

Abstracts: On Activity II

Michael Friedman and Samo Tomšič: *The Topological Turn: Space, Activity, Materiality*

How does one think on space? Is thinking itself spatial? Does our conception of space shape and reshape our understanding of the material, “objective” world? Or maybe the other way around – do the materials themselves force us to rethink our conception of space? In this introduction we will claim that the spatiality of thinking space does not merely “describe” the world “objectively”, but rather intervenes in this world and transforms it. Hence, may any spatial consideration of the human psyche or the of objects of the natural sciences have a real impact on them?

Mai Wegener: *Transfers, Echo Rooms and Borderzones – Psychoanalytic Marginalia*

In a posthumously published fragment, Freud famously wrote: “Space may be the projection of the extension of the psychical apparatus.” Returning to this puzzling Freudian claim, I will unfold its signification in 3-4 parts by using a dream, some thoughts on language and the “oceanic feeling” (described by Freud in *Civilisation and Its Discontent*) as material. To put it the other way around: What is the material of this extension we call space, or even shorter: Is there a space outside?

Joseph Vogl: *At the Castle Hill*

Daide Crippa: *The Changing Status of Impossibility Results in Geometry*

Geometrical impossibilities have a long history going back to Ancient Greek mathematics, but only in the 19th century many impossibility theorems stemming from ancient problems of construction were rigorously proven. Also the significance of impossibility results in geometry varied within different cultures and epochs. In this talk, I shall present two ways in which the activity of proving geometric impossibilities can be understood. This can be helpful to illuminate several aspects of the mathematical practice such as the meaning of problem-solving and rigour.

Regine Hengge: *How living systems organize space across the scales*

The genetic code in the DNA is linear – so, where does the inherited 3D shapes and forms of living cells and organisms come from? After decades of not taking spatial aspects into account, molecular biology is now developing into a molecular cell or tissue biology that begins to describe the spatial organisation in cells and tissues as an intricate interplay of genetic information and environmental cues, which often come as gradients of chemicals. By using up or releasing chemicals, cells contribute to establishing these gradients and react to them positively or negatively by differentially controlling genes. Reaction thresholds and positive feedbacks in these systems can transduce linear gradients into steep boundaries and pronounced 2D/3D patterns. Implications for the organisation of space in cells, tissues and

organisms will be shown using highly structured and self-organizing bacterial biofilm communities as a model system.

Katrin Mayer: *convulsa* or The Need for Each Other's Relay

Ok, lets start to entangle....What could be an institutional critique of the tradition of masculinist thinking of space or space of thinking? Whereas "man thinks with his objects" according to Jacques Lacan, we could respond with Ursula K. le Guin's Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction that the first cultural device was probably a recipient, like a sling, a bundle, or a net carrier—not a bone, as a tool, a weapon, or a symbol. Such a vessel is, to speak with Catherine Malabou, "(...) an empty but resistant essence, an essence that is resistant precisely because it is empty".

Angelika Seppi: *Intermediate Spaces. Thinking Through the New Ecological Paradigm*

Space, Jean-Luc Godard once declared in an infamous TV-Interview with Dave Cavett from the year 1980, is the time you need to go to someone else, or, as he has later been quoted, the time to find the other. He thereby intertwined the question of space with the question of communication and focused, as a filmmaker, especially on the mediation between oneself and the other trough the audio-visual image. In my talk I would like to situate the new ecological paradigm in respect to the intermediate spaces that are at the same time opened up, bridged and foreclosed by the contemporary means and media of telecommunication. Like for Godard, what is at stake here, are the possibilities of an encounter with the other.