

On Dirty Movement

Erik Aardema

I need to zoom in, this realisation struck me recently. The floating imaginary that I currently find myself in, drifting and weightless, sensing while distanced from the earth, is not sustainable, nor rather productive in creating and discovering the relationality towards my practice.

My orientations have been characterized by unsureness and perhaps also a passive or apathetic attitude, the communications I'm harnessing in creating new world-relations are rather 'up in the air'. Before satisfying the need to zoom in and narrow my relations, I want to make a short reflection on my imaginary position up high. Here I'm, in a way, close to Emersons worm that was introduced to me in the text by Lauren Berlant. By digging through earth the worm, that Emerson describes in his poem *Nature*, "...creates an infrastructure to hold itself in the world."¹ Rather than forming infrastructures by being surrounded with dirt I have been imagining body in air, a body that is surrounded by an invisible force holding it up and that is seemingly floating and creating infrastructures in nothing.

In her essay *In free Fall: A Thought Experiment on Vertical Perspective* Hito Steyrl points out that through technological means, for example aviation, satellite development and aerial imagery, the current perspective on the world changes from the horizontal and linear towards the vertical, tumbling and non-linear. Furthermore Steyrl poses that a stable and rightfully represented ground might not be found anymore and that the technologically meditated gaze, through computer and phone screens, creates even more displacement in the perspective on the world². I will begin by acknowledging my own perhaps problematic preference for staying un-situated or un-positioned, that comes to the forefront by means of this rather ambiguous floating imaginary. By reminding myself that not choosing is indirectly also is choosing, I feel slightly paralyzed by the amount of opportunities for orienting and question: how digging or creating my own infrastructure while floating can help me gain an understanding of the proximity in and relation to my own orientations with the world? At the same time I wonder: Is the lack of choice towards perspectives and sensing really problematic, or does it also have advantages?

To begin to answer these questions I have to ask even one more: Is experiencing and exploring the material sense a integral part of a closer understanding of problematic relations in the world? This question has been of interest to me since a few years, material sensing is very dear to me as a spatially working artist and as a person that likes to start working and experiments through material. A thing that's missing when observing from a distance is a raw sense of the materiality that makes up the world, proximity can inform clues on how to feel the world. When touching a building materiality gives of a wealth of information, for example the material temperature determines liveability for human but also non-human actors. These considerations are quite obvious but nonetheless important to address since they form a basis for realising that even though materiality informs about the world, there is no human control to be asserted over natural elements. According to Andreas Weber³ there is no human-nature duality, only a common called aliveness that is combines all social and biological processes as well as the cosmos as a whole by the striving for connection and self-realization. I would say absence of choice can be a good thing.

If the answer to this distanced perspective is a grounded and proximate view that also tries to transcend to the more-than-human than this also is problematic. Moving, drifting through this dirty sphere is difficult, here humans are limited by the physical infrastructure that represents

about the world looking beyond the paths, railroads, car infrastructures, architectures and other physical infrastructures that have been laid out for us. Drawing on the exclusion that these infrastructures keep up I'm curious if nomadic thinking can be of help, with this theory the opposition between the made-accessible and the non-accessible can be interpreted by terms of the sedentary and nomadic order. The current sedentary order is the order in which things are arranged in the way they are now and where land rights and exclusion take place, the nomadic order, that would need a radical power and ownership change in society, allows for movement not mediated by what is but in which stopping and meeting places are subordinated to the journey itself.⁴

Combining the speculative nomadic freedom of movement with questions about proximity and materiality I want to introduce an experimental way to rearrange my orientations by means of the term *dirty movement*. High speed, dirty, utopic, free, floating, autonomous and non-defined I would like to use this as a hanger not only to further explore my relation to communities and the objects or things I'm in contact with but also about relations outside myself and my practice. Here it functions as a rough guideline for sensing. By embracing situationist approaches and by allowing for perception to be blended and obscured by intense experiences of closeness while at the same time far far away, *dirty movement* resides in the right ambivalent place to allow world perspectives to clash and reveal the orientation I have been looking for.

References:

¹Berlant, L. (2016). The commons: Infrastructures for troubling times*. *Environment and Planning D Society and Space*, 34(3), 393–419.

²Steyerl, H. (2011). *In free fall: A thought experiment on Vertical Perspective*. Journal #24. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/24/67860/in-free-fall-a-thought-experiment-on-vertical-perspective/>

³Weber, A. (2019). *Enlivenment: Toward a Poetics for the Anthropocene*. The MIT Press.

⁴Aldea, E. (20184, september 10). *Nomads and migrants: Deleuze, Braidotti and the European Union in 2014*. Opendifocracy. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/nomads-and-migrants-deleuze-braidotti-and-european-union-in-2014/>