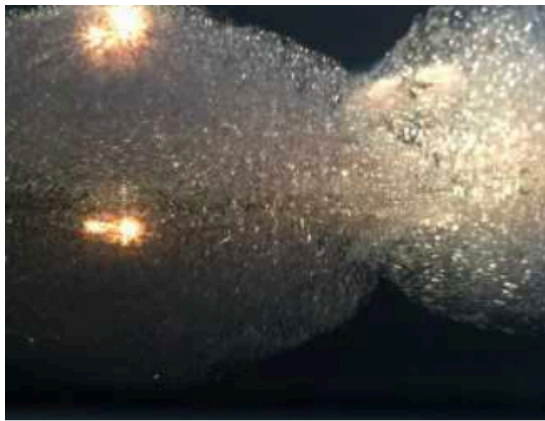


GOD IS IN THE BUBBLES.

FOAMING – EXERCISES ON POLYSPHERICAL SPATIALITY

PART I: FOAM, FOAMING

Understanding the world as a *non-round entity* sets the ground for studying 'polyspherical spatiality', which, according to Sloterdijk defines our time and our world-views. Let's take a closer look at 'foam architecture':



We see a constellation of small bubbles, entailing several types of connecting and intersecting layers. Each bubble touch each other but maintains their individuality. Every single cell is 'foaming' because they all share the same wall. Bit like buildings in a densely populated city. Topology of this kind makes every unit, every being, (like) *an island*. This is also the way how typical meeting places such as conferences, seminars, stadiums, or seats in a theatre or cinema theatre are spatially positioned. What follows, is: that what is individual remains individualized. At the same time there is some amount of division. The "dividing walls" participate in the "sharing". Simply put: singularity and sharedness coincide.

FOAM manifests a continuation of multi-chamber spaces that are separated by a thin layer of membrane. Each space exerts pressure on the next space, that surrounds it. Just like the foam produced by soap, the small bubbles join, and form larger bubbles – aiming towards a more stabilized space, where the pressure from the outside and the inside are in equilibrium.

The micro spaces of foam are *worlds of places that are isolated and fragile*. Each space, each microsphere, can ignore its neighbors only to a certain extent – they are *immune* by nature, but at the same time they are *dependent* on the spaces that surround them.

FOAM produces the space in which it is, and that is in it. Sloterdijk talks about “republic of spaces” – which is a vision similar to Bruno Latour’s “parliament of things”.

We are faced with a theory of places, situations, and immersions that slowly moves towards a new constitution of a global society that for us only appears as an outline. If the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been described with reference to the collapse of monological metaphysics of one united sphere, and to the “Death of God”, Sloterdijk offers a poly-spatial reformulation of 21st century as the “century of foams” – “century of polysphericity”. Our society is reinterpreted as “an aggregate of microspheres”, of couples, households, associations – of different formats that, like individual bubbles in a mountain of foam, border one another, yet without being accessible or completely separable. They are constructed according to a “principle of co-isolation”, and at the same time also to a “co-fragility” – in them, individual bubbles are never in direct communication or communion. They are only partially and selectively conductive for one another. And, Sloterdijk writes: “*If Einstein was to live next door to me, I would not know any more about the universe as a result.*”

FOAMS, FROTHS, SPONGES, CLOUDS, SWIRLS, again according to Sloterdijk, are metaphors of the twentieth century up until current times... They are metaphors that help us understand concepts and conceptions of the environment – ecologies and ecosystems, of humans, things, phenomenon, relations. These structures and formations *manifest the spatialisation of our vantage point to the world*.

Use of words and concepts do shape our world and understanding – as they say: language construes reality. Through language we ask questions about how inner-worlds are formed, and how interrelations and correlation-networks between things and phenomenon are created.

One of the most crucial ideas in all of this to me is:
There is air in unexpected places.

INTERMISSION 1: A DAILY 1-MINUTE DANCE IN THE PUBLIC SPACE AS AN ACT OF RESISTANCE

/ ARTISTIC PRACTICE LOOKED THROUGH THE LENSE OF POLYSPHERICAL SPATIALITY AND CO-EXISTENCE /

1-minute dance every day (Une minute de danse par jour) is a daily performance project by Nadia Vadori-Gauthier.¹ Since January 2015 when the attack to Charlie Hebdo took place in Paris, she has danced one minute a day to “resist barbarity” with an act of “poetic resistance”. Each dance is posted on a video and archived on the project website. Vadori-Gauthier believes, in the footsteps of Nietzsche’s famous quote, that the day is lost if one has not danced at least once.

¹ See: <http://www.uneminutedandeparjour.com/en/the-project/> [2.1.2019]

Vadori-Gathier claims that her act manifests positive resistance for liberty in two ways: first, "it affirms the body" in the society that tends to dismiss it in favor of a narrow definition of mind, and secondly, "it affirms the female body in the face of the patriarchy's effort to define and control it."²

Her "commitment relates to the state of violence in the world, and to the desire to act towards 'poetry' in action, for solidarity, for more tenderness in the relationship between categories and bodies." She continues:

"...dancing is very difficult in such circumstances. Every day, I am at a loss for a dance to create, but I believe that now more than ever we must come together in sensitive and kindly ways that welcome our differences."

So she dances.

"I dance, even today, a little, unimportant dance, no more than a drop of water or a beat of a butterfly's wing in comparison to everything else."

The most liked 1-minute dances (also) posted in Facebook have included the following ones: one with the French riot police force CRS (Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité) during a demonstration for the climate accords, one aside of Brussels terrorist attack, one in support for homosexuals in Chechnya, one with Raphael the handicapped dancer, one in the Calais immigrant "Jungle" encampment, one in election polling station, one with a chemotherapy patient in a hospital, one with a little girl, one with the Bells tolling at Notre-Dame, one in the 13th arrondissement in Paris, one in tribute to Simone Weill (former minister, feminist, author of abortion rights law), one with a 94-year-old woman named Francine, and many more.

*There is AIR in unexpected places
There IS air in unexpected places
There is air in UNEXPECTED places
There is air in unexpected PLACES*

INTERMISSION 2: A SILENT DISCO PERFORMANCE IN THE ARCTIC FOREST

/ ARTISTIC PRACTICE LOOKED THROUGH THE LENSE OF POLYSPHERICAL SPATIALITY AND CO-EXISTENCE /

Dance. It's the natural order -exercise was an intervention that I created for the FLOATING PERIPHERIES CONFERENCE **Art Event** SITES AND SITUATIONS, and it was performed yesterday (14 Jan 2019) in *Midsummer rocks* at Ounasvaara Rovaniemi, Lapland.

In it, I wanted to open a shared space of co-existence: group of some 20 people dancing, together, and in isolation.

I wanted to enable a space that brings together several elements to me relevant in composing a FOAMing experiment in a site-specific context, in the periphery of Rovaniemi – itself a peripheral arctic location.

These are the "ingredients" of this silent-disco-performance-experiment:

THE SITE: *Midsummer rocks* depict to me a public site, a space for people, with a history of hosting celebratory gathering and everyday passing-by for "peoples around". Romantic, picturesque, breathtaking, the remains of ancient mountain. The site suggests a coming together.

² *ibid.*

THE MUSIC: Having learned that the site is named as Midsummer rocks, according to the iconically romantic with all imaginable undertones of heavy drinking and violent acts following the thrill of the festive event – I wanted to pay tribute to the midsummer celebration tradition with the “ultimate groovy piece of music” by Betty Davis: *Anti Love Song*. Her spectacularly feministic, harsh, pioneering coolness, talent and attitude are embedded in this particular piece of music. Also her “story” bears many of the aspects linked to female artistry (being professionally and artistically unrecognized/unvalued, having been victim of domestic violence etc.).

THE CONDITIONS: Taking in to account that the **Art Event** participants have, by the time of the performance, toured for some time in wintery conditions, I wanted to provide bodily exercise, a warm-up. Dancing in a relatively small outdoor space, framed by an existing stage for Midsummer dances. Close to each other, wondering whether we will gather as an even closer bubble of dancing fidgety bodies just because it is ...freezing cold.

PART II: EPILOGUE

Having danced, coming back to FOAMS – the third of Sloterdijk’s epic *SPEHERES* -trilogy (volume I of which is *Bubbles*, vol II: *Globes*, vol III: *Foams*): Sloterdijk speaks of “*coexistential interior spaces that are produced by the reciprocal extroversion of the symbionts that temper the common interior like a stove before the fire.*”

FOAM forms a polyspherical microsphere that in itself an axis to what is the most intimate. Sloterdijk talks about “human foams” or “social foams”, where the structure, foam, draws as a principle of co-isolation. To conclude, let’s play with words and metaphors even more: Each bubble in the polyspherical space of foam is connected to neighbouring bubbles, each an individual and individualized “globe” of its own. Each interconnection is labelled through immunization, separation, isolation, but also contact, touch, interactivity, contamination. The FOAM constitutes as paradoxical interior where all surrounding bubble is of “my location, my neighbour, inaccessible to me”, and at the same time I am joined with them.

If we look at societies as spatial descriptions according to spherology and the, let’s say, *foaming principle*, as depicted earlier, they are monospheres united from a claimed “origin” only as they hypnotize themselves by claiming themselves as homogenous unities – such as “nations” or national entities of people who are geographically, genetically of theologically “of the same”. These imaginary communities are, first of all, grounded on identity politics that we need to scrutinize with great criticality – driven by a magical essence of certain political fairy-tale of “our community”, an acronym for “our monosphere”. The political fairy tale of thinking humanity as a circle of friends and other like-minded is a hazardous illusion that can easily lead us to create false kings and queens, and false symbols such as those of “nations”. Identities that from far seem like any old community represented by a people, territory, flag and images, but are not. “*It is only through monumental and emotional error that people can generate family feelings for a dozen, or for a hundred million people.*”

^Thank you.