Tom Holert

Ships in Doubt and the Totality of Possible Events

The Planetary Sensorium

Elicited by an elliptical remark from the late Harun Farocki about the relation between filmic montage and the visual economy of computer games,[1] a particular question has began to loom ever larger to myself and a few others: To what extent and to which consequences is the visual culture of the present, and thus, arguably, the present itself, caught in the paradigm of navigation?

With this question in mind, I am repeatedly stopped in my tracks in front of pictures that circumstantially unveil themselves to me in different ways than before. Take the so-called *Madonna of the Rose* (1529/30), a painting by Parmigianino.

The Dresden *Madonna* is a perfumed, sticky, and disorienting scene of sexual innuendo set in an environment of turbulent fabric.[2] The mother–child relationship depicted here is one of reciprocal arousal in the knowledge of a viewer's presence, with a built-in sense of oedipal inevitability. Arguably more Venus and Amor than Madonna and Jesus, the young woman doesn't seem to know where to place her hands. Meanwhile the boy, naked, with his genitalia ostentatiously exposed, somehow – by threading his hand between the woman's breast and upper arm – produces the *rosa mystica* of Christian iconography. The Madonna's eyes are painted almost closed, in an intriguing mix of piety and ecstasy.

The flower's scent, more than its visual splendor, seems to catch Maria's/Venus's sleepy attention. Sight and smell are ambitious artistic tasks to represent as coexisting in one pictorial space. Both sensorial registers contribute to the respective individual's sense of being situated in (or indeed *navigating*) a specific environment. As this environment happens to be a painting's fictional realm, the issues of anthropological affordance and visual representation become endlessly intertwined. How does a painting place what it shows in space?

In the case of Parmigianino's *Madonna of the Rose* it is hard to tell where the viewer is supposed to direct her gaze, as everyone in the picture seems somewhat distracted and out of role. While Maria/Venus appears to be guided by her olfactory sense, Jesus/Amor, awkwardly languishing across the picture's lower parts, is busy multitasking. Not only is he planting the rose in the composition's golden section and thus, tacitly, showing off his geometric savvy, he is also – with big eyes and blond curls – flirting with the viewer.

What first caught my navigational attention on this visit to the Old Masters Picture Gallery in Dresden was the boy's indulgent engagement with the planetary in the lower-right corner of

detail of Parmigianino, *Madonna of the Rose (Madonna della Rosa),* 1529/30, oil on canvas, 109 × 88.5 cm, Old Masters Picture Gallery/Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, photo: Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain.

Parmigianino, *Madonna of the Rose (Madonna della Rosa),* 1529/30, oil on canvas, 109 × 88.5 cm, Old Masters Picture Gallery/Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, photo: Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain.

the painting. Parmigianino, always fond of spheres (as in his well-known 1523/4 *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror*, which he painted on a vaulted piece of poplar wood), placed a cartographic globe in this painting both as the masturbatory toy of a (precocious) child and a symbol of power and geographic knowledge. Without even looking at what his left hand is doing, the boy caresses the globe's renditions of the oceans, continents, and coastlines of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Seen and touched in this way, the toy globe appears as an erogenous zone entirely, an object sensitive to sexual stimulation.

Is it ready to be penetrated by the sun, as Georges Bataille suggests in "Solar Anus," his 1927/1931 mythopoeic-cosmogonic copulation fantasy on planet earth's untold sex life?: "From the movement of the sea, uniform coitus of the earth with the moon, comes the polymorphous and organic coitus of the earth with the sun. The terrestrial globe is covered with volcanoes, which serve as its anus."[3]

Of course, Bataille's geo-porn resonates strongly with ecological debates that preceded and followed it, and which have been relayed through feminist and queer concerns until today.[4] The initial reason to write "Solar Anus" was, among other things, Bataille's interest in parodying Descartes, Hegel, romanticism, and surrealism in their different attempts to fuse Ego and the (cosmic, transcendental) whole.[5] The text thus aims at a radical heterogeneity against what Bataille had learned, with Nietzsche, to despise as a tendency towards celebrating union and identification in Western thought. The scenes of orgasmic convulsion, copulation, digesting, and vomiting in "Solar Anus" function as anti-anthropomorphist envisionings of an exuberant heterogeneity featuring nonhuman protagonists and their relationships. The earth's surface is perceived as a living organ with its particular affordances for those who want to move across it and enter its orifices. The peculiar ecological, seismological, and geological concerns of Bataille's text could inform a kind of navigational imaginary which takes seriously the specific sensitivity and sexuality of the planet and its astronomical surroundings.

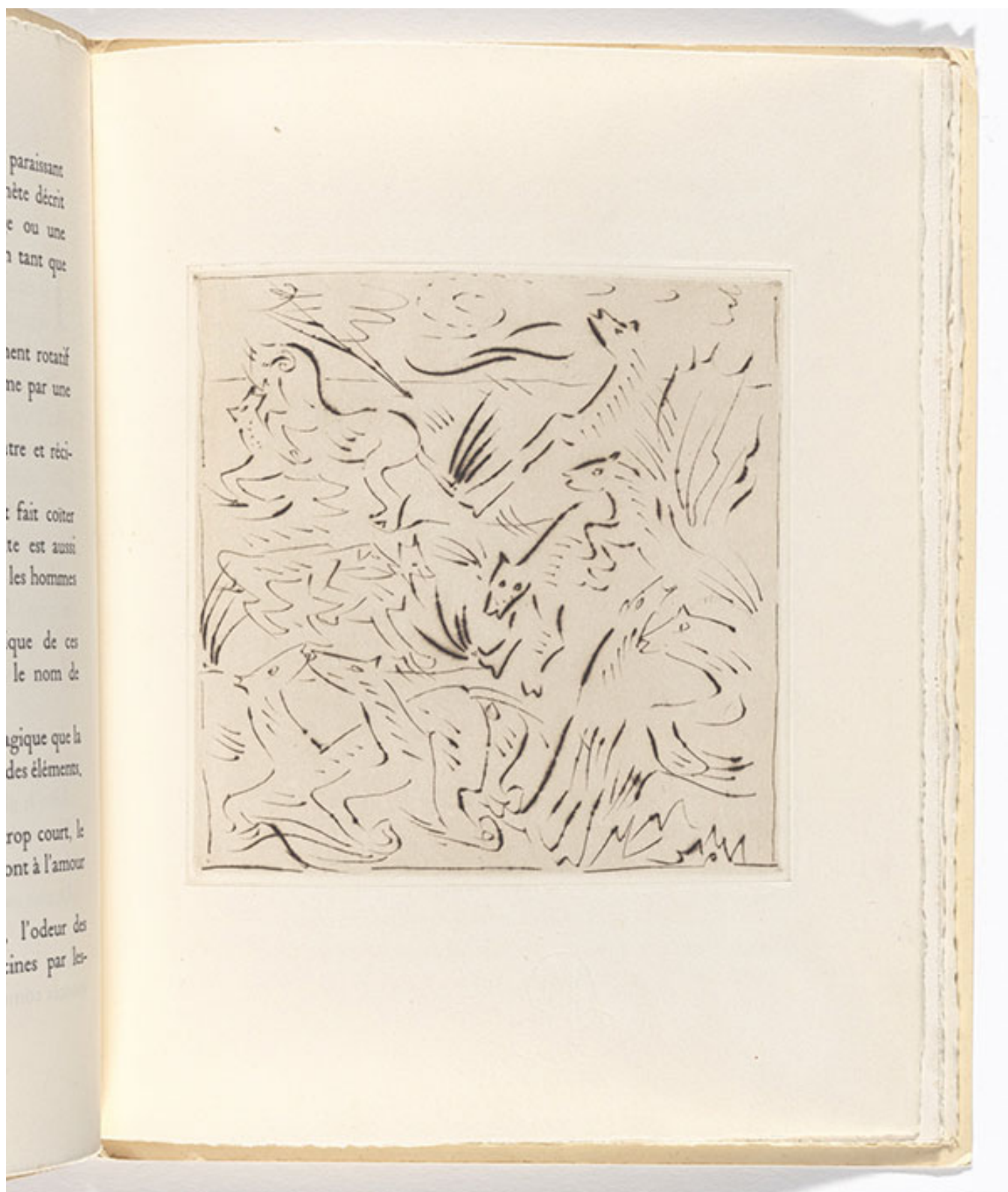### Gesticulating in a System of Mutually Relative Positions

In a similar, yet certainly also very different way, Parmigianino's painting suggests that finding orientation should be conceived as a fundamentally tactile, sensuous, nonvisual matter (and, considering the pedophilic gaze impelled by the picture, a rather disconcerting one too). The boy's hand, more than his vision, is the navigational device par excellence. It also

serves as a precedent for another infamous hand of a boy with "a passion for maps" some four centuries later. Charlie Marlow, the narrator of Joseph Conrad's 1899 *Heart of Darkness*, recalls his childhood dreams of "blank spaces on the earth." "And when I saw one that was particularly inviting on a map," Marlow muses, "I would put my finger on it and say, 'When I grow up I will go there.'"[6] Both hands, first in the sixteenth-century painting and then in the turn-of-the-twentieth-century novel, point to an evolving set of protocolonial, colonial, and neocolonial gestures that continue to inform geopolitical visual cultures. The hand is used as a scaling device, allowing one to literally touch the cartographic representations of often vast geographical areas, thereby making available an individual bodily experience of exploration, travel, and possession. In the mind deformed by colonialism, the touching of the map anticipates the grabbing of the land.

Interestingly, Immanuel Kant made a compelling argument for the significance of the particular role that hands and dexterity, rather than cognition and calculation, play in spatial coordination and orientation in his early, 1768 treatise "Von dem ersten Grunde des Unterschiedes der Gegenden im Raum" (a title that has been translated either as "On the First Ground of the Distinction of Regions in Space" or as "Concerning the Ultimate Ground of the Differentiation of Directions in Space"):

> No matter how well I may know the order of the compass points [Die Ordnung der Abtheilungen des Horizonts], I can only determine regions [Gegenden] according to that order only in so far as I know towards which hand this order proceeds; and the most complete map of the heavens, however perfectly I might carry the plan in my mind, would not teach me, from a known region, North say, on which side to look for sunrise, unless, in addition to the positions of the stars in relation to one another, this region were also determined through the position of the plan relatively to my hands. Similarly, our geographical knowledge, and even our commonest knowledge of the position of places, would be of no aid to us if we could not, by reference to the sides of our body, assign to regions the things so ordered and the whole system of mutually relative positions.[7]

With Kant's "whole system of mutually relative positions" in mind, Parmigianino's ballet of dislocated hands in the *Madonna of the Rose*, as with many of his other paintings, could be reconsidered as a multivectorial,

paraissant
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...ont à l'amour

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...ines par les-

André Masson, Plate (folio 5) from Georges Bataille, *L'Anus solaire*, Paris: Éditions de la Galerie Simon (Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler), 1931.

logische Richtung R_{ab} bestimmt als Anfangsdifferential des Weges ab, obschon die *Euklid*ische Richtung R_{ab} nahezu die entgegengesetzte ist. In einem Labyrinth von der in der Abb. 22 wiedergegebenen Form entspricht der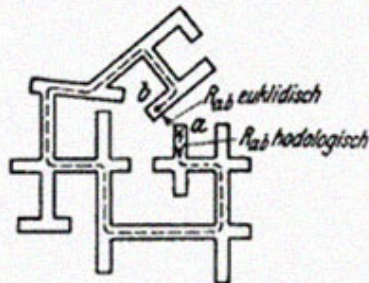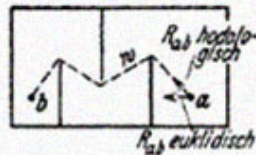 Richtung R_{ab} der Pfeil in a. Die Richtung im hodologischen Raume stimmt in diesen Fällen also sehr gut mit jener Richtung zusammen, die psychologisch tatsächlich für eine Person besteht,

Abb. 21.
Euklidische und hodologische Richtungen.

Abb. 22.

die das Labyrinth hinreichend gut kennt.

Für eine genauere Betrachtung der Eigentümlichkeiten des hodologischen Raumes gehen wir zunächst auf den einfachsten Fall ein: Das
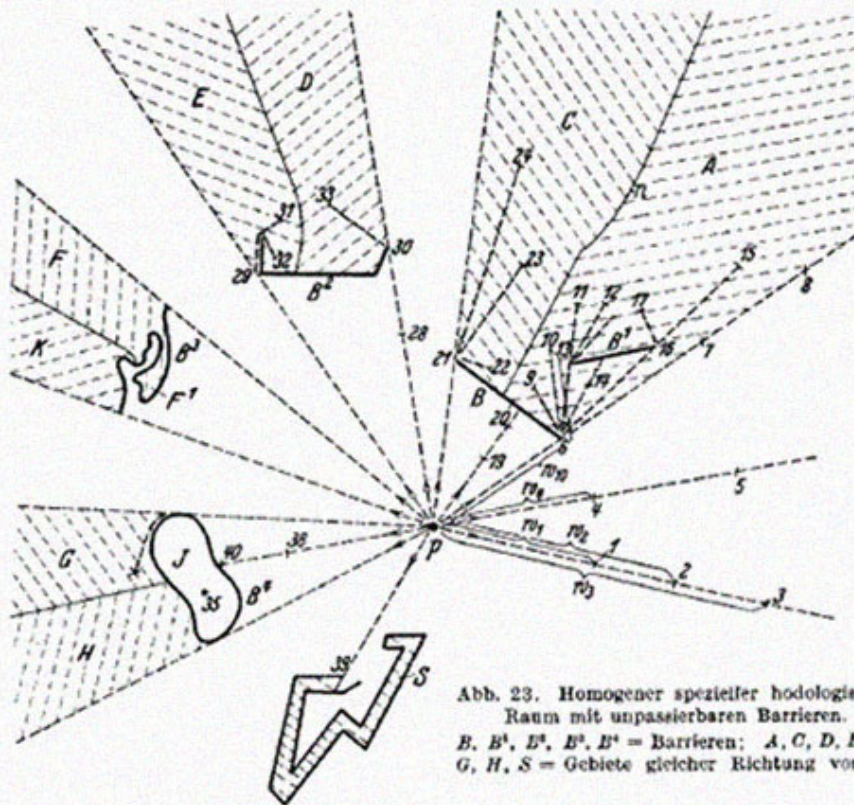
Abb. 23. Homogener spezieller hodologischer
Raum mit unpassierbaren Barrieren.
B, B^1, B^2, B^3, B^4 = Barrieren; A, C, D, E, F,
G, H, S = Gebiete gleicher Richtung von p.

Feld mag in bezug auf die in Frage kommende Wegart funktionell *homogen* sein. Das heißt: sofern das Feld überhaupt passierbar ist, soll die betreffende Lokomotion in jeder Richtung und in jedem Punkte

A page from Kurt Lewin's "Der Richtungsbegriff in der Psychologie: Der spezielle und allgemeine Hodologische Raum,"
Psychologische Forschung 19, no. 3–4 (1934).

multidirectional space – a space that is constantly transforming and being transformed by numerous corporeal extremities moving, gesticulating, touching, caressing in a multiplicity of directions and with varying degrees of intensity. Moreover, the relationality of bodies and "regions" that Kant suggests propels his text into the realm of certain contemporary arguments around embodiment and situatedness in feminist, queer, black, postcolonial, indigenous, and other intersectional studies and activism. Guided by thinkers such as Donna Haraway, Denise Ferreira da Silva, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Kim TallBear, and Zoe Todd, the onto-epistemological stakes of a politics of knowledge that critically opposes Cartesian-Kantian dualist notions of subjectivity and cognition inevitably involve the critique of violence with regard to space and geography. Attending to the place-based extinctions of First Nation peoples, the urban geographies of race and segregation, or the public-private spatialities of sexual and anti-black violence, all of which are very much part of the present political debate, it is evident to what extent bodies, geographies, and knowledges are bound up in assemblages of violence and force. Hence, Kant's "reference to the sides of our body" and to the "whole system of mutually relative positions" should be read in the knowledge of what Denise Ferreira da Silva has called the philosophical (Cartesian, Kantian) elevation of "the formal (as the pure or transcendental) to that moment that is before and beyond what is accessible to the senses," because it is only in this moment that "the mind [is] comfortable dealing with the sort of objects – numbers and geometrical forms – which it can handle without reference to space-time."[8] As Ferreira da Silva's formulation suggests, the epistemic violence of abstraction inherent in Western rationalist philosophy is also always to be considered as a physical "handling" of numbers and forms. And it is here, at this junction of form(alism) and force, that a critical notion of navigation gains traction.

Hodological Escapes

In the past two decades of the twenty-first century, the role of haptics and the body in relation to the orientation and movement within (and by way of) images has been discussed at great length in another area of expertise: the corresponding realms of academic game studies and commercial game development. Harun Farocki became interested in these theories of increasingly immersive, interactive, and algorithmized image technologies through his last realized project, *Parallel I–IV* (2012–14). Especially influenced by a reading of Alexander Galloway's 2006 *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic*

Culture, the project made him think about the navigability and actionability of continuous gamespace in relation to more traditional filmic narration by way of montage.[9]

Without attempting to summarize ongoing debates since the turn of the century around embodiment, navigation, and gamespace,[10] I would like to point to a particular moment in these theorizations, namely the recent revisitation of the work of Kurt Lewin (1890–1947). In the 1920s and '30s, this social and child psychologist's dynamic field theory of "psychobiological" vectorizations and orientations proposed a post-Euclidian and post–Gestalt Theory approach to analytically spatialize individual and group dynamics. Lewin's notion of "topological psychology," synthesized in a monograph on its "principles" published in 1936,[11] three years after he had sought exile in the States, proved to be of particular interest to those game studies people who were looking for ways to understand the particular ludic engagement and involvement that games demand from (and offer to) their users/players.[12]

Thinking of the above quote by Kant, it is interesting how the notions of "region" (*Gegend*) and "field" coalesce in Lewin's writings and in the numerous diagrams he inserted on the printed page. They participate in an algebraization of psychological geometry, a shift "from objects to processes, from states to changes of state,"[13] that is conceived as one towards "topology."

Following Lewin, the topological operates both inside and outside the psychobiological entity, be it a person or a group. The forces, drives, desires, interests, ambitions, pains, and pleasures of an individual constitute a constantly transforming, hypermobile, and relational process-architecture made of said regions and the changing positions occupied by the person within and towards them. Change in a person (or in a group) is always also a change in the tectonics of its spatiality, a test of the endurability or accessibility of its "barriers" and "boundaries," a redirecting of its "locomotions" and "forces," and thus a rescaling of the topological environment as a whole. This all occurs on top of the background of "a totality of possible events" that Lewin calls "life space."[14] Space as such becomes expanded and potentialized, since

> from the point of view of mathematics there is no reason to limit the number of dimensions to three. The progression to spaces of *n* dimensions is possible without difficulty. Mathematics deals also with spaces whose number of dimensions is different at different points. It might seem

enticing to psychology to make free use of the possibilities which the introduction of a more complicated space or of a space of many dimensions would offer.[15]

On a different plane, in another dimension altogether, Lewin's concept of topology is also ready to take into account the restrictive dimensions of lives organized and policed by social and economic forces that contribute to the reaching of the plenitude of the "life space." Thus Lewin was interested, for example, in studying the topology of punitive confinement, such as prisons, as well as pondering the effects of prohibitions caused by class affiliation and geopolitical position:

> There is a difference in freedom of movement between different classes and conditions even where they are legally equal. The rich man generally has much greater freedom of movement because of his means. He can take a special train or an airplane in order to reach his destination quickly. The poor man may have legally exactly the same rights as the wealthy one, but what is much more important for him is the fact that his social dependence and the

task of supplying himself with the immediate necessities of life, such as his daily food, narrow down his freedom of movement to a much greater extent ... One of the most important goals of domestic and foreign politics is to change the space of movement of a single person or of a group. At the same time it is one of the essential means of reaching a political goal. Political struggles as well as struggles between individuals are nearly always struggles over the boundary of the space of free movement.[16]

Reading movement in close regard to political economy, class politics, and the politics of migration may have been as topical in the global 1930s as it is today; however, Lewin's crucial contribution to the conceptualization of a politics of mobility and pathfinding lies in the grounding of his theory of topology in a notion of the "hodological space." The term "hodology" derives from the Greek *hodos*, meaning "path," and continues to be used in fields as diverse as geography, neuroscience, psychology, and philosophy.[17] In a 1934 article on the "concept of direction in psychology," Lewin asks what qualities a space would have "in which the
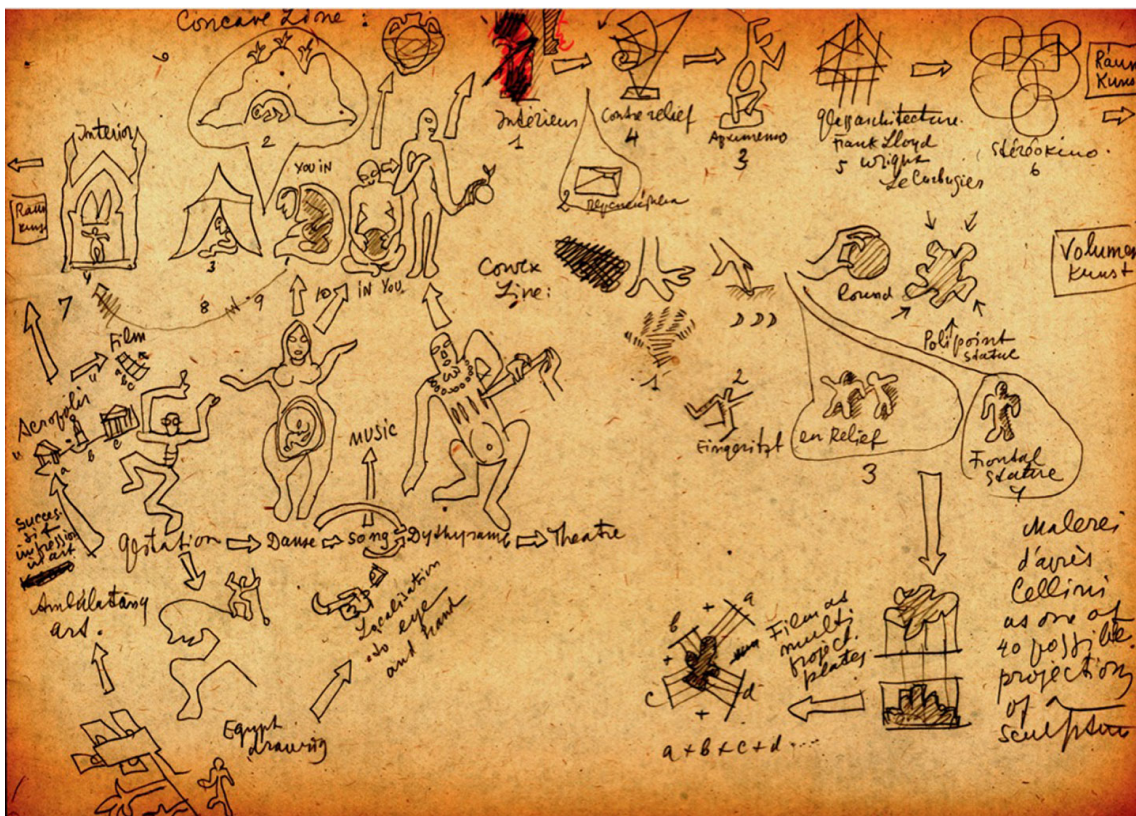
Sergei M. Eisenstein, from his book *Notes for a General History of Cinema*, 1945–46. Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI), Moscow.

direction *Dab* is defined as initial differential of the distinguished path [ausgezeichneter Weg] from *a* to *b*." He would label such a non-Euclidian space "hodological."[18] Without going into any detail here, it might suffice to say that for Lewin the hodological space is the space of the "distinguished path," a path that is mathematically overdetermined by what is happening in the regions that are being traversed and by what is changing for the individual due to the inner and outer states she's passing through. Lewin repeatedly returns to the case of the escaping prisoner to exemplify the specificities of the hodological. In this choice, he emphasizes that the path/direction is guided by a sense of and longing for freedom, and thus by a *political* desire.

Cinematic Path-Finding
Never directly drawing on the terminology of navigation, which became more common in behaviorist studies only a decade or so later (largely elicited by Norbert Wiener's introduction of the nautical concept-metaphor of cybernetics in the 1940s), Lewin nonetheless partakes in an early instance of what might be called a navigational turn. This turn, in turn, expands across a wide field of concerns, experiences, and knowledges – from psychology to mathematics, politics, and notably, film (and which was so strikingly palpable in the conference that *e-flux journal* and the Harun Farocki Institut organized in Berlin in April 2019). Lewin's relationship to cinema took many directions in addition to his use of a film camera in the 1920s to record children's behavior for research and demonstration purposes. Like his colleague Wolfgang Köhler,[19] Lewin was also read by Sergei Eisenstein, collaborated with Russian psychologist Alexander Luria, and met the polymath-director when the latter visited Berlin in 1929.[20] Eisenstein was particularly eager to learn more about Gestalt psychology and to find material for his theory of cinematic expression and the immersive involvement of the spectator by means of filmic montage. There are several connections to be found between Eisenstein's project of a cinematic method of involvement and mobilization and Lewin's field theory and vectorial psychology,[21] but only a few direct traces.

A somewhat unexpected introduction of the hodological dimension ("the word path") can be tracked in a singular drawing from Eisenstein's huge compendium *Notes for a General History of Cinema* from the mid-1940s.[22] With this tableau, Eisenstein tried to picture what he considered the entirety of cinematic practices, covering a vast geographic and historical area of pictorial and ritual activity. As suggests media scholar

Antonio Somaini,

> what emerges from this drawing is once more the conviction, shared by Eisenstein and Warburg, that the history of images and artistic forms should be approached through montage. Montage here becomes an instrument of orientation, like a map, within a history of artistic forms that would otherwise remain an intricate labyrinth.[23]

In the lower-left corner of the drawing, Eisenstein represents an instance of what he denotes, writing in English, as "ambulatory art," that is, an art of or by walking. The drawing refers to visual and artistic practices in which bodily motion through space, drawing, and mapping interlace and interact, for instance in the art of Japanese artists such as Hokusai, who performed "the 'running around' an object … with the hand," as Eisenstein writes in his *Notes*, amid reflections on drawing and haptics in the history of art.[24]

Tellingly, considering the notion of "ambulatory" art, the term "path" had accrued a particular meaning in Eisenstein's film theory writings of the later 1930s. In a paragraph from a text on "Montage and Architecture" from around 1938, without making explicit reference to Lewin's "hodological space," Eisenstein nevertheless seems to make use of the concept:

> [When talking about cinema], the word path is not used by chance. Nowadays it is the imaginary path followed by the eye and the varying perceptions of an object that depend on how it appears to the eye. Nowadays it may also be the path followed by the mind across a multiplicity of phenomena, far apart in time and space, gathered in a certain sequence into a single meaningful concept; and these diverse impressions pass in front of an immobile spectator.[25]

Eisenstein's canny articulation of cinema and path, that is of image and orientation, of the visual and the kinetics of following a path, is one road to follow in the project of identifying points of mutation, of paradigmatic shifts towards the navigational condition of the present. Emphasizing motion and searching for Eisenstein was key in reconsidering the interlaced spatialities of built and filmed environments, with the ultimate aim of arriving at an expanded notion of the viewer's attention and involvement. On the other hand, Eisenstein still posits an "immobile spectator" for whom a "single meaningful concept" has to be produced. More forward-looking may be his thought of "a

path followed by the mind across a multiplicity of phenomena, far apart in time and space."

Here, Eisenstein anticipated the mobilization of cognition and perception that has long since become an important asset of cognitive capitalism's mode of valorization. Pathfinding and searching, like modeling and mapping, are crucial activities of involvement and survival in an age that is characterized by constant localization and orientation, by being tracked and mined. This age could be dubbed, if it weren't so corny, the age of the navigational self. This self, this subject-type, may be "immobile" like Eisenstein's spectator, but it is most definitely impelled 24/7 to leave a trace and produce itself as a moving target to be navigated.

Ariadne's Thread and the Dionysian Mindfuck

Moving back and forward simultaneously from gamespace to paths through cinema and montage, I, figuring as another of those navigational selves, discovered Parmigianino's *Madonna of the Rose* painting anew when I came to Dresden for a conference on Friday, May 24 of this year. This date fell just a couple of days before the 2019 European Parliament elections –

the prospect of which provoked a massive "#FridayForFuture" demonstration, part of the movement against climate catastrophe organized since 2018 by students throughout Europe.

Elections and protests, environmentalism, future-thinking on different scales (Europe, the planet), the legacies of colonialism, the presence of new strands of decolonial thought, how all of these could be seen as interlaced with the navigational condition – these thoughts were constitutive of the mood in which I encountered the painting. Any framing of the dexterity of Parmigianino's Jesus/Amor in terms of colonialism, or rereading it from a needed feminist navigational perspective, could be rejected as utterly far-fetched in its anachronism. However, the painting's brushstrokes intimate that navigation equals the caressing and potential penetrating of terrestrial topography and geology. This particular framing of the terrestrial condition is, following Bataille, orgasmic, eruptive, and ejaculative:

> The terrestrial globe is covered with volcanoes, which serve as its anus. Although this globe eats nothing, it often
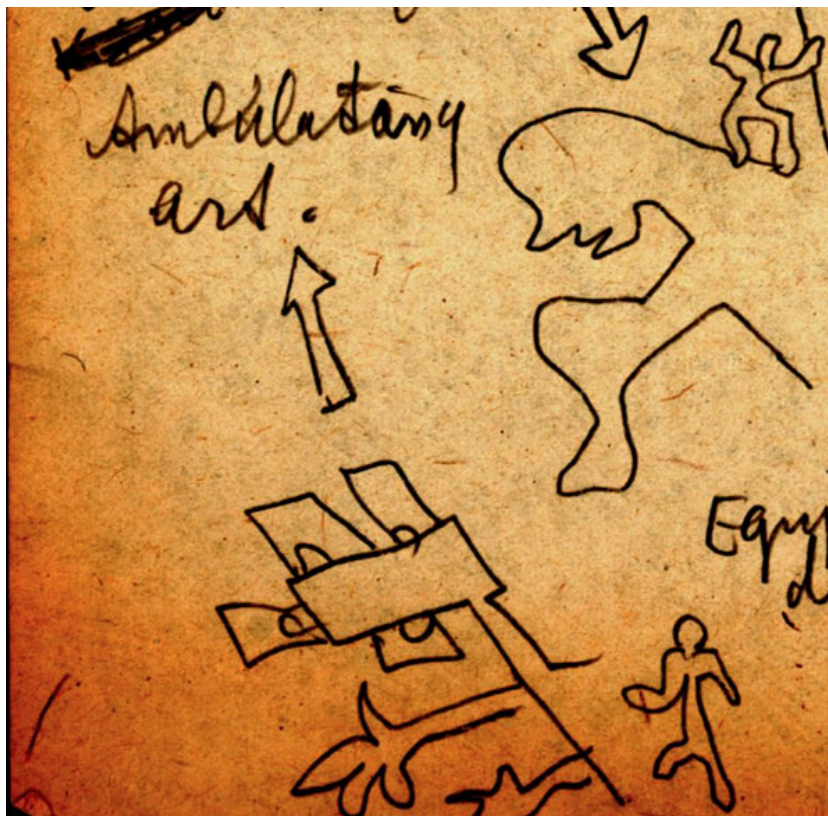
Detail of Sergei M. Eisenstein's drawing connected to the *Notes for a General History of Cinema* (1945-46), Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI), Moscow.

Evelyn de Morgan, *Ariadne in Naxos,* 1877, oil on canvas, 90.8 × 132.8 cm, The De Morgan Foundation and the De Morgan Collection, Watts Gallery Estate, Guildford, Surrey, United Kingdom, photo: The De Morgan Foundation.

violently ejects the contents of its entrails … The earth sometimes jerks off in a frenzy, and everything collapses on its surface. The Jesuve is thus the image of an erotic movement that burglarizes the ideas contained in the mind, giving them the force a scandalous eruption.[26]

Fittingly, in sight of the disturbingly sexualized representation of a navigator/Jesus provided by Parmigianino's painting, Bataille, without any connection to the *Madonna of the Rose*, uses the name "Jesuve" (or "Jésuve" in French). The term is a portmanteau of his invention that contracts Jésus and Vésuve, but also Vénus, the Cartesian "*je suis*," and the "*sève*," the sap of Dionysos.[27]

Bataille's Jésuve is also an (anti-)epistemological concept, the "image" of a terminally sexualized and violated rationality. It is, quite bluntly, the philosophical figure of a mindfuck. Under the tutelage of Jésuve, orientation is deemed to be in an eternal crisis. Rather than finding one's way out of the labyrinth of human existence and non-knowledge, the Jésuvian mindfuck is supposed to keep the subject firmly, if ecstatically, inside the primordial maze of ancient mythology extended into the present of Bataille's battle with enlightened rationality. The Dionysian, a-cognitive dimension of the mindfuck, tangible also in Parmigianino's painting's epistemological reflection on sight and touch, sensuousness and topography, (dis)orientation and desire, tends to subvert any pathfinding effort.

On the other hand (and, considering all that has been said above, the trope of the hand is chosen here with caution), let's consider the role of Ariadne in the Dionysian narrative. The quintessential mythological pathfinder, the daughter of king Minos from Crete, provided a man, Theseus, a warrior from Athens, the means to escape her father's labyrinth (which was built by the enslaved engineer-architects Daedalus and Icarus) after Theseus had killed her half-brother, the Minotaur. Having helped Theseus find his way out of the Minoan labyrinth, Ariadne finds herself in a diasporic, exilic state, abandoned both by her family and her alleged lover – on a beach. In Evelyn De Morgan's 1877 painting *Ariadne in Naxos*, Parmigianino's *Madonna of the Rose*, and particularly her abundant, featherlight draperies, appear to have been teleported into a Pre-Raphaelite environment. Here, lavishly posing on pre-touristic sands, Ariadne contemplates the futile deployment of a thread to guide the object of her desire (Theseus) out of what they both perceived as the carceral architecture of the Cretan ruler and his monster. Although the operation was successful, Ariadne seemed to have lost

everything; in her attempt to outwit the labyrinth, she fooled herself. Despite her best efforts at tactile navigation, providing Theseus with a thread made most likely by a woman's hand, the labyrinth persisted – if in unexpected ways.

Meeting (and falling for) Dionysos and his entourage in despair might have made Ariadne reevaluate the situation. For in a Dionysian perspective, a labyrinthic existence[28] becomes desirable in itself. In fact, the maze proves to be the actual paradoxical place to be in order to escape the determining placedness of one's existence – to escape what Gilles Deleuze in his 1962 *Nietzsche and Philosophy* called "method": "Method in general is a means by which we avoid going to a particular place, or by which we maintain the option of escaping from it (the thread of the labyrinth). 'And we, we beg you earnestly, hang yourselves with this thread!'"[29]

By disqualifying method and by privileging disorientation against the enlightened desire for accountability and placement, Deleuze thus points to the fundamental pointlessness of navigation, as the aim should be *to never reach a destination*. He also draws on Nietzsche's sexist assumption about the deadliness of Ariadne's thread (only good to commit suicide with). Instead of navigating, Deleuze recommends voyaging to a rigorously non-navigational landscape. Deleuze's epistemological advice amounts to a thinking against orientation and into the labyrinth as well as other "extreme" places and times. In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze implores his post-existentialist, neo-Nietzschean, and future post-structuralist readership to reach

> the height of summits and caves, the labyrinths; midday-midnight; the halcyon aerial element and also the element of the subterranean. It is up to us to go to extreme places, to extreme times, where the highest and the deepest truths live and rise up. The places of thought are the tropical zones frequented by the tropical man, not temperate zones or the moral, methodical or moderate man.[30]

Notwithstanding the voluntaristic Übermensch disposition operative in such lines, the navigational doesn't simply vanish at Nietzsche's or Deleuze's will, as much as they are both frantically working at refuting a goal-directed understanding of navigation. Casting a Dionysian spell might not suffice here. For one, how does one reach the "extreme places" if not by navigational means? Ariadne certainly arrived at one of those extreme places when landing on Naxos, where Dionysos pursued her,

frighteningly, with his chariot pulled by tigresses. But this experience didn't leave her in disorientation and distress, much to the contrary. As Ovid and others report, after he had persuaded her to marry him, Dionysos made Ariadne the ultimate navigational wedding present if there was ever was such a thing: "Have the sky for your gift: there you'll be gazed at as a star; / you'll often guide ships in doubt, as the Cretan Crown."[31]

By attaching Ariadne to the sky and thus elevating her from the material terrestrial ground, Dionysos also devalues the crucially embodied nature of her navigational knowledge. The myth of Ariadne, a mainstay of feminist literature and theory,[32] is an example of how men successfully appropriate women's contribution to salvage and social cohesion in order to support their own interests and careers. Disembodiment has proven to be one of the successful strategies resulting in gendered power asymmetries, yet with regard to navigational knowledge and skills, a (changing) set of phenomenological theorizations of embodied orientation and sensorially diverse modes of pathfinding, mapping, and modeling has remained comparably strong.

This gesture also could be read as an acknowledgment of Ariadne's achievement as a mediator of navigational technology and methodology. Amid all the Dionysian turmoil and the god's penchant for deterritorialization, equipping the bride with the features of a stellar body that guides "ships in doubt" is paying tribute to the epistemological and existential need for orientation, to the entanglement of knowing and surviving.[33]

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See the editorial of this issue and, for one example, my "Meshed Space: On Navigating the Virtual," in *Myths of the Marble*, exh. cat. eds. Milena Hoegsberg and Alex Klein (Sternberg Press, 2017), 95–112.

2
The *Madonna of the Rose* is a later work by an artist who was called "the little one from Parma" and whose actual name was Girolamo Francesco Maria Mazzola. Parmigianino died young, in 1540, at thirty-seven. But he lived long enough to build a reputation as a pioneer of eccentric Mannerist painting and draftsmanship. Famous for his courtly, flattering portraits of noblewomen and noblemen, but even more so for his anatomically daring *figurae serpentinatae* in religious paintings such as the notorious 1534/35 *Madonna with the Long Neck*, Parmigianino was also an accomplished eroticist.

3
Georges Bataille, "Solar Anus," in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927–1939*, ed. and intro. Allan Stoekl, trans. A. Stoekl with Carl R. Lovitt and Donald M. Leslie, Jr. (University of Minnesota, 1985), 7.

4
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See, for example, Leslie Anne Boldt-Irons, "Bataille's 'The Solar Anus' or the Parody of Parodies," *Studies in 20th Century Literature* 25, no. 2 (2001): 354–74.

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Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899) (Dover Publications, 1990), 5–6.

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Which would also mean retelling an epic battle between the "narratologists" and the "ludologists" launched by game scholars Gonzalo Frasca, Jesper Juul, and others. See, e.g., Gonzalo Frasca, "Simulation versus Narrative: Introduction to Ludology," in *The Video Game Theory Reader*, eds. Mark J. P. Wolf and Bernard Perron (Routledge 2003), 221–35; Jesper Juul, *A Clash between Game and Narrative: A Thesis on Computer Games and Interactive Fiction*, 1999 http://www.jesperjuul.net/thesis/AClashBetweenGameAndNarrative.pdf; Jesper Juul, "Games Telling Stories? A Brief Note on Games and Narratives," *Game Studies* 1, no. 1 (July 2001) http://gamestudies.org/0101/juul-gts/.

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Lewin, *Principles of Topological Psychology*, 16.

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Lewin, *Principles of Topological Psychology*, 16.

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Lewin, *Principles of Topological Psychology*, 46–47.

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See, e.g., David Turnbull, "Maps Narratives and Trails: Performativity, Hodology and Distributed Knowledges in Complex Adaptive Systems – an Approach to Emergent Mapping," *Geographical Research* 45, no. 2 (June 2007): 140–49; and Dominic H. ffytche and Marco Catani, "Beyond Localization: From Hodology to Function," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*, no. 360 (2005): 767–79. (No mention of Lewin in either text though.)

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See, e.g., Katja Rothe, "Mimesis als Sozialtechnik: Kurt Lewin, der Film und die Nachahmung," *Archiv für Mediengeschichte* 12 (2012): 127–36.

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See Oksana Bulgakowa, "Sergej Eisenstein und die deutschen Psychologen," in *Herausforderung Eisenstein*, ed. Oksana Bulgakowa (Akademie der Künste der DDR, 1989), 80–9.

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See, e.g., Pia Tikka, *Enactive Cinema: Simulatorium Eisensteinens* (University of Art and Design Helsinki, 2008), 127–28 https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/80710802.pdf.

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I owe the knowledge of this drawing to Elena Vogman and Antonio Somaini.

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Antonio Somaini, "Cinema as 'Dynamic Mummification,' History as Montage: Eisenstein's Media Archaeology," in Sergei M. Eisenstein, *Notes for a General History of Cinema*, eds. Naum Kleiman and Antonio Somaini, trans. from Russian by Margo Shohl Rosen, Brinton Tench Coxe, and Natalie Ryabchikova (Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 94.

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Eisenstein, *Notes for a General History of Cinema*, 200.

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Sergei Eisenstein, "Montage and Architecture" (c. 1938), intro. Yve-Alain Bois, *Assemblage* 10 (December 1989): 110–31, 116.

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Bataille, "Solar Anus," 8.

27
For a Lacanian reading of Bataille's neologism, see Albert Nguyên, "Bataille 'Le Jésuve,'" *L'en-je lacanien* 10 (2008): 47–79.

28
Arguably anticipating the "labyrinthcity" of a "neo-baroque" present, see Angela Ndalianis, *Neo-Baroque Aesthetics and Contemporary Entertainment* (MIT Press, 2004).

29
Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962), trans. Hugh Tomlinson (Alhlone Press, 1983), 110.

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Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 110.

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Ovid's Heroides*: A New Translation and Critical Essays*, eds. Paul Murgatroyd, Bridget Reeves, and Sarah Parker (Routledge, 2017), 119.

32
For an excellent application of the Ariadne myth to contemporary academia, see Briony Lipton, "Writing through the Labyrinth: Using *l'écriture feminine* in Leadership Studies," *Leadership* 13, no. 1 (2017): 64–80.

33
The navigational relationship between stellar constellation and orientation (on sea level or on land) in the Mediterranean has been reemphasized recently by artist Bouchra Khalili, in a time when the visual offers of the sky have already been replaced by satellite-based GPS technology. Her 2011 *Constellations* series of diagrams graph the trajectories of illegalized immigration to Europe while strongly and deliberately resembling astronomical constellations. Khalili's series is reminiscent of the fact, in Eric de Bruyn's formulation, "that star patterns have another cultural significance, one that predates their use as a navigational tool: namely, to commemorate the dead." Eric C. H. de Bruyn, "Beyond the Line, or a Political Geometry of Contemporary Art," *Grey Room* 57 (Fall 2014): 24–49, 45.