, mutually and actively touching. Touch opens the world to collective sensation. How do we learn to be with others? Touch branches out and forms responsibility. Thinking through touch = the future of touch which can emphasize (ethical) awareness about material effects. The nearness of the touching sight – everything is very slow and careful, with attention to detail. Without a trace of hurry. Touch can not only amplify nearness, but can also complicate it. Touching relates to having faith in reality.

Touch = meeting in space and time.

On the other hand, monitoring by means of touch can be understood as redress to ineffective sight, as a means of compensation, as allegedly infectious or pathological. In various practices, touch is considered a form of healing. The so-called companion of healing. In an abnormal situation, for example an epidemic, touch itself becomes the source of illness. An epidemic thus uncovers conflict and contradiction. The tension between desiring and avoidance (of touching).

Note: Visibility wrapped in invisibility reaches our consciousness only in retrospect, and so it surprises us in the future. The invisibility of seeing the cause and the effect. We are constantly being watched, but we don't realize that what is in fact doing the watching is our own self – that which stands above the framework itself and constitutes one of the strangest projects ever.



Alienation and Space for Radical Love (Jakub Albert Ferenc)

About fifteen years ago, a 25-year-old woman moved from Prague to a small town just near the Catalan capital of Barcelona. She brought with her a secularized, religiously liberal and global-oriented mindset. Soon after finding a Catalan husband, she started encountering the differences between the values of her own family, and those of her husband's parents. One of the central disagreements stemmed from the fact that her in-laws had reservations about what originally motivated this young woman to move to Catalonia, why she had married her husband, and why she wanted to have two children with him. One day, during a particularly vicious argument with her husband's parents, she heard their heretofore unvoiced opinion that, as a migrant from the Czech Republic, she left her family and found a new one abroad in order to find a man who would provide for her financially. No matter how much time, energy and love she had dedicated to her family, even after fifteen years of living with her husband, whom she married in a church in truly Catholic fashion, she was accused of having purely selfish and material interests. This accusation was so painful to her, that instead of trying to prove her true motives, she decided to completely stop communicating with her mother-in-law.

In 2018, a year before the eruption of the global coronavirus pandemic, I advised this young woman to attempt at reconciliation with her mother-in law; after all, she was an elderly lady who was getting close to eighty, and the unresolved issues might weigh on everyone involved. A year later, the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic erupted especially strongly in Spain. The mother-in-law returned from a long-planned holiday with a sharp cough, and she was transported to hospital two days later, where she was however denied admittance to the Intensive Care Unit, as these life-saving means were, in the chaotic conditions of a provincial hospital, reserved for those whose life was deemed more precious. The woman's state worsened. One day her mother-in-law was feeling better, and the young woman from Czechia came to visit her at the hospital, in order to wish the elder lady a quick recovery and offer her psychological support. A few days later, the mother-in-law's state again worsened and she died soon afterwards. Disposal of the body was done in almost mechanical haste due to fears of further infection: the body was transferred along with other cadavers to the morgue and incinerated as quickly as possible. No final farewell was allowed, as the hospital did not wish to risk anything. All personal disagreements remained unresolved.

The preceding story is not in any way unique. During the coronavirus crisis, many people lost their loved ones, and oftentimes in worse manner. But I do think this short probe into daily life uniquely shows how common it is to replace our thoughts of mortality and death with any ideological system which might offer us blind solace, and provide alibi for postponing personal problems to a distant and indefinite future. There always seems to be time for that.

In the case of the woman from Prague, this ideology rested on the assessment that her mother-in-law was a naturally bad woman. In my opinion, this young woman, whose motivations I have come to understand very closely, was not able to assess the difference between being mad at her mother-in-law and the much more important fact that her mother-in-law is an elderly lady who grew up in a wholly different culture, with a different education and values, all of which colluded to inform her thinking. Instead of the younger woman from Prague rising above, she fell back on the comfort of a story of her own devising – that the mother-in-law is evil and does not like her, and that this is the best reason for



erasing her presence from her everyday life. Was the mother-in-law in fact like that? Perhaps. But because the young woman did not attempt a rational and candid dialogue with her about their mutual sympathies and antipathies, no one will ever know. Even before the death brought on by the coronavirus, a great chasm of misunderstanding, which was deeper than any geographical or objective distance, opened up between the two women. No one wanted to talk things out. Neither party had an interest in changing, despite both wanting to improve the relationship, yet not at the cost of sacrificing one's own position, opinion, ideology, which all masked the complexity of another person's lived reality (with all its positive, negative and contrary characteristics), rather making of them a comfortable caricature which made an easy target for accusation and hate.

If we want to change our relationship to other people, we assume that we will be able to change the other person. But are we even aware of the fact that we are assuming that it is the other person who ought to change? Perhaps our relationship with others suffers only because we are the victims of our own imaginations, and the illusions we have developed about who we think the other person ought to become. It is not very plausible that we have created an accurate image of the other person's character. It is much more probable that our existing idea and knowledge about other people dramatically circumscribe our ability to truly understand them. Whether we call this preconceived understanding of other people "stereotypes," or mere "heuristics" of our limited animal psychology, it constitutes a type of filter for how much knowledge, emotion and non-verbal signals coming from others we are able to accommodate. And the less a person matters to us, the less open we are with them, and the more we filter anything which pertains to the given person.

All of us unavoidably approach not only other people, but also the world at large with a certain degree of preunderstanding, as this allows us to give meaning to the things around us,



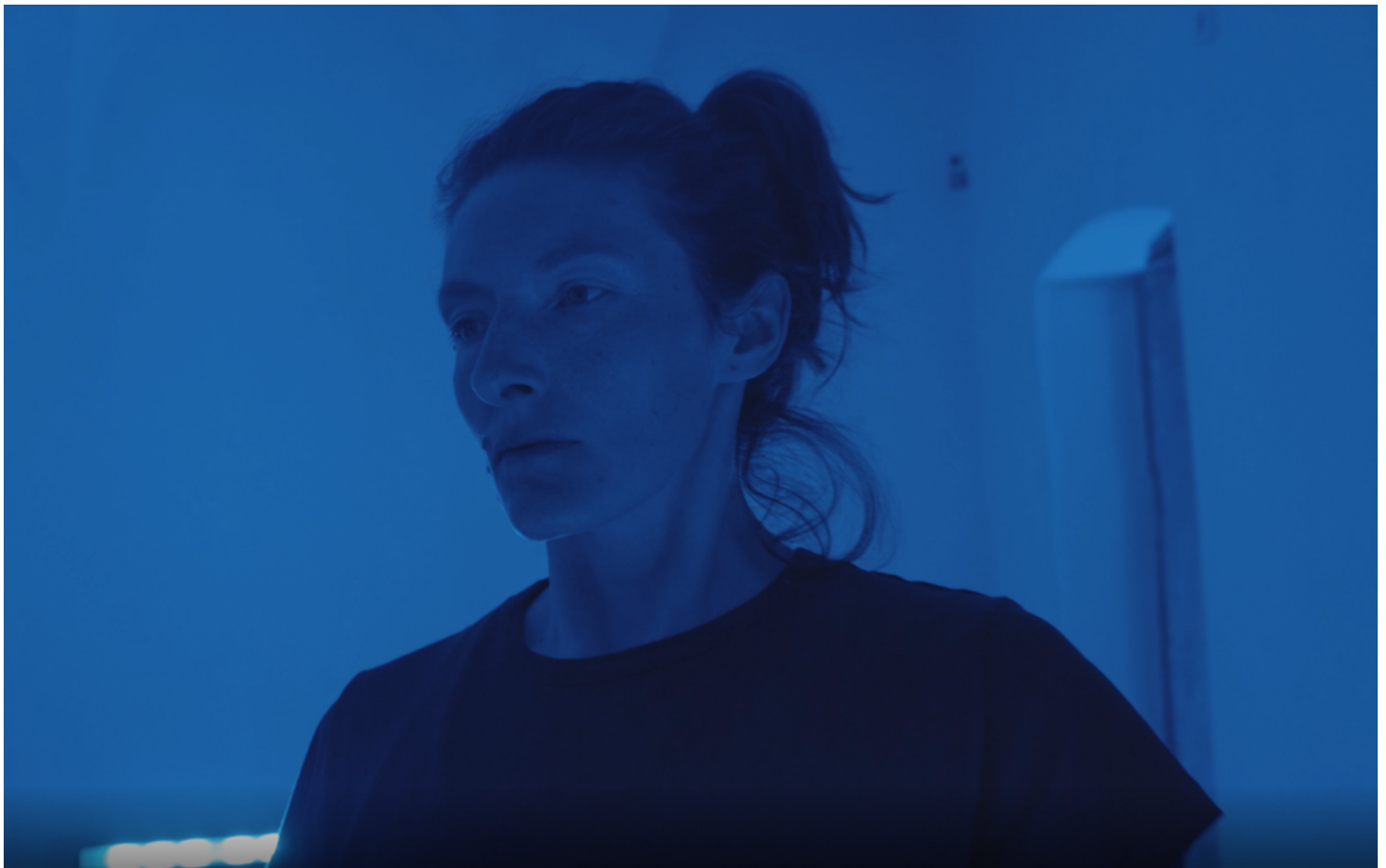
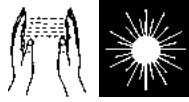


and influences what we pay attention to. Preunderstanding is not a disease; it is an inherent part of the human condition and stems from the fact that we are steeped in history whose events, values, heroes and anti-heroes form our dreams, opinions and goals. Preunderstanding is not only something which comes from the past but, following the 20th century existentialists, preunderstandings keep evolving and developing in relation to our own subjective experiences. If it weren't for preconceiving of the heroes of the past, we would have to rework our value system from scratch every morning before we get out of bed, as it would be the only thing which would make us get up, get dressed and go to school or work. Every morning we would thus have to re-incarnate Nietzsche's figure of the *Übermensch*, who is able to create value without making recourse to the cycles of history.

Preunderstanding is a human necessity. But like all powerful instruments, even this one has its negative aspects. If we aren't trying to actively and consciously update our preunderstandings, we risk becoming a sleeping surfer on the waves of history, which are moved by those with power and those willing to carry out their individual vision of our collective future. Passively referencing the inherited historical, cultural and social preunderstandings makes of individual members of the collective pawns within another's game, fated to be sacrificed for a goal which remains unknown to them and is not theirs; yet they follow anyway, as the pressure to conform to the dominant trends dictated by the billion-dollar industry of neuro-marketing, PR work and the virtual politics of virtue signaling are simply too strong. Any part of the political spectrum can fall prey to deeply-rooted preunderstandings, whether it is the conservative who idealizes the good old times, or the progressivist who fills their preunderstandings with the fundamentalism of an ahistorical present – a preunderstanding which only seems novel due to its ignorance or the willful forgetting of the past.

If preunderstanding, meaning our actions as they are determined by historical background, is an integral part of human life, but also a factor which limits openness towards new experiences and other people, we can ask to what degree we are able to transcend these preunderstandings, or at least limit their influence on our thinking. Why should we do this? In the case of the afore-mentioned migrant from Czechia who found herself in argument with her Catalan mother-in-law, we can say that reflecting more on one's own constructed ideology about the elder woman's corrupt nature and unworthiness could have led to an important moment of reconciliation, before death made that possibility void. That does not mean that an open discussion would have resolved all qualms – saying that your daughter-in-law is only after money is an attack on the person's most intimate character – but the unwillingness, which soon turned to impossibility, to come to another person with an open mind and an open heart and attempt to, perhaps for the first time, truly understand them, made sure that the argument would never get resolved.

Both women lacked the capacity for *alienation* from the everyday routines dictated by one's own constructed ideology of another, as well as a deep preunderstanding of how disputes ought and ought not to be resolved. By alienation, I mean a radical uprootedness from the everyday, which is often unfortunately brought about by the death of a loved one, and which allows a person to grasp her or his life and its course as an object for reflection. It is the moment when a person transcends their sense of self, and one which often brings existential angst, largely due to the sudden imposition of becoming acutely responsible for oneself. But this moment of alienation is also the site of vast potential. A person can consciously remain in their alienated state and explore direct contact with reality and





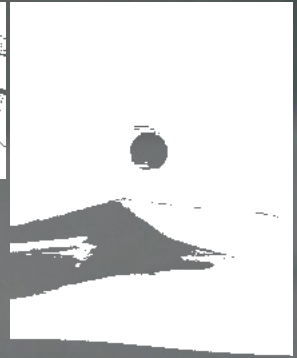
with others. I consider existential alienation as a form of parenthesis, similar to Husserl's epoché of the everyday which gives us the opportunity to experience reality in its most purified form, beyond preunderstandings and ideologies.

Husserl and his followers attempted to purge their intentional relationship to the world so that they might reach the essence which lay within the objects of their perception. Understandably, one of the many possible objects was also the relationship to other people. For the proponents of Husserl, the parenthesis placed on the world coupled with a certain form of alienation provided the methodology for creating a new rigorous science of consciousness. But when we apply this methodology to human relationships, we reach an absolute openness to the other, a relationship without any ideology or theory about whom the other is and how we ought to approach them. On the one hand, this parenthesis leads to an existential experience of alienation and results in anxiety, while on the other, this subjective emptying can also be understood as a form of radical openness and acceptance of the Other, or *radical love*: a non-filtered wish to, if only for a moment, experience the essence of the Other.

Of course, this is a dangerous act in which we become vulnerable to anyone who might be motivated to take advantage of our radical love. There is no mathematical formula or philosophical system which might predecide the success of our radical love. In this space of alienation, self-parenthesis, and radical love we can only invoke Kierkegaard's "leap of faith" – we can hope that strong faith will, in the end, lead to a qualitative change of our relationship to the Other (human, God) and, vicariously, also to ourselves.

Apart from death, there exists a qualitatively equal mode of experience which can also evoke feelings of momentary alienation: art. As the Canadian media theorist Marshall McLuhan said, artists work to create an indispensable layer within society. Due to their psychological constitution and artistic training, they play the role of "antennae of the race," which are able to engage with the phenomena of the collective unconscious, as well as social and technological infrastructures, and make them visible to others by giving them an aesthetic form, allowing the everyman to experience what, under other circumstances, remains hidden.

Art is thus presented with the opportunity to avoid the current trend of "verbalizing art," where the physical or haptic experience is replaced by the dominance of narrative content and the signaling of the proper, social morals, and rather return to uncovering ignored, invisible, forgotten experiences; especially those which can simulate a temporary death of the subject, and which allows our subjectivity to avoid a stereotypical experience dictated by the preunderstandings of self and Other. Radical openness allows us to reclaim our unfiltered, immediate relationship to the Other. Art has the capacity to propose architectural spaces and open-ended dramatical scenarios where our desubjectivized Self can become reconciled with the love for people who have, to the majority of the population, remained invisible. Not necessarily because the majority is cruel, but rather that they have been conditioned by an unconscious ideology which dictates that it is proper to disengage from anything stereotypically untoward; meaning anything which might open a gap in the Matrix and reveal a truth – a truth about the role which embodiment plays in the constitution of our lives, as well as the truth of our own mortality.



PART THREE

Community at the Moment of Disintegration

To be a body means to not wholly be a body.
When the sun is shining and the rain comes with
it, we see a rainbow in the sky.
Similarly, all the diverse forms we encounter are
the result of a fleeting connection among
a number of variables.





Hybrid [Artificial] Autobiography Thinking about a “human body” which is difficult to acquire (Aleš Čermák)

There is only one reality, but a thousand opinions on it exist.

Something is weird in the magical forest.
– Vimeo

The prime suspect is always you yourself!

I don't really like the idea that there's 'the body'. I don't know what 'the body' is: there's this body, my body, your body... there's no 'the body' disenfranchised from its psyche and its context. It doesn't really exist.
– Chrysa Parkinson

It is possible, why it takes place in such a world, and that is what is here for us.
– @0iyE1, 05:51pm on 2019-May-27, (RNN)¹

I will bury myself in my own imagination and let myself rot, eaten by all the thoughts that I once ate. Until only an almost-nothing remains, an infra-thing that whispers between words and speaks to You!
– L'aura di Cristallo

The very essence of matter consists in opening up to the other.

¹ An RNN (Recurrent Neural Network) is a neural network (NN) based on the architecture designed by Andrej Karpathy. The resulting model which NN utilizes learns from each individual letter and attempts to determine which letter might follow simply based on the process of generation itself. This process exhibits something undoubtedly magical – the NN determines its own direction and creates citations without making reference to any central core. NN is a distributed system which functions analogically to the brain, as it has the ability to learn, think, develop and live.



PROLOGUE

The virtual human body

left to right – top to bottom

–every body has its origin in childhood, the body matures and through the passing of time ages and finally dies.

[OBE & NDE]

The participants of the experiment use alternative [VR] bodies. These were designed so that they are sexually neutral and generally attractive – these bodies are reminiscent of the characters in the film Avatar.

Revision of life = tour of life.

A tunnel leading to white light – follows

observation of the virtual world on an external monitor.

Each of the experiment participants experienced a meeting at a beautiful island along with two other companions.

Together they explored the island and performed the given tasks

their virtual bodies changed as time went by.

Sixteen female participants experienced six encounters

their virtual bodies developed

first, they were those of children

then matured

– finally they aged and then died.

Somewhere in reality, there was a group of sixteen persons who waited for the return of sixteen participants which happened to be somewhere on the island.

The mechanism of imaging creates strong illusions.

Those who experienced the island – announced a change in their approach to life.²

² Čermák, Aleš: *Return.Self.*
New. Brno: Brno University of
Technology, Faculty of Fine
Arts 2019, p. 26 [translation].

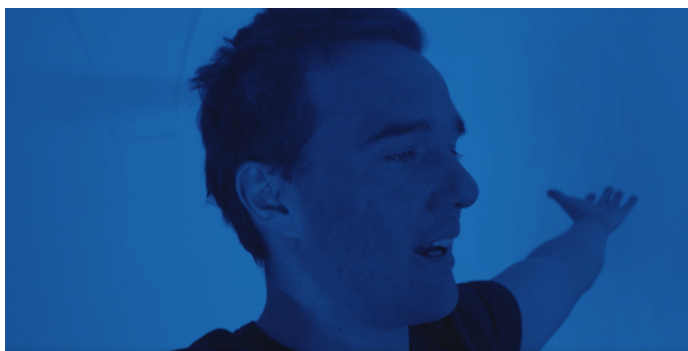


FRAGMENT THE FIRST On Strange Intimacy

§1

When the sun is shining and the rain comes with it, we see a rainbow in the sky. Similarly, all the diverse forms we encounter are the result of a fleeting connection among a number of variables. But none of them have any physical existence.

When we say *body*, we mean that constantly undulating assemblage of bones, meat and blood, but in fact, no such entity exists. The illusory feeling of a physically existing I – the source of all suffering. In each individual pore of the body we see endless spaces – empty spaces of wisdom – spaces of creativity.





When we observe our body in comparison to the head, we see that the body is large and the head is merely a small part of it. We might say that the large body is more important than the small head. But really that small head does all the work of the large body. If we didn't have a head, we would not be able to see with our eyes, hear with our ears and speak with our mouth. Without our small head, it seems as if the large body could not do anything, but with a small head, the large body is able to exist.

§2

I am dying. I believe that I am dead because I am imitating a corpse. Symptoms of sickness, these are the processes, states and situations of the body. What is a symptom, and how do we recognize it? My RNN @OiyE1 of 2019 randomly generated this answer:

In this manner it expresses itself in this form.

From that our body and bodies and bodies are generated again, , and.

It is a method.

To be a body means to not wholly be a body. The body reproduces noise and interference out into the world. The body is a form of life which must always be reconstructed anew. The body naturally calls for a different language. With eyes closed you see a dark blue which disappears as soon as we open our eyes. The body is just as alien to us as the world, and that is why we should accept its strangeness. It is important to realize that we are already other, strange – extraterrestrial. It is simply necessary to carefully connect to this feeling – to be aware of it and to ally with it. Personally, I prefer to close my eyes. This is no longer a social game, it is hidden somewhere deep within. If we observe our body long and hard enough and let various forces act on it without trying to control this process in any way, a strange sensitivity appears. A strange sensitivity which transcends all conceptions. The body is thus real, but what we think of it is a fiction. We are awake in one world, but we slumber in the others. The way of thought can never comprehend the transcendental mind. Let's keep consciousness as a consciousness in itself, not as a means of the intellect. What are we when we experience a state which cannot be described by words? Our bodily identity poses a great obstacle for understanding what the body might become, so let's forget about it! Who were we when bodily experience did not yet exist? Without a body we do not know that we exist. The body should thus be well taken care of.

§3

Now that I am steadfastly imitating a corpse, I realize just how much I am hanging onto life. We get the idea that we are performing some sort of exercise only by means of our bodily identity. But in fact, we are its mere observers.

§4

We have adopted strategies which bring short-term advantages and which have recently been shown to be destructive from the long-term perspective. In the meantime however, they have become deeply rooted in our civilizational structures which makes the possibility of changing them very difficult. This is a classic example of extinction through loss of flexibility.



§5

A new invention opens new possibilities and provides a new level of flexibility. The exhaustion of this flexibility means death. Flexibility should be in accordance with the flexibility of other actors. It should exhibit a high enough level of diversity so that it might serve the genetic diversity of its own members and would be able to assure flexibility and the necessary means of preadaptation to overcome unexpected changes. Now and into the future, we will need to be greatly flexible.

Extinction according to necessity – injustice according to the law of time.

Endless change which lives in us and through us in that it awakens us to the inhuman might seem uncaring, irrational, but can help us face the depths of what responsibility brings with it.

§6

When we fall into a deep, dreamless sleep, we seem to be in complete darkness. We do not know what is happening.

The night which is slowly coming joins the living with the non-living.

One long dark night,

Transforms the living into the non-living.

§7

With your body consistency, you will surely die!

§8

When the mind is not functioning, the world is not present. When two hands touch, the sensuality of the body appears – we feel the warmth of the other, their pressure, tremors, nervousness, their presence and closeness. The intimacy of the other which at that moment achieves the level of oneself. A greeting from a stranger deep within us. One touch rouses an infinity of others. An infinity of other beings, an infinity of other spaces in various temporal strata. At least before we fall asleep, let us remember that we are not a body.

PLACE: NEW DELHI, INDIA

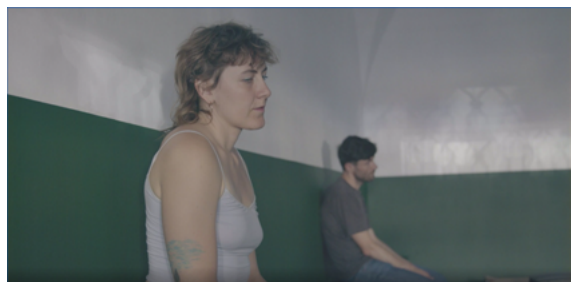
Date: August 20, 2563

On September 20, 2563 I realized while asleep that I am dreaming and decided that the best thing I can do is fly towards the sky. I latched onto a current of air which took me very high up, into the stratosphere. Then I changed the current's direction so that I might observe the world, suspended in air. I looked down and saw the earth as a large sphere. Then I let go of the air current and spread my arms so that I might slide better through the air. I stayed in the sky a long time, long enough for me to realize the immensity and beauty of the ocean when observed from above. After a short while, I started floating lower and found myself in a narrow but bustling street in the Majnu-ka-tilla colony in New Delhi.



The place and the street's atmosphere had a very soothing effect on me. It was early morning and the noise of the place allowed me to have a very clear view on it. Somewhere in the background of my own experience, I started perceiving the growing intensity of the colors and of emotion, and a strange sense of participation in a grand moment. The mind without a body is immensely flexible and any thought can immediately be made real. The dream state is just as real as the waking state. The waking state created this world. Can you say why you woke from a deep sleep? And why did this specific dream come to you? Without waking, there is no world. The waking world is a copy of the dream world. Our current discussion is also taking place in a dream. As soon as your bodily identity disappears, you will see yourself merging through all space. What can we say about ourselves in a deep dream? The waking which grows from deep sleep is almost imperceptible, yet one sees a vast world within it. If there is no waking, who is it that died? When he who is awake falls asleep, does that mean that understanding becomes ignorance? When you are awake, do you feel that it is you who is not sleeping? The ignorance called sleep supports everything. Waking is childish ignorance – what would happen if sleep did not exist? There are regular intervals, segues from waking into sleep and from sleep into a waking state. Thus, our existence is temporary.

Many voices speak from the interstitial spaces, like a cacophony within stories which somehow resonates with itself. The stories are woven into one another, are nested within each other. Are these stories essentially not in contact with the understanding, the invasion of the stranger, whether wanted or uninvited, who is hidden deep within? Stories woven into one another.





Inhalation and exhalation.

Let's consider waking and dreaming together. The difference between waking and dreaming is only in their continuity. Our existence is fickle because of the shifting states of waking and sleep. Whatever is temporally limited is transitory, and so is not real. If our dreams were properly coherent, so that the same people and circumstances would return again every night, we would have to consider very carefully what is waking life and what is a dream. And so, if we speak of a waking state, we must also take into account the dream state.

§9

When two hands touch, how close are they really? Touch moves and influences what it acts on at the given moment. It is an electromagnetic interaction. That means that it is not real contact. And that is perhaps why we think that your hands touch someone else when you press them together. But it is not so. We might feel warmth, the smooth surface of the skin right at the place where our fingers touch another. But that which you really feel is the electromagnetic repulsion between the electrons of the atoms which co-create your fingers in connection with someone or something other. The world is immeasurably vast and him who observes it is smaller than an atom.

By means of touch, we feel differential speed coming on. Touch is never pure or innocent. What words describe is not stable or permanent. That is why it is similar to dreaming.

§10

Awake into a dream where no one is awake. Maybe it is time to face the inhuman within us.

§11

Are we the clothes we wear? No. And just the same, we are not the body either. The body is a mere marionette made of food stuffs. Every living being performs activities so that it might keep its sense of being occupied. It is a big mistake to identify with the body, but also the fact that we consider ourselves man and woman. To consider oneself a human being is also erroneous. Our body is in fact space – the vast space is the body of universal expression. Life does not create itself by accident. If the body is real, then everything other is also real.

Our assumed form also does not remain identical. We are neither living, nor that which dies. Do we need to have at hand something else than ourselves, so that we realize that we exist? In other words, if we are truly lonely, we do not know that we are here. When we don't know that we exist, does a world exist at all? As soon as we realize that the message regarding our existence is insensible, there is no space for any mental creations. If I don't exist, what can be said to exist? What to call this state?

Close your eyes. Do you see twilight?

And you also saw that deep blue. Will you remember it? That dark blue light?

Remember that fears kill the intellect.

A miniature consciousness can create only a false, albeit immense, world. We must destroy this strange custom of identifying ourselves with the body. And start thinking about what we really are and stop limiting our lives.





§12

Thinking was never a mindless or unique human activity.

A real being is not a thing, it is a process – a dynamic process. One cannot comprehend it. It is a freely flowing world without stops. We found out that we are not the body, but that the body should rather become our direct experience. There is nothing wrong with us taking care of our body, for example by not being one. We are not the body, but we are its experts. Because there is no form or color, the expert cannot be seen. The body is our fold, not our form. Are you able to see some hole, an interruption, in the vast space? There were times when we did not know about our existence, and then suddenly there appeared the sensation of being, and the world also appeared along with it. But the world is a hospital full of unhealthy people. If we reject a false medicine, we will not experience its impacts. What are we when we are in a state which cannot be described by words? The mind is able to consider only the acquired impressions. How do thoughts of the unknown appear? Is the unknown world our own creation? Did it appear all on its own? When you wake from your sleep you observe your surroundings and realize that you are awake. Through bodily identity, everything seems real. For those without a body, this is mere illusion. Because we feel limited to our body, we have the option to go from one place to another. But in fact, no movement is at all possible. We are not limited to the body because we are everywhere. The reason we discovered ourselves in the body has become clear. It was enough to understand that the body is not me.

My miniscule feeling of being has become the cosmos, just like being born inside a dream gives rise to a whole, vast dream world. Our waking can be compared to the cosmos – either to this one, or to its dreamy copy. Mental modifications, in other words our memories, are responsible for all our activities. But the future is not completely unreal. That which is unexpected and unpredictable and limited in time, that is what is real.

POSTSCRIPT

The very form of experimentation is always about contact. An experiment is always a living, breathing configuration of the world. Space is very, very soft and your consciousness is even softer.

We function in this world based on our ideas which have no existence. Apart from thoughts, nothing like the world exists. We must destroy this strange habit of identifying ourselves with our body and again start considering the body, which is so difficult to acquire. The body should thus be well cared for! Our world is only the creation of our consciousness, and so we experience it at precisely the moment when we realize that we exist. Was there a world before we were born? A world without us? We must answer this on the basis of our own direct experience. Because we do not analyze ourselves enough, we leave the world waiting. We are the tools of our own action because we lack any other truly reliable tools.

Because the world is false, we do not need to be particularly respectful towards it. But still I ask: What do we need to move the false world? To enter into the emptiness, open ourselves to its possibilities and to wander. To experience this living, breathing indeterminacy of non-/being. To deny the existence of that which we imagine. Our thoughts are unreal. That which is real is truly independent. Because the existence of the individual is dependent on the existence of the world and is circumscribed and determined by the world, it cannot be real. That which we consider the individual can be something wholly different.



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## (Marie Štindlová)

1.

Imagine you are at Atacama Desert, where the mountains cut into the plains in myriad shades of ochre, yellow and rust. You find geysers along the way, mountains covered in snow, houses built of salt brick, a gigantic abandoned mine. You travel through it all for 40 nights. You crave nothing; all there is, is here and now. There is nothing else. Nothing you could turn to or hope for. You walk the plains, sometimes observing the flamingoes as they alight near a lagoon in the distance. You are doing nothing, yet you are (secretly) doing everything. You listen to the wind as it sprints through the valleys and splinters on the crags. It leads you to hidden places, where you come across termite nests and the homes of diverse creatures. You settle in with them gradually. You let them traverse your burning skin, and through slitted eyelids observe every nook and cranny on their bodies. Place constellations of water droplets near their homes and watch them come drink. Sometimes you cry along with the termites and flamingoes. Because of the world, or just because. Some days you speak with them, but otherwise you're mostly silent. You are always silent during the night, only staring into the indigo depths of sky, imagining your body fracturing into millions of morsels dissipating across the cosmos. You peer into a puddle of water, trying to understand. You remember everything people have come to learn. You listen to the surroundings and slowly, like a cat, stroll across the valley's red stone.





2.

It never rains at Atacama Desert. One lone cloud floats above the sands every seven years and the houses are built of unfired clay brick. They would turn to blobs of slick mud, good for making plates.

At night, just as the dry heat tips over into frost, you look to all the four cardinal directions. Nothing and no one stands between the moon light and the cold as they survey the squared kilometers of open space. They glide over orange, wind-swept rocks made round by wind currents.

Ocean currents maybe too.

You lie on the ground and know that you might die like this. It's cold to the touch and tastes like salt.

3.

The driest desert in the world bloomed into purple flowers today. They were hiding in their seeds all this time, just waiting for the seven drops of water which would bring them to life. Atacama Desert is now speckled with tiny blossoms the color of priest robes and eighties disco costume. The flamingoes, long accustomed to their solitude, curl up their legs in confusion. Atacama Desert looks like auntie's shawl – today, tomorrow and maybe even the day after tomorrow. At night, when it is dark and the last remnants of the day's heat are dissipating, this pleases her immensely.

4.

Then.

The sun is setting. You are returning to the city.

You attend punk concerts, embrace your friends.

You run a comforting hand down the cheek of those in need. You laugh, sometimes silently, sometimes aloud. You do rituals together.

Summoning visions of a different world.





~ ~ ~

My activism is silent,  
circumscribed by the space of the body.  
From there it spreads in pulses  
Bottled messages scattered in every direction.  
Sometimes someone notices.

~ ~ ~

Since can be bounded,  
I am also able to not.  
Sometimes we are everywhere.

~ ~ ~

Today,  
as I was devising a way  
to not be,  
I decided to be  
lazy for all the world.

~ ~ ~

The body does not question what is normal or what is evil,  
when it speaks to us through symptoms,  
we begin the task of anamnesis.

~ ~ ~

I sing songs,  
which surge within me.  
Like water in a swaying bowl.

~ ~ ~

When I place my hand on your back,  
we can be one.  
Where is this?

~ ~ ~

In order to learn to write, I had to stop eating.  
To hear my breath along with everything else.

~ ~ ~

The only thing I am capable of containing in this world,  
is my own self.  
Of course I can become a landscape.

# INFINITE MANUAL: Movement Between Intuition<sup>1</sup> and Chaos

A set of dynamic instructions intended to focus attention and keep  
it flowing, that is keep it in a state of doubt.

<sup>1</sup> An intuitive form of intelligence, or also dynamic intelligence, which is able to integrate movement as a spherical spiral which is objectively unfathomable  
(R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz)

This version of the *Infinite Manual* is dated 8 November 2021. *IM* is related to **(TTN)**.<sup>2</sup> The second edited version was prepared especially for the **The Transversal Navigation: Community at the moment of disintegration** project.<sup>3</sup> The *Infinite Manual* is an endlessly evolving handbook, a set of dynamic instructions which should keep their user in a constant state of becoming. Each version of the *Infinite Manual* is custom-made for the specific project of which it is a part.

## KEYWORDS

#hybrid thinking, #intuition, #indeterminacy,  
#transparency/opacity, #flexibility,  
#choreography, #artistic practices,  
#methodology, #education, #post-dramaturgy,  
#artificial intelligence, #consciousness,  
#complexity, #alienation, #no-one, #dreams,  
#care

<sup>2</sup> (TTN) is an acronym for The Transversal Navigation educative-performative entity. Source: <https://transversalnavigation.gamu.cz/en/>.

<sup>3</sup> The Transversal Navigation: Community at the moment of disintegration, is the third final piece of performative research that ran through 2021 at the AMU Gallery.

*And,, with, and that, what here on, and that, what to, what you, and, and.*

— @0iyE1, 08:28pm on 2019-May-29, (RNN)<sup>4</sup>

*Thinking in Rio is not the same as thinking in Paris.*

— Eduardo Viveiros de Castro

*A person, a key, gas, liquid, air are part of a convex context. The human is part of a contextual composition; bad chemistry between a dead position and a living software.*

— Mehrdad Iravanian

*All of us together create something which destroys the whole society.*

— #TTN\_20<sup>5</sup>

*It is possible, what takes place in such a world, and that is what is for us.*

— @0iyE1, 05:51pm on 2019-May-27, (RNN)

*Our gestures are the archeology of our era.*

— #TTN\_20

<sup>4</sup>RNN = Recurrent Neural Network constitutes the basis for a xenomorphic entity, a kernel of the speculative program. It is possible to follow the entity's development on its Twitter account under ·<sub>0</sub>iy·rb·e<sub>1</sub>·wh Er<sub>1</sub>trht·er<sub>2</sub>·m - (@0iyE1). The resulting model which the NN uses learns based on individual letters. By means of the generation itself, it attempts to predict what further letter might occur. Something magical most certainly unfolds within this process. The NN moves in a direction of its own, creates citations without reference to any central core. Neural nets are distributed systems which work as analogues to the brain, and are able to learn, think, develop and live.

<sup>5</sup> #TTN\_20 designates the Twitter posts which constitute one of the branches of The Transversal Imagination, an educative-performative entity.

1. Can performance (in the sense of a performative exertion) transcend the actions of subjectivity itself?
  - 1.1. For example, some strange form of neurochoreography.
  - 1.2. Particular methods and skills for action.
  - 1.3. Strange neuropedagogy whose question is how the brain works so that we may better know how to teach it?
  - 1.4. Teaching = changes in neural synapses which take place along with changes in behavior.
  - 1.5. What if what we consciously experience hides a mystery within?
  - 1.6. If touch expands us, it also reminds us of our finitude. **#TTN\_20**
2. How to deal with performance (in the sense of a performative exertion) – if time disappears?
  - 2.1. How we spend our time is crucial.
  - 2.2. It doesn't matter what we live, but how we live it.
3. We ourselves are always the prime suspect!
4. An attempt to construct cryptocomplex (unrecognizable, crypto = hidden, occult, plex = weaving) strategies. Cryptocomplex strategy is a method which is able to construct an identity which could be called "no one."
  - 4.1. For a cryptocomplex artist, subjects become more than personal identity, meaning that this person is close to no one, diligently works on constructing their own invisibility (Thomas Metzinger, Being No One). Metzinger works toward such a performance which would make it possible to swerve away from the performance of subjectivity in the sense that the relationship towards space and time becomes ambivalent.
  - 4.2. Where ought we to find the point where the "first-person perspective" meets the "third-person perspective"?
  - 4.3. No self-localization in time (atemporality). No self-localization in space. No localization of one's own identification. No perceptual qualities.
  - 4.4. It seems that this person is not of the first-person perspective.
  - 4.5. Attempt to regain manifestation in matter. Being someone.
  - 4.6. Because we dwell in material form, the experience of ourselves as no one is insupportable. People can merely tolerate such a state
  - 4.7. If we consider ourselves to be someone, there will be other people for us here as well. **#TTN\_20**
  - 4.8. If a sense of being emerges during deep sleep, the dream world begins for you anew with a new dream body. **#TTN\_20**
  - 4.9. A mind bereft of its body is immensely flexible, and any thought can immediately be realized. **#TTN\_20**
5. When I think about dance or choreography = complex movement, then dance or choreography is something which is localized and which lives on in the hole of language.
  - 5.1. Gaps in narration are prompts towards intuitive reactions. Analyzing the gap between something and nothing.

- 5.2. Interspatiality.
- 5.3. A better name for dance might be – implicated (self-inclusive) mind. Something which is necessary to rediscover time and time again.
- 5.4. A horizon or an unknown partner. A set of horizons allow one to move through – navigate in incessantly changing terrain. A magnetic field with multiplying, dynamic poles.
- 5.5. What if it's not any of this? Obstacles precipitate unrest and doubt, but also include experimentation = activation of the process.
- 5.6. Ought the head really be the highest point of the body?
- 5.7. Usual behavior in these situations is consciously put on hold – blocked. The period of decision ensues.
- 5.8. Collective processes ought to build on particular conditions and circumstances. Taking a step into the unknown. Embrace the fact that we don't know.
- 5.9. The form of experimentation itself is always about conflict. An experiment is a living, breathing reconfiguration of the world.
- 5.10. While sleeping, you are pure unknowing. This unknowing is sleep itself.  
**#TTN\_20**
- 5.11. Keeping/sing your own negation (uneasiness) in life.
- 5.12. To begin somewhere deep in darkness and let it work on the body, mind and consciousness. Expose oneself for oneself. To observe one's own shadow meld with others. Until we disappear.
- 5.13. The dark is primary. The lighted, that which we enlightened, is secondary.
- 5.14. But all that is clear has a tendency to become significant. **#TTN\_20**
- 5.15. Begin to perceive only that which is dictated by silence.
- 5.16. ... we are still sort of behind. **#TTN\_20**
6. Movement = production of knowledge. Movement is a specific form which raises questions about the very nature of knowledge.
  - 6.1. How do we know that equilibrium has been reached?
  - 6.2. Just like cosmic mechanics are determined by the law of gravity and the mechanics of matter by the laws of energy, does there exist one analogous and basic universal principle which determines the mental processes of the living organism, one from which all else can be derived?
7. Only diligent methodic praxis can aid us in reaching the unknown, meaning that which is found outside (on the outward side of thought), that which is available only beyond the senses and rationality.
  - 7.1. Weak method: dissipates structure. The weak method is an acceptable praxis. The weak method is only interested in that which transcends the conditions and possibilities of generation. The weak method is a plague of universality. The weak method heals the wound with another wound. Swallowing nothingness by nothingness. Healing fear by fear. The weak method can be very rash – insensitive.
  - 7.2. Being weak does not mean being slow, but rather reaching a different speed than the speed of the medium we inhabit.
  - 7.3. Weakness is much more dynamic than strength. It is a corrupted method.

It requires radical reappraisal. Weakness is in and of itself a radical concept. It lingers in the gaps. It becomes an opportunity for creating one's own concepts which build on the compulsive need to survive. Weakness is cloned from the real.

It includes: futility, unfinishedness, faults, inconsistencies, boredom, cities without houses or weather, rooms without doors, dance without a body...

- 7.4. The weak method depends on the function of the structure only because it increases the potential for weakness.
- 7.5. What becomes of a thought which is itself exposed to the pressure of illness?
- 7.6. Various qualities of the relationship.
- 7.7. The weak method creates for an aesthetics of insecurity.
- 7.8. Aesthetics of insecurity = a praxis of insecurity.
- 7.9. Abstract and sensuous homeopathy.
- 7.10. Therapy by fog, who knows what it might mean? Grey gives space to color.
- 7.11. Expressing one's most affective feeling without any emotion, in the most monotonous and level voice.
- 7.12. Repressed vocals.
- 7.13. When the mind stops working, the world stops being.
- 7.14. Every formalized praxis discovers its own ideology and its diligent practice it can have great impact on how we perceive subjectivity. And in what manner it is possible to navigate the body in an endlessly changing terrain.
- 7.15. Diligent methodological praxis promotes unstable, processual and alienated subjectivity.
- 7.16. RNN: But it is also your body which has no name. – @0iyE1, (recurrent Neural Network)

- 8. Technologies of the self and of life (form of life) as an effective method of the creative process.
  - 8.1. That which we today define as life are precisely its contradictions.
  - 8.2. Life is focused on the human and yet it is not focused on the human. Life is always understood as something else than life.
  - 8.3. Life = immaterial substrate distributed across social spheres.
  - 8.4. Evolution is a shell religion; it proves that just like other animals, our existence here is contingent, we do not lead anywhere. **#TTN\_20**
  - 8.5. The pragmatics of life consist in that it accepts all variations simultaneously – it is non-reduceable.
  - 8.6. A network of influences.
  - 8.7. Events at the micro level are also events at the macro level.
  - 8.8. Whatever we do – it merely aggravates the situation. **#TTN\_20**
  - 8.9. A world without us – a lifeless life.
  - 8.10. A life defined by its temporariness (movement, change, adaptation – modification).
  - 8.11. At the moment when the image of life itself has dissipated, it is time to consider life in wholly extraterrestrial contexts (that is perhaps the

- greatest lesson of reading weird fiction).
- 8.12. Our world is just a product of our consciousness. **#TTN\_20**
- 8.13. Life as an untried, empty principle.
- 9. Almost every thought is an expression of concern over our own selves.  
**#TTN\_20**
  - 9.1. After all, what we want is the desire to be and to exist. **#TTN\_20**
  - 9.2. In deep slumber you don't know whether you are man or woman.  
**#TTN\_20**
  - 9.3. If we don't consider ourselves a body, it prompts us to create a long list of both fortunate and unfortunate events. **#TTN\_20**
- 10. What if an artwork offers the option to program life (but also to de-program it). It creates the conditions which are outside common functioning. What if what we call an artwork is not dependent on human performance, but on an artificially programmed person?
- 11. I prefer closing my eyes.
- 12. This is not a social game, it is hidden deep within me.
- 13. To walk like an animal.
- 14. To be deformed, asymmetrical, slow and awkward.
  - 14.1. Fluid. Test your liquidity, the body's viscosity.
  - 14.2. While the body is healthy, you consider your thoughts to be real.  
**#TTN\_20**
- 15. To find possible ways to prevent me judging myself at the moment I transcend a threshold.
- 16. A new invention opens new possibilities and provides a novel flexibility. The exhaustion of this flexibility means death.
  - 16.1. Flexibility ought to be in accord with the flexibility of other actors. It ought to possess a high level of diversity so that it offers diversity in the genetics and experiences of its members and is able to guarantee the flexibility and prehension necessary to overcome unexpected changes.
- 17. We will need a tremendous degree of flexibility.
  - 17.1. Limits define the space of maneuvering which can be used to reach adaptation.
  - 17.2. Pathologies of the contemporary world create for accumulated effects of a depletion of flexibility in reaction to various kinds of pressures.
  - 17.3. People and institutions have a natural tendency to exhaust all their available flexibility.
  - 17.4. Flexibility = a neutral ability to change.
- 18. I never trusted my body or its reactions.

- 18.1. We all experiment with forms of life.
- 18.2. Vacuum is a joyful analysis of virtuality and virtuality is a type of thought experiment performed by the world.
- 18.3. The more we try to push through changes in reality, the more we affirm and create various forms of anxiety and fear.
- 18.4. Is having perfect control over oneself still human?
  
- 19. Our healthy dream system can be compared to a tightrope/walker.
  - 19.1. Having the skill to change one unstable position for another. The position of the arms or the speed of movement are imbued with great flexibility.
  - 19.2. If the body is bound or otherwise made immobile – it falls.
  - 19.3. To diligently work on the question of the ecology of our legal system.
  - 19.4. With a rising number of laws, the tightrope/walker has ever dwindling possibilities of movement. He is however allowed to freely fall.
  - 19.5. When the tightrope/walker is learning the necessary hand movements, he must be secured by a safety net, guaranteeing the freedom to fall.
  - 19.6. Freedom and flexibility are necessary components of processes and the development of new systems by means of social change.
  - 19.7. The budget of flexibility ought to be one of the central features when attempting to understand the functioning of the environment-civilization system.
  
- 20. We adopted strategies which bring short-term benefits and which have been shown to be destructive in the long-term. In the meantime, they have however become integral components rooted deep in civilizational structures, which makes it largely difficult to change them. It is a classic example of extinction brought about by the loss of flexibility.
  - 20.1. Some ideals adopted during the first experience can survive the second experience. Ideals which survive, survive for longer than those which don't economics of flexibility.
  
- 21. To be in accord = an analogy to having the necessary flexibility.
  - 21.1. We are now finding out that some assumptions which are deeply rooted in our way of life, in combination with advanced technologies, have lost their truth value and have become pathogenic.
  
- 22. ...we don't own our body, it is like another's coat which we ought to safekeep, explore, find indications of wear and tear and collect proof of this.
  - 22.1. We do not stand outside an ecology for which we spin our plans – we are inevitably part of it.
  
- 23. Perspective creates reality.
  - 23.1. Surface = epidemic.
  
- 24. The body is just as foreign as the world. And we must accept its strangeness.
  - 24.1. What is a symptom? How do we recognize it?
  - 24.2. We easily accept the simplest method, we get used to it, it is, how it is. Then we are surprised how alienated from our own selves we are when we are alone (closed in, limited in our movement, without the distraction of the surroundings).

RNN: In this guise, it expresses itself in this manner

RNN: That's a method.

RNN: From that our body and bodies and bodies it again creates, , and.

RNN: I could all these years, so that, I already said, that I in and in managed and I felt myself.

25. Healing is like an operation, just as the rhythm of changes of these operations.
  - 25.1. Rhythm = energy – life, that is what yet (or still) cannot be understood, or we cannot understand, that is why there cannot be any previous plan, meaning or explanation.
  - 25.2. Healing is a poem written in the language of symptoms.
  - 25.3. Programming life and healing can be one and the same. It is a form of life which must be again reconstructed.
  - 25.4. The body (naturally) calls for a different language.
  - 25.5. The word body describes that constantly transforming cluster of bones, flesh and blood, but in fact there is no such entity as a body.
  - 25.6. If you observe your body long enough and allow various forces to affect it without interfering in any way – a strange sensitivity emerges.
  - 25.7. A strange sensitivity beyond all conceptions.
  - 25.8. The body is then real, but what we consider it to be is fiction.
  - 25.9. We are awake in one world, but we sleep in the others.
26. Intelligence of the soul.

RNN: But it's your body which has no name.
27. The body is abstract. It takes up more space than it currently occupies. That is why we can transform into a jungle or into any other space.

RNN: In fact, it is one of the biggest and restrictions, that towards it, that it's in -.

  - 27.1. The transcendental mind cannot be grasped through the path of thinking.
28. I carry care for my body into the world of imagination.

RNN: After a while he stopped and entered and from her everyone.
29. You are responsible for your own selves which means you should communicate what you currently feel.
  - 29.1. Don't keep your thoughts to yourself.
  - 29.2. Nothingness is always contained within us, nothingness grows through us and lives through us. We can't close it nor can we control it. We cannot block irrationality, perversity, the madness of which we are afraid in the hope for a more orderly world. That however does not relinquish our responsibility. Quite the opposite, it makes it possible.
  - 29.3. The inhuman, that which we most often consider as the inhumanity of a lack of empathy, can itself be a condition for feeling the suffering of another, quite literally to be in contact with another.
  - 29.4. A new form of self-esteem.
  - 29.5. Inhuman is he who is considered to be endless intimacy.

- 30. A model for exploring and mapping alternatives.
- 31. Playing roles is gaining understanding which doesn't have to be conceptual, but which relates to the body and its lived experience (non-conceptual).
- 32. An endless process, navigation from within outwards, balancing on the edge of identity.
  - 32.1. A constant process of evaluation and redirection.
  - RNN: But it is still so, that in consequence it is x.
  - RNN: And then, when we found ourselves in, where I was –, my body inside my view, as if I were.

For the participants

You should attempt to “understand” what has just happened to you.

# THE TRANSVERSAL NAVIGATION

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