

MEMORY-ATLAS & The REDRAWING The TERRESTRIAL

—a lineup—

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Sample—the contribution seeks to demonstrate a sideways transposition between *panel-works*, *line-ups* and an *atlas*. The lineup investigates *position*, *situation* and *record* when drawing under field-work conditions, and the readability of the ensuing plans as panel-works in the aftermath. “To read something that was never written” is visual take Didi-Huberman develops on the basis of Aby Warburg’s atlas of memory: MNEMOSYNE. This approach is here applied on **ms./plv. 1247** at the National Library, titled “Remembrance of the Mountain-journey in 1820. Dedicated to my Friend Boeck. Keilhau. Christiania 1821.” The readability of this document is already part of its *afterlife*. A method combining *proxemics* and *semiotics*, in an attempt to understand human being in geological time, where the drawings appear as stratified records (in which the development of *attitude* and *action* alternate). Patches of good/bad judgement in a life-zone characterised by the contrasts between the *shortness* of human life, the *long spans* of geological time, and the *meantime* of drawing mediating between them: featuring the short-, long- and mean-term. The lineup is materialist and cartographic. A redrawing of the terrestrial with an emphasis of vertical perspective and sitting-positions.

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PATCHES

In his book *Down to earth* (2018) Bruno Latour writes that we would need 4-5 planets to modernise the Earth. Which means that the globe is no longer our scale. We can choose between continued drilling and go to Mars w/Elon Musk when it is over, or rethink the *terrestrial*. A new wind-rose: regular life-conditions extend 3km up & down—an [infrathin](#) varnish on the earth’s 510.100.000km².

Up on high, the sky’s roof comes closer. The universe *above* and *beneath* us: the starts above and the rock below. Life’s outer limits. In this drawing, precision is sought to record the mountains. The human figures are schematic, but informative: *one* builds a cairn and fixes the position, *one* takes note of the altitude with a barometer alongside, *one* draws draws precisely aided by a tripod.

The drawing is the collection’s no. xxvii which geologist B.M. [Keilhau](#) dedicates to his friend C.P.B. [Boeck](#)—manuscript and plan-work 1247 in the National Library’s collection. The red circle marks the drawings that were made by the two fellows. While the blue marks drawings that have been done by *others*. We are in the Jotun-mountains. The drawing at the low left is the collection’s ground zero.

This is from [Goethe](#)’s stone-collection. I am here not attending the mineral-collection as such, but a certain way of *looking*. [Georges Didi-Huberman](#)’s recollection is strikingly similar to [Leopold von Buch](#)’s—a friend of both Keilhau and Goethe—in what he *read* from the sample. He writes e.g. that Norway’s university possesses a mineralogical-geognostic collection that is a print *off* nature itself.

Overlaying chaos, the sample prompts the interception of constellations: or, what we understand as ‘common’, ‘knowledge’, ‘theoretically visionary’. What is the *common*? asks Goethe—“it is the singular”. What is the particular? he asks again—“it is the millions of cases”. I.e. he underlines the importance of *observation*, to see alot and to span/examine *variation* in drawings.

What is it that emerges with *this knee* and from *millions of knees*: can the form-drive glimpse the sense-drive in the material open-case, as Goethe’s friend Schiller wrote in his letters? Such that the

actual form has come about with the help and resistance of materials, and thereby implicates one of nature's basic forms at work. A natural world in an *ongoing* metamorphosis, *sudden* transmutation.

When Goethe has both been called an [alchemist](#) and a [modernist](#), the picture becomes even more complicated as we activate findings that go further back—as Didi-Huberman does in the analysis of art historian [Aby Warburg's plans](#) (d.1929)—but still presently relevant to us: namely, some sculptures of the titan *Atlas* who carries the *firmament* on his shoulders, under Uranus, over Gaea.

If Prometheus is included it is on account of the *liver*: as a punishment for having given fire to humans he was chained to a Caucasian rock, vultures picking his liver for times eternal. Here we see two divination livers from Warburg's panels: one Babylonian, the other Etruscan. The Etruscan has a stellar hard as a template to read sacrificial livers. The way from heaven to earth was short.

The accompanying representations—e.g. blood and yellow bile were produced by the liver's dry fire—were resilient, with physicians as cultural carriers: [humoral theory](#) was an antique legacy, but stayed on, in popular Norwegian parlance and story, alongside modern medicine. If only the idea of a well *balanced* person. The knowledge was classificatory, the remedies were standardised.

However, the early knowledge ideals in the new sciences of romanticism were foremostly *descriptive*. Here, the breaking point is how one follows up description with analysis and synthesis. When the younger [Theodor Kjerulf](#) is to have named Keilhau an *alchemist*, it must have been on different grounds than the efforts Keilhau put into [empirical research](#): perhaps the prerogatives of drawing.

They can have been divided by *attitudes*, which had a historical precedence also at this time. Here we see the recurrence of the firmament as a globe—included in [Isaac Newton](#) memorial in Westminster Abbey—but the demeanour has changed: we see the leisurely scientist reclined over a pile of books as his rest. Is he been read for by two putti? Are they reading to him from his own works?

In modern times life outdoors in nature has been linked to freedom, leisure from work and great outdoor-experiences. One sets for a *destination*, pitches the *tent* and *rests*. Let us call this a *patch*.

When relating a hike in story this is a *minimum*. The night sky is splendid. It is closer. But is no ominous. It is the backpack and equipment that weighs. We are small. This is big and meaningful.

One can read [Arne Næss's](#) errand at Tvergastein—a target, a construction site and a dwelling—as a variation over a regular hike. Alternatively, one can understand Tvergastein as his errand with the *self*, beyond the human ego, made convertible to a personal philosophy: that is *ecosophy T*. As was grafted to his interest in Spinoza, it can be read as a *critique* of the Cartesian notion of coordinates.

As a destination the cabin rests on the horizon under [Hallingskarvet](#). As a construction project it entailed an enormous effort with all the loads that went up. As a dwelling—14 years straight, which is a long time for a cabin—it was for an austere life, intellectual work, visits, mountain climbing and a collection/series of experiments more reminiscent of Goethe and Keilhau than Newton and Kjerulf.

In an effort to develop a better understanding of Tvergastein as an experience—and backdrop for Arne Næss' philosophy—I have been short of words. I wanted a word as the English 'estate' not solely associated with a heritage. Possessions is too narrow. Property is too urban. Which is why I became attentive as I discovered the word 'røfte': a *patch* that is worked on for itself, apart.

Tvergastein is such a *patch*. Another example: when, in modern times, it again became timely to span the boundary between animal and human—as in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*—one sees illustrations of books from the remainder of [Kafka's](#) authorship, integrate a theme from this *one* story: though the Castle had nothing to do with human-animal shift. It *tails* his authorship as a whole. A domain/patch.

The same point follows in the wake of our distinction *between sign and omen*: it is *not* as simple as getting rid of the darkness of beliefs and *replacing* it with the light of science. Darkness has an *after-life*. [Freud's Nachleben](#), which is Didi-Huberman's Ariadne thread through Warburg's panels. A patch is not a thing we simply can abandon. Our languages & images are older than us: we contract them.

In our short life-span we become cultural carriers of *language* and *images*—a time that exceeds our own—we relate to geological time which is far beyond human history. This we can because our bodies manage to sum memories in *self-encompassing* combinations embodying the smallest element, which is *now*. The presence of the past and future in the present: remote, close, intimate time.

As we let the night descend upon the troupe on Mugnafjellet it is because time appears to overtake space: it is *foregrounded*. If daytime is devoted to action, attitudes prevail in the evening. Thus, the alternation between night and day will build judgement: whether it goes in the one or other direction. The self and ego will emerge in new ratios. The environment a patch manifested in depictions.

At least, it is possible to reflect the passage to the idea proposed here: that drawing manifests activities with different temporal horizons. That is, the *intimate*, *close* and *remote* zones. The red circles define *proxemic contours*: indications of the time-layers encompassed by the activity of drawing. We picture ourselves as we look at the troupe: they have us, as it were, in the back.

This is because the proxemic contours follow us *wherever* we are at work: whether we are located 6750 feet up at Mugnafjellet, or we are at work before a computer. The proxemic contours are thus completely transposable. And it is in the iteration of such transpositions that reflection can develop—without aping or miming—as reflections. *Asynchronous* reflections across time.

As we zoom in on Keilhau's rudimentary self-portrait is rather precise on the way he holds himself: his back is straight, even with a little curve. And without any aid: no chair and no table. From [Diderot's encyclopaedia](#) we know that the sitting-norm was emphasised in the portraiture of professional ways/techniques, gathered at the same level as empirical and systematic knowledge.

Many will laconically ascent that we here have a more realistic depiction of an actual sitting-position, in long hours before the computer-screen. We ask: was it during Covid19? Specifically, during the lockdown when we were dependent on working from home with video-transmission on teams/zoom? *Most of us were rather presentable from the seat up, with a chosen decor behind.*

In this series by the Spanish painter [Francisco Goya](#) the sitting-position has broken down. It is part of a larger series called *Whims*: Georges Didi-Huberman emphasises that darkness springs from the live & hips as the seat and origin of nightmares. Tailing to older customs/ideas. At the same time as the end of the series anticipates [Nietzsche](#). It says: *the sleep of reason produces monsters*.

As a judge seated—as a determination for the institution and the status—as does the *pope*, Keilhau's seat will embody the Kantian watershed in the history of judgement: here, judgement as it springs from Goethe's educational ideal based on observation and experience. This is something *else* than mere taste. Or, so it is claimed. Let us follow this trail in some drawings.

Can we pace the *stages* of observation that do not simply extend from the exegesis of texts, but that it is possible to patch out in *drawings*? Or, to ask with Keilhau—is it possible to comprehend the activity of drawing alongside *other* elements? Here the proxemics is marked by blue hashed vertical lines. Thus what is far off and drawing: the body that draws, instruments and equipment—*drawing*.

Then the hip is marked. *Intimate*-proximity passes through it. While the *close* zone is at the outskirts, or periphery of the hip; but within an *arm's length* distance. Mountains and environment are adjacent to this range—alongside or outside. In the top right corner the thesis is proposed that the remote and the close are summed in the close/proximate: where the drawing happens, a mean zone.

Which means that a lot can happen from movements that are limited to the *near*. The tiny movements of such work happens on the spot, and is without *external* action. We can describe the surroundings while being overwhelmed by them. Analysing works on till the relation between part and whole is established. As a synthesis emerges comes the readiness to walk *freely* in god's nature.

At that point the choice presents itself between leaving behind the *uncertainty* of description and the *toil* of analysis; or, move on with them. Keilhau opted for the latter, since the collection that he sends his friend Boeck—precisely as a recollection—include both the drawings from the *field*, and the reproductions added *afterwards* (along with a context of drawings in the “Jotun mountains”).

The difference between the drawings on the 2 panels is obvious: the two above feature a record of a *landscape where these drawings have been*, while that is *not* the case with the reproductions. That is, the provenance of the two are completely different. The lower drawing to the right and left break the pattern of frames and annotation, otherwise distinguishing a field-drawing from a reproduction.

Therefore it is ‘laborious remembrance’ vs. ‘leisurely amnesia’ we will take with us onwards. And then linked to a coordinate system that both record and reproduction engage with, though—as I shall show—in different ways. My question is: where shall we locate *zero*? Where the two orthogonal axes *intersect*, or where the *observation* is happening (e.g. Mugnafjellet)?

This question is real because as *description* is initiated—before *height* and *position* are established—the zero-point will necessarily move to where *observation* takes place. In [Einstein's](#) restricted theory of relativity it is kept there all the way. He depends on Lorentz transformation, allowing him to *transpose* between immobile observation posts, that are in *constant* relative movement.

As the post's *position* and *height* are established, it will then be relevant to place *origo*—that is, the coordinate system's zero-point—*under* the mountains in the horizon, e.g. the peaks of the Huringrange and calculate with regular trigonometry. If we then accept that we have coordinates in a usual sense, these are no longer elementary, but complex: they are part of an *observation itinerary*.

When the discrepancy between what is shown in the drawing *as such*, and what the drawing *shows* in the field—i.e., the discrepancy between the field-drawing and the reproduction—it is then the cartographic moment emerges: that is, the difference between them is the same existing between a *map* and an *area*. That is, *contrastive* information about the *same* (in the interstitial space).

Here indicated by Bjørn Blikstad investigating the interstitial terrain between wood-carving and furniture design. The premises are the same as previously. But here it is possible to place the coordinate system precisely in relation to an *object*. An element of a personal philosophy—or, ecosophy—that can be *moved*. From the observation point a theoretical attitude is developed.

Now, he is working directly on the horizon. The gravity of the observational centre *X'* has here moved from the cerebellum which is active in processing and replay of movement—i.e. [self-motion perception](#)—to the hip as the fulcrum of all coordinated movement. As a *red pigment* was applied desire and destructive lust was in the air, until an educational turning point was reached.

Finally, the gravity centre is floored in the [HULIAS](#) gallery where the work was shown, while still in the making. The case is included here because it shows that *T₀*, *T₁* and *T₂* do not have to be located in the same place to connect. The first image is from Tørberget in Trysil. The second from an atelier at KHiO. The third at Maridalsveien 3. Connectivity resides in the combination/combinatorics.

This idea of lineup—which is neither an exhibit nor a performance—is active in a structure which neither is an exhibition nor a performance—is *active* in an institution with the care of books, as the National Library. As presently the wider sketch work adjoined to *ms.plv. 1247*. But also in the sheets

as elements of the archive: laid out with a colour scale and measurements, repro-technical metadata, similar to a coordinate system.

39 It is a *mediation* of the question of what we are doing in the meantime/proximal zone. It was a living question in Aby Warburg's work with the Atlas of Memory MNEMOSYNE. The afterlife of images—Freud's *Nachleben*—is concrete: the lineup of the panels was always in the proximity of books. The book-collection is the *remote* time-horizon of images. The sketch reveals a proxemic *attitude*.

40 The sketch reveals a natural history of *observation* proper. It is not generic like consciousness. It grows organically with 'singular examples' contrasted with 'millions of cases'. As the *education of the eye through observation*, *colours* are part of the *acts of light* in Goethe. The drawing that hatches an attitude to the 'work of time' is *precise*, in that it documents the *pathways* of observation: self/patch.

41 When considering the archive and research in different strata—as [Lorraine Daston](#) ventured in the book *Science in the Archives*—they appear as transpositions of the *pathways* of description, analysis and synthesis. The patchwork of drawing is *neither* ontologic *nor* epistemologic, but walks the paths of the *self* and expresses *attitude* and *agency* in a *personal transcending* aspect which is *judgement*.

42 That is, earlier observations—as *ms. plv. 1247*—are *life-forms* of sorts, since the *proxemic* contours, today and then, are the same but where framework of *public* resource-management (whether of *nature* or *archives*) have gone through a series of political and economic *changes*: while art form could celebrated god's *free* nature at Keilhau's time, nature is today under the *yoke* of humans.

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⌘ Is it possible to treat drawings and panels as one, which is the tendency of this foundation study? What drawings and panels have in common is the freedom of *composition*: which allows photography to enter the patches from which an atlas is made up. In Aby Warburg's case the architecture of images to reach from Babylon to Manet. In Keilhau, from nature-studies to [resource management](#).

We have gone from a hike, via observation-modi linked to *moveable objects*, to *moveable* elements in a panel *collection*, to *moveable* elements in an *atlas*. I have attempted to show that the link is 1) transposable; 2) conditioned that one does *not* assume that a) 'I exist' and b) 'I am here' follow from each other automatically, but must be established: that is, as a *sum* ⊕ and as an *interval* Δ.

The hypothesis that I have sought to establish is that if we set *geological* time as the *remote* time-horizon—between 1000 and 300 million years ago in Norway (when our shield was south of equator and then 30° North)—with minerals that may be studied in the *present*, other time-factors will be affected: e.g. imagery/linguistic turns that are distant to us. Then here too time will be layered.

An adjacent genre is the [almanach](#), in which data with very different time-horizons were accommodated to be gathered in *one* graphic format. The difference between the almanacs and the atlas—in the sense that I have sought to discuss—hinges on the *moveable* elements that are found in *pictures*, *panels* and *patches* that are part of a *lineup*.

With hopes for a more democratic encounter between art and science.

(Theodor Barth, 03.11.2021)

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