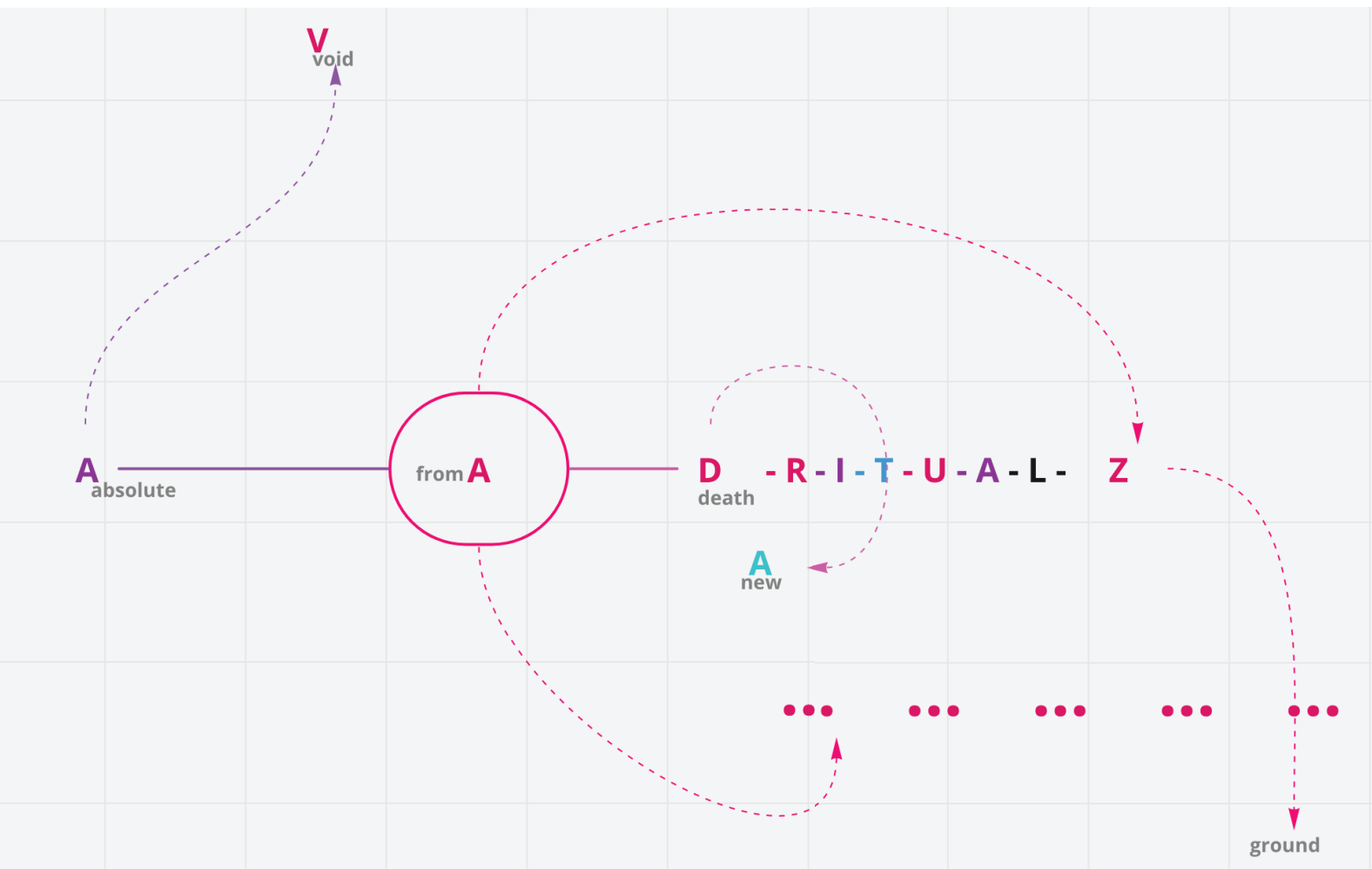


# n(denis)\*

collage essay on the Others in Self  
and the linearity of time

1/  $n(A)$  is an mathematical operation. The number of elements in a set is called the cardinal number, or cardinality, of the set. This is denoted as  $n(A)$ , read "n of A" or "the number of elements in set A."



The weeping willow branches dangling tightly cover the entire space around the tree trunk. I pull them apart and enter inside. The branches converge high up into an opaque dome, like in a church. There is a dusty, yellow, stuffy heat. A heavy hot orange orb hangs in the air, as if suspended by Olafur Eliasson. I take a step back, to go out. I look through the tree whips. There is fog, night, cold, "Russian North" in a brief moment of three-day autumn. There is no space to move either back or forward. The wind only moves the whips of the tree, among which my body drives blood from one part to the other and back again. I freeze.

My friend Vanya sent me the message two years ago "Usually what has become obvious already happens a while ago". Then why did I freeze up? After all, what has happened liberate me from living through it. Am I capable of experiencing what has happened as well as what is happening right now? I would suggest that I am not. There is no Immanuel Kant's critical distance in happening right now, that MOAB (mother of all bombs) of rational consciousness. And how do unMOTIONed I feel itself between the branches of an unFREEZing willow tree, without possibility to step back and with no understanding what lies ahead?

2/ My dream on the night of July 10, 2021.

3/ The weather project, 2003 Tate Modern, London, Olafur Eliasson

4/ Telegram message from Nov. 19, 2019.

5/ Immanuel Kant suggested that analysis (understanding) of phenomena is not available to one at the moment when it occurs or when one first learns of it. Understanding requires time and additional information. This is the critical distance with the object. *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781).

6/ The mother of all bombs (MOABs), the GBU-43, was dropped by the U.S. military on April 13, 2017, in Afghanistan. It is one of the largest air bombs equipped with a satellite guidance system.



Eadweard Muybridge stopped motion in 1878. He was figuring out if there was a moment in horse Sallie Gardner gallop when none of its hooves touched the ground. Does Sallie fly? Muybridge stopped the horse, captured fragments of its movement in his photographs. I look at a series of 12 images he took, titled "The Horse in Motion." And I see a painting "The Treachery of Images" by René Magritte with the caption "Ceci n'est pas une pipe", French for "This is not a pipe". The horse depicted is not a horse. A motion frozen in a word or an image is not a motion. Where is Sallie now when I look at this picture? Sallie is already over the horizon line, and it is no longer a horse, but a burning giraffe.

7/ The Horse in Motion is a series of cabinet cards by Eadweard Muybridge, including six cards that each show a sequential series of six to twelve "automatic electro-photographs" depicting the movement of a horse. Muybridge shot the photographs in June 1878. The series became the first example of chronophotography.

8/ The Treachery of Images (French: La Trahison des images) is a 1929 painting by surrealist René Magritte. Below it, he painted, "Ceci n'est pas une pipe", French for "This is not a pipe". "And yet, could you stuff my pipe? No, it's just a representation, is it not? So if I had written on my picture "This is a pipe", I'd have been lying!"  
— René Magritte.

the Word is Yesterday.  
the Body is Today.  
Tomorrow is Self (oder?).

Not "Self = Narcissus." Self as the continuum of my fiction, my personal reality. If I disappear, so does my time and my reality. Words are the material of the past. What happens Today organizes me and my world and Tomorrow through my Body. It's about the only material available to my senses and consciousness – my fiction. It is the intertwining of bodies and consciousnesses in a multifictional rhizome. Some part of this will be photographed-frozen one day by the Word and titled "knowledge". Tomorrow I may or may not be Denis's Denis.

9/ Rhizome as a philosophical concept was developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their Capitalism and Schizophrenia (1972–1980) project. It is what Deleuze calls an "image of thought", based on the botanical rhizome, that apprehends multiplicities. Deleuze and Guattari use the terms "rhizome" and "rhizomatic" (from Ancient Greek ῥίζωμα, rhízōma, "mass of roots") to describe theory and research that allows for multiple, non-hierarchical entry and exit points in data representation and interpretation.

I freeze by Word. In the pause of words, in the movement of willow branches, I am Schrödinger's Denis. And I do not know what is happening to me. I have no words to inhabit the motion. I am neither alive, nor dead. I am... ? Who knows.. Kant's Denis is not there yet, he is overcoming the critical distance to me, he needs a time. And this is pause for Word. I relate to the tree through motion. Today Body are louder than Word.

10/ In the thought experiment, a hypothetical cat may be considered simultaneously both alive and dead as a result of its fate being linked to a random subatomic event that may or may not occur. This thought experiment was devised by physicist Erwin Schrödinger in 1935, in a discussion with Albert Einstein.

Subtracting the greater from the lesser - time from man - you get words, the remainder, standing out against their white background more clearly than the body ever manages to while it lives, though it cry "Catch me!"

Brodsky

11/ Excerpt from Joseph Brodsky's poem "York", 1976.

Caught, can we get a witness?

Public Enemy

12/ The song "Caught, Can We get a Witness?" by Public Enemy, 1988.



13/ We lost everything. All we had left was traces. That's why I believe that our literature is a literature of traces.  
*Édouard Glissant: One World in Relation.*

Motion is a blind spot, the trace of which is frozen by the Word, turning it into witness. The obsession to get a witness of motion is called cognition? And who is witnessing? Luhmann's Denis, as an observer of the second-order or maybe n(order) observer, testifies to what other witnesses have seen and described before him. This witness is not a pure perception of discussing phenomenon. This is prefabricated perception by language. Aren't we all witnesses of language only? Passionately observing the words, I mimic the motion without being able to live it and understand it. Ndikung's Denis says that an artist's life and work is already can be in itself a witness. A witness-trace, not a witness-motion. There is no place for witness Today, Yesterday will come for that.

Liberated Today from the obligation to understand, Glissant's Denis is looking for relations. Does he have a dialogue with Marx's Denis? "...social being [of people] that determines their consciousness". What was at the beginning – the relation or being or consciousness? The chicken or the egg. This binary circle is broken. The chicken or the egg or the farmer's feeding-and-beheading hand or the biological desiring machine or chicken meat global shipping? There is no starting point but working structure with specific conditions. The number of participants is inordinately large, and the environment is infinitely fragmented and distributed. The liberation of Édouard Glissant gives a space for Today. Being Today does not require understanding, but liberation from it, in order to be open to relations.

14/ Second-order observation is what Niklas Luhmann calls the impossibility of seeing something completely unknown, previously undiscovered and written by someone else, a first-order observer. Artist Ilya Kabakov paraphrased this as "I don't draw a duck, but I draw the way others have drawn a duck" (*not precise quote from my memory*).

15/ «Caught, can we get a witness?» text by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung, published for the first time in the catalog of the exhibition "Being There: South Africa, A Contemporary Art Scene" in 2017. The text focuses on the challenges of a culture of witnessing.

16/ 'There is no need to understand in order to be in a relations' states Édouard Glissant in his book *Poetics of Relation* (1997)

17/ "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." *Marx, Karl. (1859)*

18/ The chicken or the egg causality dilemma is commonly stated as the question, "which came first: the chicken or the egg?" "Chicken-and-egg" is a metaphoric adjective describing situations where it is not clear which of two events should be considered the cause and which should be considered the effect, to express a scenario of infinite regress, or to express the difficulty of sequencing actions where each seems to depend on others being done first. Plutarch posed the question as a philosophical matter in his essay "The Symposiacs", written in the 1st century CE.

Listen to my body: Bees have their gods  
and the cries of horses have their numberless fiddles.  
I am the clouds, and you the earth, chained to a fence  
by the eternal moan of desire.  
Listen to my body: death has its fruits  
and life has a life that renews itself only  
in a body that listens to the body.

19/ Excerpt from Mahmoud Darwish's poem "The Seven Days of Love". Translation from Arabic by Paul Weinfeld, 2014.

*Mahmoud Darwish*



20/ «Glitch is anti-body, resisting the body as a coercive social and cultural architecture. We use body to give form to something that has no form, that is abstract, cosmic.»  
Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto, Legacy Russell.  
Legacy Russell's thoughts are based on the following quote:  
"glitch as a mode of resistance against the social, cultural framework of the body"  
Jean-Luc Nancy, "Corpus".

Today is the space for the Body. Russell's Denis is referring to the glitch-body. Not a word-construct-prosthesis in a capitalist or other hierarchy with certain privileges. The unreadable-glitch-body as a tool of presence, perception, production of Today. A Body has more languages than the 111 languages of an online-service. A Body without clear frontiers questioning the Word. Construct n(Denis) constructed of all these names, words, opinions and certainties exists Yesterday, but Today it can be Denis's Denis and rewrite, unlearn or forget the trauma of the Word. And produce an unpredictable wild unknown multifictional Tomorrow.

21/ To consider glitch as a form of encryption, we render the plaintext of the body (e.g., the body viewed through a normative, binary lens) as ciphertext (e.g., a glitched body, queered and encrypted). Encryption offers a mode of privacy; encoding of content creates secure passageways for radical production.  
Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto, Legacy Russell

"Sometimes when you put a full point, you get a line" The point, as a symbol of the completeness and wholeness of something, is also only possible Yesterday. Sallie Gardner's point in motion research is a settled questionable knowledge. To be Today is to be in motion, to be a horse moving away beyond the horizon. To be Today is to be a lasting line, looping between the moving willow branches. To be Today means to break the constructions, reducing the density of the Word of being to the glitch-presence of the Body, that reads the wild opaque Unknownness.

22/ Google Translate is a web service designed to automatically translate a piece of text or a web page into another language. There are now 111 languages in the web service's arsenal.

23/ As we fail, we morph. As we morph, we transcend captivity, slippery to those forces that strive to restrict, restrain, and censor us. Glitch-as-virus presents us with a sharp vision of decay, a nonperformance that veers us toward a wild unknown. This is where we bloom.  
Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto, Legacy Russell

24/ My daughter Maja's words, June 3, 2021.

the Word is Yesterday.  
the Body is Today.  
Tomorrow is ...

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