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The Human Figure and Urban Ground: Cyborgs and the City.

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Abstract:

Recent years have seen developments in cyborgian movements in which people play and experiment with the boundaries of human flesh and aesthetic realities. Some individuals develop novel intimate relationships with devices that, each in their own way, interfere with human subjectivity. Public dissemination of these movements often proposes notions of transcendence, therapy, post-humanism and trans-humanism, but often fails to outline the lived-experience of those who explore cyborgian identity as an alternative mode of being in the world. This paper briefly follows self-described cyborgs who delimit the body through sensory 'enhancement' in an effort to disrupt common relationships between the human figure and the urban ground. Borrowing from Lewis Mumford's concepts of biotechnics, I propose cyborgian engagement as a type of psychodynamic living. Rather than focus on post-human discourses, these cyborgs turn to the natural world for inspiration in shaping the terms of engagement between their bodies and the city.

Introduction:

This paper presents emerging research that follows from themes on urban anxiety and the anthropology of the body and city, and applies it towards new field sites in London, exploring cyborg identity and motivations for intimacy with emerging technology. What follows is a merger between ethnography, philosophy and bioethics that speak to novel

ways to consider cyborg[1] techniques applied through urban environments. I have, for several years, followed cyborgian movements in which people play and experiment with the boundaries of both human flesh and aesthetic realities. Some of these movements are academic, institutionalized, and in some cases, industrialised. Funded laboratory work within Britain, for example, has focused on the manipulation of sensory inputs to reshape cognition and transform aesthetic boundaries, allowing researchers to 'perceive' aesthetic input alternative to normative human experience (sonar movement and infra-red radiation, for example, Hammad 2010). In addition, other work has focused on the ability to 'share' one's sensory experience with others through technological entanglements between individual nervous systems, sensory implants, and wireless technology (Warwick, 2004). Some elitist institutions in the United States, and specifically in Silicon Valley, apply the use of technology more broadly, conceiving of exponential technologies as applied global solutions to both planetary and social crises. Both of these types of institutions utilize discourse of 'furthering humanity', and even 'salvation', in terms of recently popularized cross-disciplinary models of the anthropocene, and in doing so, they also construct binaries between present and future human minds and bodies (Warwick, 2003, 2004; Kurzweil, 2006).

Ethnography among these institutions has produced social scientific critiques of the ways in which bioethics are constructed among researchers and laboratories fixated on post-human bodies and identities (Cerqui, 2002; Cabrera, 2015). They are also weary of discursive regimes of power that could be produced through the language and motivations proposed through these elite groups (Ibid). In a similar vein, Science and

[1] A first, and standard definition can be found from Clynes and Kline (1960) and their first conceptualization of a cyborg and its value, though the term has since been borrowed in myriad ways. The use of the label 'cyborg' as used in the rest of this paper is ethnographic, and borrowed from my informants' language.

Technology (STS) scholars have outlined how future vision within nation states and powerful institutions produce 'sociotechnical imaginaries' that shape and "enter into the assemblages of materiality, meaning, and morality that constitute robust forms of social life" (Jasanoff, 2015; 4). While these imaginaries operate on a grand scale, the constructs have been aptly applied to smaller scale groups and individuals who market themselves as avant-guard, elitist revolutionaries within technological industries. STS professor Stephen Hilgartner has termed these groups 'sociotechnical vanguards' who "formulate and act intentionally to realize particular sociotechnical visions of the future that have yet to be accepted by wider collectives, such as the nation" (2015; 33). These vanguard movements, however, often compete against one another, driving technical advancement, but limiting the power of any particular imaginary (Ibid). The hope and hype of both large scale and small scale imaginaries, then, have the potential to mask subtle forms of hegemony, governmentality and biopower, as post-modern political critiques have outlined (Foucault, 1977, 2008). Under these regimes, embedded within imaginations of revolutionized bodies on the grand scale, and even Nietzschean post-human agency on an individual scale (Warwick, 2003), lay profound social processes that have the potential to limit and further institutionalize people's behaviour (Rose, 1999).

Alternative to technocratic movements within academia and silicon industries are individuals and small groups who, more peripherally, construct cyborgian identity in an incommensurable fashion to, and sometimes in opposition with elite groups. Some are conceived of as art movements, utilizing technology as a means of aesthetic production rather than a vision of future hope. Others are self-defined citizen scientists who purposefully operate outside the establishment, developing cyborgian techniques and technologies in garages, rented spaces, and pubs, among other places. These artist and citizen scientist groups often overlap, and I argue, in contrast to the 'sociotechnical

vanguards' of Silicon Valley (Hilgartner, 2015), these individuals are not, on a philosophical level, in conflict and competition with one another. Unlike Silicon Valley developers and entrepreneurs, for example, these individuals' visions do not often imagine technocratic trajectories for their work. It is with these artists and citizens that this paper concerns.

In terms of cyborgian movements, what each of these groups (academics, entrepreneurs, artists and citizen scientists), are doing, on some level, is attempting to create novel intimate relationships with devices that, each in their own way, interfere with human subjectivity. Where they differ is in the meaning they create out of these intimacies. Intrusions 'into' the body (medical) contrast with extrusions 'out of' the body (enhancement), to frame robust binaries that shape the metaphors and terminology people utilise to understand their bodies and selves. As I have written elsewhere, public dissemination of these movements often proposes notions of transcendence, therapy, post-humanism and trans-humanism, but often fails to outline the lived experience of those who explore cyborgian identity as an alternative mode of being in the world (Parkhurst, 2012). The discord between therapy and enhancement[2] remains a dominant discursive binary in the United Kingdom, for example, and this binary does have poignant social applications. These applications are especially salient in terms of policy, and they help construct the effective, meaningful, and ethical regulation of emerging technology that exist in specific cultural and political contexts. Social constructs of therapy and enhancement have economic consequences as well. For example, in national health care systems, cybernetic engagements towards 'well-being' are justified in terms of

[2] The bioethical discourse around therapy and enhancement, and the potential effects these discourses offer towards human subjectivity and living are complex, and there is not scope in this article to outline it here. However, for a nuanced ethical perspective, see Kass (2003).

constructing normative body standards, and recipients may then have access to public funds to help provide technology as 'treatment'. Cultural notions of enhancement, however, become tied to ideas of frivolity, and may then be inaccessible through tax-payer money.[3]

This binarism, while productive of regulation, and informative of national values and imaginaries, creates discourse of 'post' or 'trans' humanism[4] that can be utilized by elite groups, and furthermore, often belies the act of partnering the body with technology. For many people who partner themselves with technology, the intimacy they construct with exogenous material is far more vulnerable, and, perhaps, far more existential than that. I have suggested that cyborg anthropology can move beyond structural paradigms of salvation and hubris to utilize ethnography to record the waking life of cyborgian identity (Ibid). This type of approach has been, to some degree, separately applied to large scale tech movements (see, for examples, Case, 2014), but very little social science research has focused on small scale and individual *motivations* for cyborgian living. Artists and citizen scientists tend to be ignored in public discussions on cyborg anthropology, and it is these groups on which this paper focuses.

This particular research briefly follows self-described cyborgs who delimit the body through sensory manipulation in an effort to disrupt common relationships between the human figure and urban ground. Their technological engagements, in this sense, are

[3] Or, they may even be taxed. Cultural constructs of 'frivolity' are applied to a wide range of technological intimacies that create contention and debate. Tampons, for example, are taxed as luxury items in the UK at the time of writing.

[4] Transhumanism and posthumanism definitions are themselves large topics of debate. I use these terms loosely in this paper to refer to ideas of extending or enhancing the human condition through modern technology (transhumanism), or abandoning the human condition altogether to achieve a new ontological category of personhood (Posthumanism).

informed through the way they envision their bodies in relationship to city living, rapid development, and radical uncertainty. Rather than focus on post-human discourses, these cyborgs turn to the constructed ideas of the 'natural' world for inspiration in shaping the terms of engagement between their bodies and the city. This paper strays from ethnography in the sense that I do not name the different forms of technology and art produced by my informants; this is a material for a different type of discussion. Rather, this article teases out ethnographically informed *motivations* for becoming cyborgian that speak to the delimitations of the body in the city in order to theorise on the cyborgian response to a perceived anxiety and pain of urban uncertainty. It is argued, finally, that cyborgian technology becomes inherently ironic, both in terms to its anthropological relationship to nature and its philosophical relationship to the future person. These engagements, then, are not described as sociotechnical vanguards, but rather a response to adapting self-hood to cope with urban landscapes that cease to offer the stability upon which constructs of the human body are often presumed.

Uncertainty, body and the city:

There is a fountain in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where I would sometimes meet my informants during my years of ethnography in the Middle East. As far as grand structures in Dubai go, this fountain was extravagant, but not superlative. The installation is 5 stories tall, and longer in width than height. The falling water is smooth against a nearly vertical drop, but the most salient feature is a series of fixed art-deco male bodies diving head-first, suspended in the air, arms outstretched into a pool of ambiguous depth. The imagery was interesting ethnographically in that it was an endless source of fascination to my informants, some of whom would choose to relax alone, along-side the façade in the shadows of the divers. It illustrated, in a small way, what my

interlocutors *feel like* as they engage with the city: diving headfirst, without knowing what they are diving into. My earlier ethnography on Anxiety and Identity in SouthEast Arabia (2013) focused partly on men's health issues. High rates of diabetes, obesity and heart disease in the region are informed from rapid urbanization, but also ironically informed from a rather ever persistent anxiety that my informants construct in thinking about their identity and place in an increasingly globalized and unstable world. I borrow the concept of irony here from Michael Lambek (2004) whose thoughts on Rheumatism help make a simple point: torn between the multitude of conflicting decisions and choices that accompany complex modern living, between tradition and modernity, uneasy ethics, and stability and risk, many people simply cannot make any. This type of stagnation is, as Lambek argues, inherently ironic (Ibid). For some people, rapid urban chaos makes many types of conscious agency intolerable. The uncertainty of 'modernity', whatever 'modernity' is, makes thoroughly excruciating the complexity of life's choices. The inability to make these choices in accompaniment to a rapidly expanding world has serious ramifications for the body. When imagining the future is so strenuous, it becomes difficult for many people to participate in health behaviours that require future vision of their bodies and their relationship to chronic disease.

The city, as my informants knew it was, in their own terms, an "inescapable realm of desire", a place that paradoxically offered and limited life, where "people don't know how to not want things", but could not leave once they came. They saw the city alter their bodies as well. For many local Emirati, the city was constructed as an affront to nature. They saw themselves as originating from the desert – their bodies "scanned in the rhythms of nature" (Bourdieu, 1963, pg. 57). The desert and coast, despite their shifting sands and perpetual tides, provided a dependable Earth from which the human corpus could be pivoted. At first, the city was conceived as a similarly stable ground, but

rapid growth, urbanization, multiculturalism, and technological introduction led to the view of the city as a path to instability. In this way, the relationship between the human figure and the urban ground became profoundly disrupted. There are aspects to this research which are highly contextual to the cultural legacies and historical shadows unique to the Arabian Peninsula, which I do not have the space to discuss here. However, I argue that there are parallels between the psychodynamics of the body in the city in South East Arabia and those in the West.

The ways in which the human body can be understood in relation to cities are complex. Many academic disciplines have contributed their own methodological and theoretical approaches to analysing this relationship, and, because cities themselves are so fluid and dynamic, it is a discourse that is always in the making. Within epistemologies of classic architecture, the human body has, in many eras, been the model by which buildings and urban cosmology was planned and understood (McEwan, 2003). Ethnography on the body and architectural space, as Carroll (2016) demonstrates in this volume regarding the body-as-temple, articulates how these two corpora not only speak to one and another, but rather *are* one and another. This relationship between the body as the city informant in classical design, however, began to be inverted in academia, first within concerns of structural poverty of the city (Engles 1845), but especially within scholarship in the aftermath of the first world-war, where questions about the future of humanity began to give agency to the concept of the Metropolis as an entity that structures human bodies. Rather than understand structures and cities made and modelled for bodies (Benjamin, 1940, for example), post-war artists and academics, troubled by the lack of ethical discourse on development and culture, began to highlight the ways in which bodies are

made and modelled for cities.[5] In this paper, I specifically draw upon the work of Lewis Mumford (1934) who attempted to categorize specific societal wide engagements between bodies and cities through biotechnics that speak to the psychodynamics if urban ethos, a concept I will return to soon. Classic themes in symbolic anthropology situate the human body and society at large as reciprocal reflections of one another. In this way, rituals and practices of and on the body create symbolic structural change and echo the structures people desire in their world (Douglas, 1966). Recent scholarship within geography has come to refocus on the body and its quid pro quo with urban landscapes (Sennett, 1996). Through discussions of powerful cultural movements in Paris, Rome, London, Venice and New York, Richard Sennett argues that the 'city' appears to be stable ground, and people plan and live their lives under these assumptions. However, he argues that these assumptions mask an unrecognized dynamism that characterizes urban forms. The city is as much informed after the human body as the body is constructed by the city.

> *"The master images of the body which have ruled in our history would deny us knowledge of the body outside the garde. For they attempt to convey the completeness of the body as a system, and its unity with the environment it dominates. Wholeness, oneness, coherence: these are key words in the vocabulary of power. Our civilization has combatted this language of domination through a more sacred image of the body, a sacred image in which the body appears at war with itself, a source of suffering and unhappiness. People who can acknowledge this dissonance and incoherence in themselves understand rather than dominate the world in which they live. This is the sacred promise in our culture." (Sennett, 1994; 25)*

[5] Fritz Lang (1927), for example, famously envisioned the engine of the metropolis first as a human industrial hybrid, and then as a monstrous demon who consumes human flesh.

The city, for Sennett, consistently makes and breaks this sacred promise, causing much social and psychological pain for its inhabitants. Jeevendrampillai's (2016) ethnography among Surbitan residents in greater London for example, demonstrates how these broken promises become more than somatised within the bodies of inhabitants; they become practiced. Psychoanalytically informed analysis of the city in geography focus on this pain, suggesting that the challenges of the body / city dynamism can create quiescence when fought in the city's terms, but innovation and freedom when embraced as a condition of urban chaos (Pile 1996; Thrift and Amin 2002).

Lewis Mumford argued famously that the "city is a fact in nature, like a cave, a run of mackerel or an ant heap. But it is also a conscious work of art, and it holds within its communal framework many simpler and more personal forms of art. Mind takes form in the city; and in turn, urban forms condition mind." (Mumford, 1995 [1938]; 23). Mumford envisioned a series of technological epistemologies in which he argued that mind and bodies become encultured and informed. These biotechnics speak to the way bodies are governed. For Mumford, the 'clock', for example, predated and then premised the age of science and reason before the industrial revolution. The clock represents the processes that quantified, measured, classified and regulated science, cities and citizens – first institutionalized from systems of religion, and then adapted in wider ranges of systems of socio-political relations (2010 [1934]; 14). Following the age of enlightenment, Mumford recognized the development of the factory as the biotechnic of the city into the industrial revolution. The exploratory nature of science in the enlightenment transformed into a tool of stoicism that provided a methodology to solve industrial problems. Human bodies were valued as objects of energy consumption and production, and ceased to have value beyond labour. Commodity fetishism masked the conditions the factory oppressed upon its inhabitants (1934; 151-210). Production in

European cities during this time, supported by steam and coal, relied upon bodies as mechanical energy. Knowledge of the atom, and radical ideas of how energy is structured, partly freed the factory worker from their lives as batteries. Atomic biotechnics displaced indices of value through industrialised visions with indices of value through information and innovation (1934; 215, 221). [6]

Since Mumford's proposed technic eras, there has been nearly a century of other 'civilised' technologies to consider that interfere with human subjectivity. I suggest, anthropologically speaking, that what each of these biotechnic propositions evidence is a contextual re-evaluation of the dynamic relationship between nature and culture. Embedded within the promise of the 'clock' was a conceived mastery over nature. The factory, under this rubric, brought the body beyond both nature and culture. The atom was a return to culture. I argue that, increasingly for many of the artists and citizen scientists with whom I have begun working, their small-scale engagements with technology are a similar type of biotechnic, which, in this context, is a return to 'nature'. If, as Mumford argues, ages of urban waking life were characterized first by measurement and then stoicism, and then the invisible, I propose to think through those epistemologies or worldviews that characterise the cyborg[7] as a biotechnic in ethnographic terms, and for my London informants, it is paradigms of exponentials and uncertainty.

Exponential technology and uncertainty.

[6] I apply Mumford's biotechnics broadly. In later writings, he began to refer to these atomic neo technics as 'biotechnics' more specifically.

Gordon Moore, in his musings on technology, saliently predicted the exponential nature of computational power and development (1965). His hypothesis, commonly referred to as Moore's law, is one of the theoretical motivations most often cited among cyborg enthusiasts. It was first proposed in computing power, but it has since been applied to many different domains of social and technical development by both academics and lay-people, including my London interlocutors (see Kurzweil, 2006). They envision ways to apply ideas of exponentials to almost every aspect of social and bodily engagement. It is often discussed in terms of a 'goal', something that entrepreneurs, self-defined social advocates for technological applications, and technologists, are trying to work towards, especially among those Elite enterprises in Silicon valley, who may also have a vested commercial interest in maintaining excitement, hype and cascading developments in a given technological field. These networks of people particularly borrow the language of 'post' and 'trans'-humanism to conceive of future identities. For others, however, Moore's law is not something that one 'does', it is something that one is subject to. Moore's law 'happens' to people who feel disconnected to the sources and industries who perform it, and so exponential movements in society are not something that these individuals enact, and becomes something for which one needs to respond. For my interlocutors in citizen science and art, this is something that drives their passion.

Moore's law does not only speak to change, it also speaks to the *rates* at which things change. Many people, technologists or otherwise, attempt to look in to the future and increasingly cannot see how they fit. Moore's law becomes an anecdote of something larger, and this is the anxiety and uncertainty that urban life informs. Recalling again Steve Pile's psychoanalytical works of the city (1996), I suggest that this anxiety and uncertainty is a primal source of pain. The city, and urban living, is a massively complex

phenomenon. The movement of people through urban landscapes is of paramount concern across social and historical sciences. Many people embrace their cities. They speak of the city as a close friend, with whom, at times, they may have a falling out, but to whom they always ultimate return. Some go to the city because they have to, and there is not space here to begin to highlight these motivations. For many others, still, there is a sense of ambivalence and chaos to their lives in the city. The city is something that simply happens, flowing effortlessly but inevitably around inhabitants. Much like Moore's law, for these individuals, the city is not consciously 'done' and sought after. Rather, one is subject to it. One feels stagnant and devoid of agency.

There is reason to consider the stresses of uncertainty on mental health as the chaos of urban life, politics and economics are increasingly recognized, and there are correlates to these ethnographic sentiments within patterns of pathology in the UK and in the West in general. The use of antidepressants has surged across the developed world over the past decade (see Dumit, 2012, for a lengthy discussion). In the UK, there are now over 6 million Prozac prescriptions annually. In many UK cities, the rates of depression have quadrupled in the last 15 years. Public NHS data and research from Britain's Office of National Statistics demonstrate that cases of depressions rise by 100,000 every year, and there were 500,000 new cases between 2010 and 2012 (Ssentif, 2012). 20% of all British adults are currently subject to diagnosable non-psychotic mental distress (Beaumont and Lofts, 2013). These trends are echoed across cities globally, to greater or lesser degrees. There are a number of themes within Medical Anthropology that can be used to think through this phenomenon: medicalization, over-prescription of anti-depressants, or simply better recognition of mental illness, and better advocacy and support, among other factors. These contributions to understanding exponential psychiatric pathology are profoundly important, and while Dumit (2012) also singles out insecurity as

impacting medicalization of depression, there is still too small a body of research that recognizes the city, itself, as an active participant in informing human well-being, and contributing to this insecurity.

Nature and Culture.

Many artists and citizen scientists see Moore's law not as something to enact, but rather something for which one needs to react. After many years of following 'elite' technologists and their discussions of 'enhancement', it was striking to listen to groups of people who define themselves as cyborgs abandon this designation of becoming 'enhanced'. These individuals conceive of their relationship with technology as a return to nature. One of my interlocutors, in explaining their perspective, once introduced me to the cover of *New Scientist* with the image of a dog with the headline *"How does a dog smell the future, or a turtle surf the magnetic ocean? Let five beasts with super senses show you the world through their eyes"* (Williams, 2011). Within the pages, scientific evidence is presented in which bees see ultraviolet; turtles, and even cattle, have a profound sense of magnetic fields; snakes can 'see' heat, or infrared; and dogs can smell 'time'. The cyborg's point was a salient one. "These animals, if we could talk to them like we talk to other people, would have the ability to grasp our senses, but we would have a really hard time grasping all of theirs".

Their experiments on their bodies, on their somatic realities, and with technology, have a goal to achieve what these animals can do. They wish to see and feel the natural world in the way other organisms can. I cite here Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological quip that "Our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism: it keeps the visible spectacle constantly alive, it breathes life into it and sustains it inwardly, and with it forms

a system" (1962: 235). My informants reiterate this point whenever I speak to them about technology. It is not enough to study and understand the science of sense across the animal kingdom, for example. They want to 'feel' it, and in doing so, let it change them. Some of them participate in sensory manipulation that allows them to re-evaluate aesthetic realities. They attempt to perceive these senses beyond normative human aesthetic limits, or indeed, sense the world in ways alternative to normative human capabilities altogether. In terms of art, some of my interlocutors engage with technology that is inert. That is, in terms of exogenous functionality, their technology does very little, if anything at all (cyborg jewellery or clothing, for example), but for these artists, these engagements are no less meaningful than the radical somatic manipulation of other body experiments. Furthermore, if, as I have argued elsewhere (Parkhurst 2013), the definition of a cyborg is ethnographically and contextually informed, then the functionality of one's technological intimacy is irrelevant.

As mentioned, a thick description of the types of bodily experiments conducted by these groups is not crucial here. What is distinct about the work in which these people engage is its constructed connections to the natural world. Rather than articulate non-normative senses as enhancements or post-humanism, they instead refer back to animals, or Earth. Certainly, they are aware that they are attempting to provoke feelings and connections that the human body does not, unassisted, currently afford. However, it is often discussed in terms of returning to the planet, or regaining senses that humans have lost through developing the modern world. Compared to the Nietschean language elite technocratic groups borrow on becoming 'gods', these informants speak of becoming 'dogs'. It speaks to a primordial conception of natural perfection that humans have dormant, and unreachable within themselves – that the world has stolen from the human mind and body. They are clear that humans are culpable in this regard. They claim

humans are victims of their own folly, and the chief instrument of devolution that they cite is the city.

As discussed at the beginning of this paper, the body is inexorably linked with the city. These artists and citizen scientists do not debate this point. What they claim is that the city, in as much as Sennett had argued, is, by its design, shaky. It is, the artists claim, a type of fluid art project itself. Their opinions on London are mixed. They all claim their lives are intertwined with the city. Some were born in the city, others immigrated. However, they all echo what my earlier informants from Dubai had claimed – the city offered so many freedoms and opportunities, but also pain. Once one entered, it becomes very difficult to leave. They speak about the city in terms of velocity, and the great speed, again recalling Moore's law, at which it moves and changes. The city becomes an inherently uncertain and unstable place. Bruno Latour (2014) has recently outlined theories if how agency is reconstituted in light of growing awareness of the Anthropocene. The Earth, he argues, once the stable stage upon which human actors performed, no longer functions as the anchor that grounds people. The Earth, and in my informants' case, the city, is its own actor that interacts as part of a network of performers. My informants see a 'cultured' urban world as spiralling out of control, and see technology as *grounding* in a landscape they see as no longer stable.

What they envision is a return to 'nature' through the techniques, affect, and feelings that technology provides for them. For some of them, they borrow these techniques from the animal kingdom. For some others, 'regaining senses' is not part of their articulations. They may be wearing digital clothing, or have implanted digital devices into their skin, or perhaps they have wired themselves in some way to a street, or a room. What brings the different techniques together, however, is a common theme of tying oneself to 'place',

when the 'place' is, as one woman described, "running rampant". The artists claim that art has always been the medium to express and enact connections with things and places when words fail. They claim there is nothing more 'natural' than art, and it is, for them, the best way to react to the city. Similarly, citizen scientists (some of whom work in industry as well), suggest that science and technology only appear to be beyond nature within institutions, but that 'science', wherever it happens (in a laboratory at MIT, or in a rented garage off Borough Street in London) is inherently naturalistic when practiced. The world, they argue, dances about the person in chaotic movements. Technology becomes, for them, a holistic way to test and adapt their footing when partnered with unknown choreography. I borrow Latour again, who suggested some time ago that "We have never been modern" (1993), suggesting that binaries between nature and culture within social science discourse has always proceeded from false assumptions. My informants reiterate this in their own way. The idea that becoming cyborgian, through intimacies with art or technology, is a return to 'nature', and a way to offer oneself stability, is inherently ironic when juxtaposed with the human body as a 'natural' form. My informants readily admit this irony. However, when ethnographically examined through their relationship with the urban landscape, their motivations are given voice.

Conclusion

The public relationship between James Joyce and Carl Jung provide an insight into the merger of psychoanalysis and art. The Irish novelist and the Swiss psychiatrist had a complex understanding of one and another. Joyce's daughter, Lucia, was also one of Britain's most famous psychiatric residents, living at St. Andrew's hospital in Northampton, and was a patient of Jung. Jung did not always get on well with her father. "He considered Joyce to be as mad as his daughter, but by deliberate, conscious

effort to distance himself to write his works. He made the now-famous comment that Lucia and her father 'were like two people going to the bottom of a river, one falling and the other diving" (Kaplan, 2002; 174). Lucia was, herself, an artist of sorts, a dancer, though her pursuits were stifled. The idea proposed here is that madness can be defined from the locomotion in which people embrace their world – the novelist leaped into his peripherality, while the younger Joyce stumbled and fell into hers. I suggest that the artists and citizen scientists whom I discuss are attempting something similar, attempting to leap into uncertainty rather than fall in. They view the city, and society at large, as a cultured form of chaos, even madness. Technology is, for them, not a practice of becoming cultured beyond the city, or a technique of ontological transformation. Rather, it is a deliberate reaction to the urban and social landscapes in which they move. They borrow, in their own words, ideas of holism between the body and nature to explain what are otherwise novel hybrid identities in the face of exponential change. What I have attempted to briefly articulate in this paper is how the city, with all its fragility, calls for these intimacies, and how an anthropology of the body and city can be utilised to better understand our relationship with technology.

Cities do not simply 'create' bodies. Cities and bodies inform, and are informed by each other. What some of my informants are trying to do cannot best be understood as 'enhancement'. They have disavowed the word, as many have also done with 'post' and 'trans' humanism. Rather, they recognize the city as a source of pain and anxiety and exponential change, and they recognize the human body as relatively static in comparison. Their use of technology is a way to mirror the exponential city, to remove a sense of stasis from the human body in order to help them embrace uncertainty in their own terms. I suggest, finally, that an anthropology of the body has a pivotal role in multidisciplinary discussions of well-being in a future that dictates urban living globally.

The paths of instability upon which urban life is modelled beg for critical review on the relationship between the human figure and the urban ground, and, ultimatly, provide insight on what it means to be human in a more-than-human world.

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