THINKING ABOUT POST-PANDEMIC ARCHITECTURE: HEIDEGGER, JAPANESE NEW WAVE AND NEW DUTCH ARCHITECTURE

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ABSTRACT: Whether we are embracing or countering technology, we are unable to avoid its grip on our world. Architecture is one of the areas which are the most indebted to technology. The most influential thinker on technology and contemporary architectural theory is Martin Heidegger. According to him technology is not controlled by humanity, but on the contrary: humanity is subjected to the will to power of technology as a way of revealing of Being. It conceals all other possibilities for revealing, such as the poetic way. This for Heidegger is the greatest Danger of technology since it opens the doors to nihilism. COVID-19 pandemic further pushes the cold rationale of the calculative thinking underlying technology, especially in the redesigning of our built environment. This crisis actually threatens to accelerate the dominance of the essence of technology which he calls the enframing (Gestell), and brings the greatest Danger to its full closure of all other ways of revealing of Being once and for all! This paper aims at thinking on Heidegger's notion of the 'appropriating event' (Ereignis), through 'letting-be" (Gelassenheit) for opening alternative paths of architectural design by gaining a free relationship to technology. Concrete examples from architectural design and theory of the Japanese 'New Wave' architecture, and architects such as Kurokawa Kisho, as well as contemporary Dutch architecture – MVRDV and Rem Koolhaas' OMA, will be discussed as examples for their double move towards technology: their full embracement of the latest technologies in their design and building, while explicitly rejecting the underlying technological rationality and calculative thinking associated with technology.

KEYWORDS: *COVID-19, technology, architecture, Heidegger, Kurokawa, Koolhaas, MVRDV*

INTRODUCTION: HEIDEGGER, TECHNOLOGY AND ARCHITECTURE

Technology is the essence of contemporary world. Whether we are embracing it or countering it, we are unable to avoid its grip onto our lives and world. Architecture is one of the areas which are the most indebted to technology. For Martin Heidegger technology is not just a means to an end, but a way of bringing something into the open (Dahlstrom, 2013, p. 205). It is not an instrument, a human activity but is essentially connected to the act of knowing. To the act of opening up the world! This opening up is the realm of truth, for which Heidegger uses its Greek name – aletheia (ἀλήθεια). Techne (τέχνη), says Heidegger, is a mode of alethein, "[i]t reveals whatever does not bring itself forth and does not yet lie here before us, whatever can look and turn out now one way and now another" (Heidegger, 1977, p. 13). By building a house the architect, reveals what is to be brought forth, according to the perspectives of the four modes of occasioning [i.e. the four Aristotelian causes]. This revealing gathers together in advance the aspect and the matter of ship or house, with a view to the finished thing envisioned as completed, and from this gathering determines the manner of its construction. (Heidegger, 1977, p. 13)

Thus, for Heidegger, technology is a way of disclosing, and as such it is not something that we are doing, but something that we are dependent on. For Heidegger, modern technology is substantially different from the traditional technology. Modern technology discloses, or reveals by challenging the nature, by ordering, storing, placing, distributing, re-distributing the hidden aspects. In doing so, it opens up a very different world from the traditional ways of revealing. What is stored, ordered, distributed is a standing reserve (Bestand). It seems that everything and enything is a standing reserve (Dahlstrom, 2013, p. 205). According to Snodgrass (1997, pp. 86–87), for Heidegger technology is akin to the cybernetic systems. The meaning of the word "cybernetic" comes from the Greek word for a steersman and it means a self-regulating system made of feedback loops where information is steered back to itself. The machine, or the technological system becomes self-regulating. In Snodgrass' interpretation, for Heidegger modern technology functions like a cybernetic system, fully autonomous and no longer under human agency. It "is now able to perpetuate, regulate and generate itself without human intervention" (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 87). In a sense, technology now has a 'life of its own'. Machines are not used by humanity for the benefit of humanity, but, although build, powered, maintained and driven by humans, machines, and technology overall as a part of a global system of production, functions by its own logic, needs and sense of direction independent of the human will. Technology seems to have a will of its own!

Modern technology not only asserts its power through its logic of efficiency over humanity, but it changes the nature of the things encountered in the world. Since, modern technology, according to Heidegger, is a revealing power, it reveals different aspects of the things. Things are no longer encountered as a self-standing totalities, but as cogs in a system (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 87). Both the natural and the human world are driven towards efficiency, understood in terms of their place within a global logistical chains, thus the human culture and human self-understanding is also revealed in terms of management. Time is revealed through "time management", the self, itself is 'optimized' through various 'self-help techniques' and techniques for becoming more 'desirable' or more 'liked'. For Heidegger, we are now no longer in control, but are controlled by technology by

reducing logos to logistics. Western logic, says Heidegger, "finally becomes logistics, whose irresistible development has meanwhile brought forth the electronic brain, whereby man's nature and essence is adapted and fitted into the barely noticed Being of beings that appears in the nature of technology (Heidegger, 1968, p. 238).

In terms of this technological logic, everything has to have a reason, or a cause for its existence or else is not real (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 88). The principle of sufficient reason for Heidegger is the basic principle of the western metaphysics of the modernity. This principle is accepted as self-evident state of nature. It is accepted as the only mode of rationality (Snodgrass, 1997, pp. 88–89). This Cartesian metaphysics comes out of the subject-object duality postulated by Descartes. The humanity / technology separation has its premise in the Cartesian subject/object dyad, which as indicated by Heidegger traces all the way back to the early Greeks. Descartes portrays the world as having constants which can be addressed with logical accuracy. Humans are considered individual substance which relate to the world through ascertainable representations (Loo, 2001, p. 43). Cartesian logic depends upon the cogito or individual explanation as exclusively answerable for requesting information and benchmarking normal practices. The individual thinking subject is in this manner seen as the constitutive wellspring of public activity. The modern polis in this way, with its legislative and political foundations, results from common agreements set up between individuals (ibid).

THE ENFRAMING (GESTELL) - THE GREATEST DANGER OF TECHNOLOGY

The essence of modern technology, according to Heidegger, is itself nothing technological (Heidegger, 1977, p. 20). Technology is not under the power of humanity, but on the contrary: humanity is subjected to the will to power of technology as a way of revealing of Being. It reduces all beings to standing reserve and impoverishes our thinking to calculative thinking. This is the essence of technology which Heidegger calls the enframing (Gestell) which means "the gathering together of that setting-upon which sets upon man, i.e., challenges him forth, to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve" (ibid). It conceals all other possibilities for revealing, such as the poetic way of revealing of Being. This for Heidegger is the greatest Danger of technology. It opens the doors to nihilism: a total reduction of all beings, including human beings, to standing reserve – continuously calculated, enframed, optimized and ordered. The greatest danger of the essence of technology as the enframing is that:

The ordering belonging to Enframing sets itself above the thing, leaves it, as thing, unsafeguarded, truthless. In this way Enframing disguises the nearness of world that nears in the thing. Enframing disguises even this, its disguising, just as the forgetting of something forgets itself and is drawn away in the wake of forgetful oblivion. The coming-to-pass of oblivion not only lets fall from remembrance into concealment; but that falling itself falls simultaneously from remembrance into concealment, which itself also falls away in that falling. (Heidegger, 1977, p. 46)

In other words, the enframing closes off the possibility for disclosing the world. It conceals that the enframing is itself a mode of revealing, thus it closes the possibilities for a different kind of disclosure. Conceived metaphysically, "modern machine technology is a specific kind of 'truth,' in terms of which the essence of the actuality of everything actual is determined. The machine that belongs to

such technology is different from a 'tool' for technology itself is self-subsistent" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 44). Technology for Heidegger is not the technological equipment and the production technologies, but it is the way we have a relationship to the world setup by the framework of the technological rationality (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 90). The greatest danger for Heidegger is the fact that technological rationality has become the only way of seeing reality which excludes all other ways that lie outside the framework setup by technology (ibid). The enframing in his view has a totalitarian nature. It strictly excludes all other ways of thinking, doing or seeing (ibid). This 'revealing that orders' – the enframing of technology is not a human doing. The essence of technology as a universal imposition of detached knowing has its own source outside of human agency. We can say that humanity belongs to this opening of possibilities of the disclosure of being. The Being itself seems to bring forth its disclosive mission in the essence of technology (Loo, 2001, p. 44). The essence of technology – the enframing – is in a way a manifestation of the deeper belonging together of Being and man, a kind of prelude to the primordial Er-eignis – the event of appropriation (Heidegger, 2002, p. 40; Loo, 2001, p. 47).

Technological rationality seems to be the mode of thinking that the enframing, as the way of revealing of modern technology, as the truth of being, brings forth as the only way of reason. Any other way of reasoning that does not belong to the enframing, that does not order, setts upon, that does not calculate and is not efficient, is deemed non-reasonable, or unreasonable. Technological rationality is based on the principle of sufficient reason, but it becomes clear that reason thus considered is without reason, without foundation. It questions all things, asks why they are, if there is no why, then it dismisses them (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 90).

But technological rationality itself does not answer the question why. It hides that it has no fundamental justification. It hides its lack of grounding, lack of exclusive and hegemonic authority (ibid, p.91). It is widely believed, especially in the West, that the power of reason gives the humanity mastery over nature, over the world. But this rationality that lies in the essence of technology governs humans as well as things (ibid, p. 89). Humans believe that by their mastery over the nature they are masters, but in fact it is the power of reason that rules over them. This for Heidegger is the nihilism of our age: "In demanding that every thing, whether natural or human, have a reason, we have lost our respect for them. If no reason can be given, the thing is no real thing, but no thing, a nothing (nihil)" (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 89). When we think or talk about technology, we are closed within the limits of its own mode of thinking – within the mode of sufficient reason. Trying to think about reason in terms of reason, trying to find the reason o reason is counter-productive. It only tightens the grip of technological rationality. We are trapped within technological modes of reasoning as in an enframing structure." (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 90)

THE APPROPRIATING EVENT (EREIGNIS)

Heidegger, however, gives us hope by guiding the thought towards critical embracement of technology, simultaneously avoiding its underlying technological rationality, trough what he calls Ereignis. This is a leap which involves meditative thinking and opening up for the mystery of Being. Ereignis is the 'leading term' (Dahlstrom, 2013, p. 17) of his thinking after 'the turn', after 1936, and arguably one of the most important concepts in his thinking overall. 'Ereignis' is usually translated as 'the appropriating event' (ibid), 'the event, happening, occurrence'

(Inwood, 2000, p. 54), 'enowning' (Schalow and Denker, 2010, p. 101). It is the leap of the dynamic relationship between Being and man (Dasein, being-there) through which both sides come on their own by 'belonging together' (ibid). This term is elaborated in his *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)* (Heidegger, 2012).

The emergence of technological rationality in Western history for Heidegger is not accidental, nor is it a result of human choice and doing. It is Being that reveals itself in a particular manner at a particular time and space in history. It is the way Being discloses itself in the modern epoch in the West. Modern technology and its underlying technological rationality is an event (Ereignis) of Being (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 91). Technology is a way certain aspect of reality is revealed to us through enframing. This results in a profound conclusion: "we cannot hope to control technology because its essence, which is coincident with Being, lies outside our willing." (ibid.). The appropriating event (Ereignis) for Heidegger eludes our questioning and any possible explication. The appropriating event simply comes to pass (das Ereignis ereignet) (Heidegger, 1972, p. 24). It seems that for Heidegger technological rationality – the only mode of revealing, the only way of thinking available to contemporary western men, is groundless!

Western metaphysics has been dominated by the search of reasons, or 'grounds' of being – ground of everything that is. Since the Greek thinking, Being has been identified as a ground of beings, the Being of beings (entities) (Loo, 2001, p. 46). Western metaphysics according to Heidegger is a sort of history of being (Seinsgeschichte) (Inwood, 2000, p. 95). By asking questions on the meaning of Being, the thinkers in different epochs were led to believe that different beings were the Being of beings. It is not men who 'invented' the Being of beings, but their thinking was led by Being itself. It was the way Being revealed, or disclosed itself in history. Heidegger focuses on the belonging in the belonging-together between man and Being in the appropriating event (Ereignis). The appropriating event - the Ereignis "allows human beings and Being to reach one another 'in their essences' and to attain their real natures by shedding determinations that metaphysics has given them" (Loo, 2001, p. 46). For Heidegger Being in metaphysics is associated with 'presencing' – being present. It means being present *now.* This has clear temporal implications. The appropriating event (Ereignis), on the other hand, is associated with *withdrawal.* We are not experiencing the appropriating event as presencing, as disclosure, but as hiddenness, as absence, as withdrawal which glances, flashes:

And yet that glancing, in its giving of light, simultaneously keeps safe the concealed darkness of its origin as the unlighted. The in-turning [Einkehr] that is the lightning flash of the truth of Being is the entering, flashing glance-insight [Einblick]. . . In-flashing of world into Enframing is in-flashing of the truth of Being into truthless Being. In-flashing is the disclosing coming-to-pass within Being itself. Disclosing coming-to-pass [i.e. the appropriating event, Ereignis] is bringing to sight that brings into its own [eignende Eräugnis]. (Heidegger, 1977, p. 45)

If in Heidegger's early thinking the Destiny of Dasein (i.a. man, humanity) is temporally rooted as being-towards-death in its radical finitude, than the appropriating event (Ereignis) comes from the future (Loo, 2001, p. 49). Comportment to the future "unconceals the withdrawal of Being where Being is shown as that which is not yet present (ibid.). The appropriating event (Ereignis) thus is not a name for Being, but Ereignis arises

precisely "from the experience of *the lack of a word* for Being (Bernasconi, 1985, p. 86)!

LETTING-BE: A NEW PATH OF THINKING AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

Letting be, or releasement (Gelassenheit) is what Heidegger proposes as a simultaneous, dual move in embracing and rejecting technological objects (Dahlstrom, 2013, p. 121). This is a term that he adopts from Meister Eckhart which means equanimity towards the technological logic, a releasement from the entrapment within the technological rationality, while freely using technological items. This concept brings forth a way of comportment towards technological objects in which they are let outside into our world but also letting them outside it, resting upon themselves (ibid.). As such, letting be lies outside the power of technology, since it is not part of the logic of technological rationality. We no longer view technological objects in a technological way, but with awareness of the world which is hidden from us in them. This is what Heidegger calls the 'Mystery' – that which shows itself and at the same time withdraws (ibid.). The Mystery is hidden in the technological world. By being constantly mindful of the Danger of technology, through letting be, we can gain a free relationship to technology, and at the same time be open for the Mystery.

This letting be means that for Heidegger the only way to deal with technology is not to deal with it at all, "but to leave it alone to reveal itself. … We can learn to 'listen' to what Being reveals, and open ourselves to its disclosure" (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 93). It involves a new way of thinking which doesn't ask for reasons of things all the time. It asks the reason of things, it operates in a calculative manner *only* when it is appropriate. Technological thinking should be used only in certain occasions.

We need to stop challenging forth things, ordering things and treating everything as a standing reserve. By letting be we are able to let other ways of revealing of Being reveal itself. Letting be is realization of the finitude of human powers of control and understanding (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 94). By letting be we can step outside the entrapment of technology:

We can use technical devices, and yet with proper use also keep ourselves so free of them, that we may let go of them any time. We can use technical devices as they ought to be used, and also let them alone as something which does not affect our inner and real core. We can affirm the unavoidable use of technical devices, and also deny them the right to dominate us, and so to warp, confuse, and lay waste our nature. (Heidegger, 1966, p. 54)

Essentially, letting be means coping with technological objects, acknowledging the enormous benefits of technology for our lives and civilization, being aware of the enormous and potentially fatal dangers, while retaining a critical stance towards the technological rationality. Using technology, but not being used by it. Being humble in our thinking.

THE PANDEMIC AND THE COLD RATIONALE OF CALCULATIVE THINKING

COVID-19 pandemic further pushes the cold rationale of the calculative thinking underlying technology, especially in the redesigning of our built environment – our cities, our public spaces, our work and transport infrastructure. This crisis actually threatens to accelerate the dominance of the essence of technology (the Enframing) and brings the greatest Danger to its full closure of all other ways of revealing of Being once and for all. Covid-19 has shown the vulnerability of the global logistical chains. The response to the Pandemic is not only medical, but also in terms of organization of public space

and work spaces. The 'social distancing' arrangements have become common. Architectural magazines (Giacobbe, 2020) are also unanimous in their praise for all sorts of latest technologies such as the acceleration of automation, self-cleaning toilets, automated and advanced airport check-in, self-opening doors etc. Smartphone technologies, combined with other tracking devices (cameras, sensors etc.) have been widely used by governments for 'contact tracing'. Ethical debates of the use of these surveillance technologies (Klenk and Duijf, 2020, 2020; Verhulst, 2020) are just beginning to take hold. While these questions are very important and interesting in their own right, this paper will be more interested in the underlying logic of all proposals.

Technological rationality seems to be the inevitable solution to all problems concerning the current pandemic. While it is clear that the modern and advanced technology will certainly play crucial role in mitigating the pandemic, it is very important to address its 'greatest danger' that Heidegger clearly elaborates in his thinking. The question for us is not which technologies should the architects use in order to design resilient buildings. This is important question, but for a more technical literature. The question we are asking is: *How should architects comport themselves as practitioners and thinkers towards a free relationship with technology?* How should they design but avoid being entrapped by the technological rationality? How should they use technology but remain outside its overreaching grip? If the architects and other engineers achieve this state of mind – being free from technological rationality while freely using latest technologies – than they could respond adequately not only to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis, but they would be prepared to answer to other potential deep future crisis like another deadlier pandemic, the climate crisis etc. For this reason, in the remaining part of this paper, concrete examples from archi-

tectural design and theory of the Japanese 'New Wave' architecture, and architects such as Kurokawa Kisho, as well as contemporary Dutch architecture – MVRDV, OMA, and architect Rem Koolhaas are discussed as examples for their double move towards technology: their full embracement of latest technologies in their design and building. But at the same time, their explicit rejection of the underlying Western technological rationality and calculative thinking associated with technology.

JAPANESE 'NEW WAVE' ARCHITECTURE

Heidegger has been widely popular in Japanese academia. Even when his more 'poetic' writings after the 'turn' in 1936 were met with perplexity in the Western philosophical milieu, they were enthusiastically accepted in Japan. This is primarily because of the close parallels between Eastern thought – mainly Zen Buddhism, but also Taoism – and Heidegger's thinking. There are even studies which suggest there are 'hidden sources' from Eastern thought in Heidegger's work (May, 1996). Nonetheless, there is are profound parallels at least in the overall tone of thought between Heidegger's thinking and Buddhism. Since Buddhist thought and culture has been highly influential, not to say the least – essential – in shaping Japanese culture, and Japanese architecture in particular. These parallels will be used, first in thinking about how Japanese architecture successfully and explicitly engages with modern technology without subjugating to the technological reason. This will be presented through the Japanese 'New Wave' architecture, and mainly through writings and work of Kisho Kurokawa. Secondly, the arguably successful engagement of Japanese New Wave architects with modern technology will be used as an inspiration for architects and design thinkers for gaining a free relationship with technology.

Heidegger's ideas elaborated previously would be familiar to those coming from the Japanese Mahayana Buddhist tradition (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 92). Nāgārjuna (ca 150–250 CE) – the most important Buddhist philosopher showed that if we try to apply logic to the foundations of logic itself, those foundations will fall. Logic itself lies outside logic. No assertion,

without exception, can be sustained by reason, including even the assertion that no assertion can be sustained by reason. Illogic inheres within all logic. When logic is reflectively applied to itself, it collapses. Reason can give no absolute and certain support for knowledge. (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 92).

Nāgārjuna's philosophy of 'middle way' (*madhyamaka)* is based on the central notion of 'emptiness' (*śūnyatā)* (Westerhoff, 2020)*. The emptiness, as Heidegger also acknowledges, is always emptiness of something, or in relation to something. For* Nāgārjuna *it is svabhāva which can be translated as 'intrinsic nature', 'inherent existence', or even 'substance' (ibid.). Both Heidegger and* Nāgārjuna are led to similar conclusions that seems to lead to nihilism (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 92). However, the effects of Nāgārjuna's *madhyamaka were responsible for a profoundly rich and long–lasting spiritual, intellectual, and for us, most importantly – material culture based on his ideas of the emptiness.* Nāgārjuna's attack on logic didn't end thought and culture. Quite on the contrary. It inspired original thought and culture!

We should ask the question: "How is it possible that a way of thinking that denies reason's sovereignty could flourish without fostering nihilism nor ... negating an active involvement in everyday practicalities?" (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 93). The answers the Buddhist philosophy and Buddhist practice provides seems to be quite close to Heidegger's own thinking discussed earlier, especially in terms of his proposition for 'letting be' (Sein-

lassen). Heidegger's idea of interplay between Being and Nothing (das Nichts) and the groundlessness of Being can be put in relation to Nāgārjuna's, and Buddhiist notion that all things come from nothing (Nothingness) and all things essentially return, and are 'rooted' in Eptyness without a reason" (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 95). In practical terms, when we are thinking and working within the realm of technology and technological rationality, we should act *as if* things are rooted, have causes, have reasons, we should calculate, order, calibrate, optimize the technological apparatus. We should think within the mode of technological rationality. But always be aware that the underlying logic of technology is groundless, is not rooted in anything substantial, and most importantly – that it is just one of the many possible ways of disclosure of the world. We should avoid what Heidegger calls the greatest danger of the modern world in which "the approaching tide of technological revolution in the atomic age could so captivate, bewitch, dazzle, and beguile man that calculative thinking may someday come to be accepted and practiced as the only way of thinking (Heidegger, 1969, p. 56). The answer that Heidegger proposes is the letting be (the releasement) as a way of 'keeping meditative thinking alive'. What would that mean practically? If we succeed in letting-be towards things, and remain open towards the 'mystery' then "we should arrive at a path that will lead to a new ground and foundation. In that ground the creativity which produces lasting works could strike new roots (Heidegger, 1969, pp. 56–7).

Japanese New Wave architecture is not romantic recreation of the imagined past, nor is it a xenophobic rejection of Western culture. It is an authentic translation of the Buddhist tradition but with a new means – means provided by the latest technological achievements (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 97). Buddhism is not concerned with beauty for the sake of beauty. It is

concerned with the suffering and releasement from the suffering of all beings. Beauty in Buddhist material culture points to the fragility and the elusiveness of Being. It shows to Emptiness. It "lets all things be, both pleasant and repulsive, and allows them to lie forth. This applies as much to hydrogen bombs or nuclear plants as to roses and tea bowls" (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 97). This translation of Buddhism in the Japanese New Wave architecture, especially in Kisho Kurokawa's work and writings is explicitly done through simultaneous embracement of modern technological means and rejection of its underlying technological rationality: "In an age of reason, science, technology, and economics take precedence over culture, art, literature, and thought. To challenge Modernism and Modern Architecture is to challenge Western rationalism" (Kurokawa, 1994).

The architectural practice today is underlined by technology and technological rationality. The global Covid-19 pandemic will push the technological rationality and logic even further in order to keep the population of the tightly crowded cities and global logistical chains functional. Most of the measures are inevitable. Instead of oscillating between two opposite alternatives – full embracement of these technologies, or their total rejection – in thinking about and (re)designing our cities we could use Kisho Kurokawa's and Japanese New Wave architect's solution: we could take the middle way, by simultaneously accepting the needed technological solutions to keep us safe, but rejecting their technological rationality.

CONTEMPORARY DUTCH ARCHITECTURE

Contemporary Dutch architectural practice is leader in the cutting-edge large-scale architecture, urban design, as well as urban investigation and architectural

theory. This text will elaborate on the work of Rem Koolhaas, his Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) and MVRDV as architects who are directly engaged with latest high-tech while trying to stay away from the entrapment of the technological rationality. Koolhaas work has been tied in dialogue with technology from the beginnings of his practice. He has shown time and again that he understands that technology itself is not subjected to technological rationality. Koolhaas himself admitted while working on the Zeebrugge Sea Terminal that "the only judgement we could make was no longer functionally based, because the problem was too complex to be analyzed in a rational manner" (quoted in: Loo, 2001, p. 41). Koolhaas uses methodological approach which he calls "a method of systematic *idealization* [or] overestimation of the *extant"* (Koolhaas, 1995; Loo, 2001). His method includes wide use of statistics, notations, graphs, charts and other data which are then almost poetically transformed into architecture. This method is also used and is further perfected by the Dutch architect collective MVRDV through their 'datascapes' (López Calleja and Stott, 2020). Stephen Loo in this context asks:

Do OMA's and MVRDV's interest in contradictory programs, uncanny spaces and extant technologies in architecture exacerbate the twenty-first century's headlong plunge into technological oblivion? Is the celebration of urban voids and car parks a privileged Western aestheticisation of the banal detritus of technologisation? Is this to say that an interest in new Dutch architectural practice to help us arrive at an understanding of modern technology either naively serious or ludicrously unethical in the light of the earth's ecological problems? (Loo, 2001, pp. 41–42)

Stephen Loo (2001) further makes a compelling argument that these 'hyper-propositional' approaches taken by OMA and

MVRDV are similar both to the Japanese New Wave architects' and Heidegger's notion of 'letting-be' of technology. Further Loo claims that the work of these Dutch architects demonstrates their effort to establish a free relation to technology through a new way of thinking. This way of thinking lies in the possibility of addressing the ontological aspects of the architectural object "ironically through methodologies which on the surface appear strictly to inhabit the realm of the abstract" (Loo, 2001, p. 50). At the same time "the ontological question of the architectural object can be addressed through Koolhaas's work as the futural inscriptions of the incomplete holding onto the presence of function, while at the same time holding open the precise realisation of function itself, but without succumbing to a permanent presence" (Loo, 2001, p. 50). Koolhaas's OMA and MVRDV hyper–propositional use of technology (ibid., 51) is not rooted in reason, it can be argued that it is beyond reason. As such it seems that this aspect of their work closely mirrors Heidegger's idea of 'letting be'. By driving technology and technological representational and calculative thinking to its extremes, OMA and MVRDV are making self-evident the groundlessness of the technological rationality.

CONCLUSION

Although practical aspects for mitigation of Covid–19 crisis lie outside the scope of this paper, the underlying and deep impact of this crisis, as well as the slow-burn and far reaching climate crisis, are poised to have long lasting implications on the way we organize our life. Especially on the way we design our built surroundings. Architectural practice will be given a substantial role in shaping our new built reality. Thus, architects must have not only practical, technical knowledge, but also knowledge of the ontological realities they are shaping, or responding to. The dominance of technological reasoning and the enframing logic of modern technology lies as an unavoidable temptation for contemporary architects and other professionals. This temptation gives birth to twin temptations: full uncritical and mindless embracement of technology without realizing its potentially destructive aspects. The other – full and uncritical, and also mindless rejection of technology. Both are destructive in their own way. What we need is a middle way of a seemingly contradictory movement of our minds and spirits: a dual simultaneous embracement of technological objects and technological rationality where appropriate, and rejection of the overreaching power of technological rationality in the areas where it is not appropriate. We need to gain a free relationship to technology.

This paper argues that the most advantageous thinking that leads to gaining a free relationship to technology can be found in the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. Particularly in his ideas for 'letting be', or 'releasement' (Gelassenheit) through the 'appropriating event' (Ereignis) that we can become free from the 'enframing' (Gestell) of technology. Thus, we could again be able through meditative thinking to open up countless different and free ways of disclosing of Being, and have access to countless possible worlds. Japanese New Wave architecture, through the work of Kisho Kurokawa, and Dutch architecture through the work of Koolhaas' OMA and MVRDV, provide illustration of the way this is achievable in the field of architecture.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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